



Enhancing Mentor Teacher Practices through Jelita-Lestari: Developing an Online Journal System for Reflective Collaboration in Teacher Education

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Abstract

The quality of mentoring mentor teachers provide during the teaching practicum of pre-service teacher education programs significantly impacts the pedagogical competence of prospective teachers. The current study addresses the challenge of enhancing the quality of mentoring provided by mentor teachers in the teaching practicum of the Teacher Professional Education program in the Science Education Study Program at the State University of Malang. The research focuses on developing and implementing "Jelita-Lestari," an online journal system based on lesson study, to optimize the quality of mentoring. The system aims to provide a platform for mentor teachers to document their mentoring processes, track student progress, and publish articles related to their experiences, fostering reflective practice and knowledge sharing. Implementing Jelita-Lestari is expected to improve pedagogical competence among prospective science teachers by facilitating systematic mentoring and promoting a collaborative learning community among mentor teachers. The study underscores the importance of continuous professional development for mentor teachers and the potential of technology-enhanced tools in supporting effective mentoring practices.

Keywords—*Jelita Lestari, Mentor Teacher Quality, Technology Integration, Professional Development, Lesson Study, Online Journal System.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher education plays an essential role in shaping the quality of future educators and, consequently, the overall educational systems of any country. One of the most critical phases in teacher education programs is the teaching practicum, where pre-service teachers transition from theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom to practical application in real-world teaching environments. During this phase, mentor teachers serve as guides, offering feedback, insights, and reflective discussions to help novice teachers develop pedagogical skills. The mentoring process is widely acknowledged as a crucial determinant of a teacher's future effectiveness. Numerous studies emphasize that high-quality mentoring during the practicum phase not

only enhances a pre-service teacher's pedagogical competence but also increases their teaching confidence, classroom management skills, and capacity for critical reflection (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Hobson et al., 2009).

However, despite its recognized importance, the quality of mentoring can vary significantly across different educational settings. One of the primary challenges in maintaining consistency in mentoring quality lies in the diverse levels of experience, training, and professional development opportunities available to mentor teachers. According to Smith and Ingersoll (2004), mentor teachers themselves often lack formal training in effective mentoring techniques, leading to a disconnect between expectations and outcomes. In many cases, mentoring tends to focus on surface-level classroom management or content delivery, without sufficient attention to deeper pedagogical reflection or the



promotion of innovative teaching practices. The lack of standardized approaches and resources for mentor teachers exacerbates this issue, making it difficult to ensure that pre-service teachers receive the high-quality guidance they need to thrive in their careers.

In Indonesia, as in many other countries, the government has made concerted efforts to improve the quality of education in response to the demands of 21st-century learning environments. One key focus has been on enhancing the skills and competencies of teachers, both pre-service and in-service, to better prepare them for the evolving challenges of modern classrooms (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). These efforts include equipping teachers with the ability to foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving skills among students, which are seen as essential for success in today's globalized world. Reflective practice has also been identified as a core competency for teachers, as it enables them to continuously evaluate and improve their teaching methods (Schon, 1987). Despite these efforts, many mentor teachers in Indonesia struggle to effectively integrate reflective practices into their mentoring processes. Factors such as time constraints, limited resources, and a lack of formalized professional development opportunities for mentors hinder their ability to provide comprehensive, reflective feedback to pre-service teachers (Korthagen, 2017).

The introduction of technology in the mentoring process offers a promising solution to these challenges. Digital platforms, such as online journals and collaborative tools, provide a structured and flexible way for mentor teachers to engage in reflective practices, document their mentoring activities, and share insights with their peers. Research indicates that technology-enhanced mentoring can support mentor teachers by offering new avenues for communication, collaboration, and professional development (Zhao et al., 2018). These platforms also provide an opportunity for asynchronous engagement, allowing mentors to reflect on their experiences and provide feedback at a time that suits their schedules. Furthermore, digital tools create a space for the sharing of best practices and collaborative problem-solving, which are key elements in fostering a professional learning community among mentor teachers (Prestridge, 2019).

