

Literacy Leadership Camp

(Leadership Stimulus Program for Teachers and Educators in Early Childhood Education)

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ABSTRACT

The soul of leadership is essential, therefore, everyone has to own it. In the context of early childhood education, leadership must be owned by teachers as well as educators. Teachers' leadership is an idea of 21st century education, hence, the teacher's leadership in the process of education should be given a stimulus. Therefore, authors offer innovation based on the results of literary studies related to the stimulus efforts in order to enhance teachers' leadership in educating through the "Literacy Leadership Camp" program. The program brings a concept of pleasant literacy, love of the work environment and evoking teachers' pride in increasing leadership quality in the early childhood education work environment. If teachers are happy, their performance and leadership will increase as well, so as their functions as teachers will be optimal for the students and the work environment.

Keywords: *Literacy program, leadership, teachers and educators*

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, teachers' professional skill development is popular and mostly conducted in form of one-day training or few days training organized by an institution or organization in order to achieve the professional competencies required by law. In fact, not all teachers can take part in the training. Moreover, the other facts show that teachers can feel bored, either with routines that demand for completion of school administration like curriculum demands, teaching burdens, even taking care of the household. All of those require completion so that the teachers can regain enthusiasm, be happy, love the work environment, and be proud of their job as early childhood education teachers.

Enhancing teachers' enthusiasm can be done in fun ways. The fun way in early childhood education is similar to playing. Teachers need to do fun activities to restore children's enthusiasm, it can be done together with colleagues at school. Working spirit, love of the work environment, pride in the function as the teacher, understanding their rights and obligations are the essentials points corresponding to the context of the literacy of school citizenship (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia [Kemdikbud RI], 2017a).

There are several studies related to the function of teachers as a form of teacher leadership in education. Most of which has been done in elementary and secondary schools, with some studies focusing on literacy development programs from an early age, teacher professionalism, and teacher

leadership in teaching (Lourmpas & Dakopoulou, 2014; Renihan, 2012). Moreover, there are also research studies that show teacher knowledge to develop early literacy program based on teacher understanding and being a literacy leader in learning (Allen, 2005; Belo, McKenney, Voogt, & Bradley, 2016).

In the context of early childhood education teachers in Indonesia, the number of related research is still limited. Until now, only a few studies have tried to look at teacher leadership in terms of professional functions. Andreasen, Bjørndal, & Kova (2019) identify teacher leadership as a function of professional educators, Sinha & Hanuscin (2017) see teacher leadership as a supporter of professional development. One more reference from Harris & Sass (2011) states about the quality of teacher training as an identification of student achievement. Meanwhile, Sadtyadi, & Kartowagiran (2014) develop primary school teacher performance assessments based on basic tasks and functions. Their research findings indicate how much teacher leadership helps support teacher function as a professional educator. Similar studies in Indonesia are still limited. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to fill the research gap by focusing on the leadership stimulus of early childhood education teacher functions in Indonesia relating to the literacy movement of citizens at schools.

2. EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER LITERACY AND LEADERSHIP

Teachers and educators play the role of leaders in pedagogical competence (Cunningham, Etter, Platas, Wheeler, & Campbell, 2015). This can be interpreted that early childhood teachers have a role as a pioneer in increasing the students' competence. They play an important role to manage and transform knowledge in practice in the classroom and produce positively oriented students. Positive students are identified as ethics in daily life. Therefore, it is not surprising that the teacher as a leader is said to be an ethical man who is able to communicate well.

Ethical teachers pay attention to aspects of language skills in interacting with fellow humans. They believe that good language skills will also lead to good relationships. They will be more careful in talking and processing information, because good communication will encourage effective communication, causing an atmosphere and culture that can be adapted to the school's mission (Daniëls, Hondeghem, & Dochy, 2019).

The teachers from early childhood education up to senior high schools take role as a leader. Hence, they are expected to be able to carry out their functions and be able to optimize technology to communicate, collaborate, teach, train, and learn together. It is assumed to be applicable for early childhood teachers as professional educators. Teachers as leaders must have creative competence, critical thinking, communication, technology (Tsisana, 2015). On one side, teachers are human beings who sometimes can feel bored with something. However, they also do not want to step down in carrying out their duties. They need innovation, creation and refreshment in their leadership process. It means that they need to upgrade themselves in order to develop themselves besides developing their students' competencies.

