

UNDERSTANDING ISOLATION AND CONNECTEDNESS IN THE LEARNING LIVES OF REMOTE AND PERI-URBAN TEACHERS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract - This research explores the under-researched question of how teachers in remote and peri-urban primary schools in Banten, Indonesia vary in their professional connectedness and isolation, challenges they face in terms of school conditions, access to professional learning, quality of professional learning, and qualifications of remote teachers compared to peri-urban teachers. This research draws on a number of theoretical resources related to teacher learning and knowledge, including socio-cultural theories of learning, and considers the importance of individual and social aspects of learning. It employed a qualitative case-study drawing on an ethnographic approach. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers from two remote and two peri-urban schools aiming at developing an understanding of their professional learning. The findings show that teachers in this study learned both in formal and informal contexts. They learned individually from their own experience through reflection. They also learned socially: from books; from their sacred text (Al-Qur'an); from the teacher communities, Islamic faith communities, and social communities; and with and from other people such as other teachers and members of their immediate and extended families. This research will develop new understandings of different processes, conditions, and outcomes for teachers' learning in different contexts of connection and isolation in Indonesia by: (a) focusing on relationships between teachers' professional learning needs, their learning strategies, and how classroom practices change; (b) bringing together detailed contextualised and critical perspectives of remote and peri-urban teachers who are: (i) more and less experienced, (ii) more and less qualified and trained, and (iii) more and less connected; (c) informing improvements in the quality and quantity of professional learning support that will enable teachers to develop their classroom practice in ways that optimise access, participation and quality of learning opportunities in all their students.

Keywords - Professional Learning, Formal Learning, Informal Learning, Individual Learning, and Social Learning