The *Jelita-Lestari* system, developed as part of the Teacher Professional Education Program at the State University of Malang, is designed to address

these issues by providing mentor teachers with a digital platform for documenting their mentoring processes, reflecting on their practices, and collaborating with other mentors. The system is based on the lesson study approach, which has been widely used in educational settings to promote collaborative reflection and continuous improvement in teaching practices (Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004). Through the use of *Jelita-Lestari*, mentor teachers can engage in systematic documentation of their mentoring activities, track the progress of pre-service teachers, and contribute to the professional discourse by publishing articles based on their mentoring experiences. This process not only supports the professional development of mentor teachers but also enhances the overall quality of the mentoring process by encouraging reflective practice and knowledge-sharing. The findings of this study will have broader implications for teacher education programs globally, as they offer a model for integrating technology into mentoring practices in a way that supports both mentor and mentee development.

2. METHODS

This research focuses on the development of the *Jelita-Lestari* online journal system designed to enhance the quality of mentoring provided by mentor teachers in the Teacher Professional Education Program at the State University of Malang. The study followed a design-based research (DBR) approach, which emphasizes iterative development processes in educational interventions. The research was limited to the development phase, with no evaluation or testing phase included in this study.

The development of the *Jelita-Lestari* system was guided by the principles of lesson study and reflective practice, aiming to create a platform that facilitates documentation, collaboration, and reflection for mentor teachers. The technical development of *Jelita-Lestari* was carried out in collaboration with a team of software developers and educational technology experts. The system was built using web-based technologies to ensure accessibility and scalability. The development process followed an iterative design cycle, with continuous feedback from the mentor teachers involved in the needs analysis. Mock-ups and prototypes were created, tested, and refined based on input from the educators to ensure the system met their practical needs. The development of the *Jelita-Lestari* system was conducted in compliance with ethical standards.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 RESULT

The development of the *Jelita-Lestari* system marks a significant advancement in improving the mentoring process for mentor teachers within the Teacher Professional Education Program at the State University of Malang. This online platform, designed to foster reflective practices and collaboration, addresses several key challenges faced by mentor teachers in providing consistent and effective mentorship to pre-service teachers. Built upon the principles of lesson study and reflective practice, the system incorporates features such as digital journals for documentation, tools for collaborative knowledge sharing, and a platform for publishing reflective articles.

The features of the *Jelita-Lestari* system were developed based on the results of a needs analysis conducted with mentor teachers. One of the main features is the digital journal, which allows mentor teachers to document their mentoring sessions, reflections, and feedback on the progress of pre-service teachers. This feature encourages systematic reflection and provides a comprehensive record of the mentoring process that can be revisited and built upon in future sessions. Another crucial feature is the collaboration tools embedded in the system, which allow mentor teachers to interact with their peers, fostering a community of practice. Through these tools, teachers can share insights, discuss challenges, and exchange best practices, ultimately promoting continuous professional development and collective problem-solving. Additionally, the platform offers mentor teachers the opportunity to submit reflective articles about their mentoring experiences. This feature not only promotes knowledge sharing but also supports the professional growth of mentor teachers by encouraging reflective writing and contributing to broader discussions about effective mentoring.

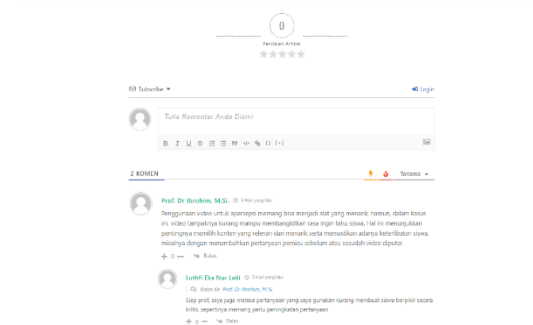


Figure 1. The *Jelita Lestari* website and figure

The *Jelita-Lestari* website in Figure 1., was designed with a user-friendly interface to accommodate mentor teachers with varying levels of technological expertise. As a web-based platform, it is accessible from any device with an internet

connection, ensuring flexibility and ease of access. Initial internal testing revealed that mentor teachers found the interface intuitive, with clearly marked features and straightforward navigation paths. The simplicity of the design minimizes technological barriers, allowing educators to focus on the mentoring process rather than on learning to use the platform.

Despite the formal evaluation phase not yet being conducted, initial feedback from mentor teachers who participated in the needs analysis has been positive. Many mentor teachers reported finding the digital journal feature particularly useful for maintaining a structured record of their mentoring activities, which helped them track the progress of pre-service teachers and facilitate more meaningful feedback sessions. The collaborative tools were also well-received, as they encouraged mentor teachers to engage in discussions with their peers, fostering a greater sense of community and supporting the exchange of knowledge. The ability to publish reflective articles was viewed as an opportunity for professional development, enabling mentor teachers to reflect deeply on their experiences and contribute to the professional discourse on mentoring.

However, several challenges were identified during the initial development phase. One of the main concerns raised by mentor teachers was related to time constraints. They expressed concerns about the additional time required to document their mentoring activities and engage in reflective writing. While the system is designed to streamline these processes, the increased workload may pose a barrier for some teachers, particularly those with heavy teaching responsibilities. Additionally, some mentor teachers, particularly those less familiar with digital platforms, required additional support during the onboarding process. To address this challenge, training sessions or user guides may be necessary to ensure that all users are able to fully utilize the platform's features.

3.2 DISCUSSION

The development of the *Jelita-Lestari* system underscores the significant role that technology can play in enhancing mentoring practices. By promoting reflective activities, collaboration among educators, and knowledge sharing, this system addresses key challenges that mentor teachers often face, particularly when it comes to providing structured feedback and maintaining continuous professional

development. The use of digital tools in education has been recognized as an effective strategy for improving teaching practices and creating a community of practice among educators (Zhao et al., 2018). The *Jelita-Lestari* system embodies these principles by offering a structured platform for mentors to document their mentoring experiences and engage with their peers.

Looking ahead to the broader implementation and evaluation of the system, there are several areas where future improvements could be made. One area for enhancement is the streamlining of the documentation process. Time constraints have been identified as a significant challenge for mentor teachers, many of whom struggle to find the time to document their mentoring activities comprehensively. To address this, future iterations of the *Jelita-Lestari* system could incorporate features that automate certain aspects of the documentation process. For example, the inclusion of templates, pre-filled forms, or auto-generated reports could significantly reduce the time burden on mentor teachers, allowing them to focus more on the mentoring itself rather than the administrative aspects (Killeavy & Moloney, 2010). Automation of routine tasks is widely recognized as a means to improve efficiency in education systems, particularly for overworked teachers.

Additionally, providing ongoing technical support and training for mentor teachers is critical for the successful adoption of the system. As with any new technology, the successful implementation of the *Jelita-Lestari* system will depend on how well users are supported in their use of the platform. Research indicates that one of the key factors influencing the success of technology-enhanced learning tools is the provision of sustained support, such as through webinars, tutorials, or a dedicated helpdesk feature (Prestridge, 2019). These support mechanisms will be particularly important for mentor teachers who may not be familiar with using digital platforms, ensuring they can fully utilize the features of *Jelita-Lestari* and participate meaningfully in the collaborative and reflective practices that the system encourages. By addressing these areas, streamlining the documentation process and ensuring robust support for users the *Jelita-Lestari* system has the potential to significantly enhance the quality of mentorship provided to pre-service teachers, contributing to a more effective and reflective teacher education process.



4. CONCLUSION

The development of the *Jelita-Lestari* system marks a significant innovation in the way mentor teachers engage in reflective practice and collaborative mentoring. By providing a digital platform tailored to the needs of mentor teachers, the system offers a structured and scalable solution for improving the quality of mentorship in teacher education programs. While there are still challenges to be addressed, particularly in terms of time management and technical training, the initial feedback from mentor teachers suggests that *Jelita-Lestari* has the potential to positively impact mentoring practices and contribute to the professional development of educators.

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