The development of students' abilities is one of the responsibilities of the teachers. as they play a pivotal role in improving students' literacy and language abilities (Cunningham et al., 2015). Besides, they are also expected to make students sensitive to their surroundings. Developing literacy skill is teacher's leadership assignment which requires strong content knowledge, understanding of how these skills develop in children, as well as the ability to use of research-based and implement high-quality teaching practices. It also means that effective communication is needed, by paying attention to what is said and how to say it. It is expected that the teachers will be able to apply literacy skills in daily life. The related literacy ability refers to six basic literacy skills namely literacy (the ability to read and write), numeracy literacy, scientific literacy, digital literacy, financial literacy, cultural and citizenship literacy (Kemdikbud RI, 2017b). In this paper, the opportunity for

teachers to lead is in line with the literacy of citizenship as school citizens and early childhood educators.

The ability of citizenship literacy in the context of teacher leadership can be observed in the teacher leadership development process below:

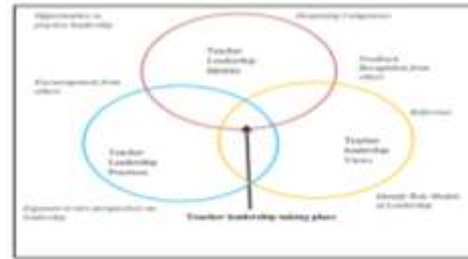


Figure 1 Teacher leadership development process (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017)

From the figure above, we can describe that the process of teacher leadership development considers three aspects, namely the point of view of teacher leadership, teacher leadership practices, and the identity of teacher leadership to help students in greater opportunities. Teacher leadership takes place as the adhesive of these aspects. Identifying role models in leadership, opening up new perspectives on leadership, encouraging one another, providing reciprocity, reflecting on impact are components of the three aspects above. In leadership development practices, workshops must be designed to align teacher's views with opportunities to practice various leadership activities and reflect one's growth as leaders (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017).

2.1. Leadership and Literacy in Early Childhood Education Teacher Scope

In the narrow scope, literacy is defined as an ability in reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Scott, McTigue, Miller, & Washburn, 2018). While in a broad sense, literacy can mean developing competencies which has an end to produce works that can be enjoyed by the public (Kemdikbud RI, 2017b). Basically, interpreting literacy as only ability to use language is not wrong, because the ability to read and write is included in literacy.

Leadership in the concept of teacher literacy is very important. It is explained that teachers play a role as a professional teacher with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, evaluating, and evaluating students (Indonesian Republic, 2005). Skills needed to organize the environment are sensitive to change. The aforementioned literacy skills must be owned by teachers because they cannot be separated from their daily life in educating children. However, the situation is related to advanced era in which the literacy skill required for teacher is the leadership which is sensitive to changes. The teachers are expected to be able to read, listen, speak, and

write the situation that occurs around him/her to be managed as information that can be conveyed to others. In doing so, teachers need to have competence and motivation in carrying out their functions as leaders as well as pioneers of literacy (Snoek & Volman, 2014). The teacher's function from literacy development and teacher's leadership point of view covers six basic literacies proposed by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2017 on the National Literacy Movement Guidelines.

In this paper, literacy that will be developed is Citizenship Literacy as knowledge and skills in understanding rights

and obligations as citizens. Integrating cultural literacy skills and citizenship in learning aims to shape student character in order to understand, respect, and protect the culture and national unity through integrated training.

In this case, leadership and literacy must collaborate to organize each other and be sensitive to the needs of the environment, then optimize their potential to produce work early childhood teachers. In relation with Sadtyadi & Kartowagiran (2014) research about the assessment of teacher functions, we can observe the components included in the teacher's function in accordance with the law.

Tabel 1 Component of the teacher's function in leadership

| No | Component of The Teacher's Function | | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| | <i>Teach</i> | <i>Educate</i> | <i>Train</i> | <i>Guide</i> | <i>Asses and Evaluate</i> |
| <i>Indicator</i> | | | | | |
| 1 | make lesson plans | develop students' potential | provide learning motivation, | make guidance program plans | arrange an evaluation plan, |
| 2 | implementing lesson plans, | develop the students' personality | provide guidance in learning, | implementing a guidance program | utilize the results of the evaluation. |
| 3 | carry out the follow-up of learning programs | carry out adjustments in conducting education | getting used to behaving positively | carry out a follow-up guidance program | |

Indicator of Teacher Function Components (Sadtyadi & Kartowagiran, 2014)

Based on the component of the teachers' function in carrying out their leadership, we need to pay attention to conditions on the ground, i.e., who is the early childhood teacher? Early childhood teachers talk, walk, do routines, expend energy throughout the day. Teachers even often think of school and children even though they are not on working hours. Positioning themselves as listeners, partners and agents of change, teachers work with other teachers, parents, literacy experts, administrative staff and children. At work, they are a part of the leadership team whose role is in collecting and analyzing data to be sorted into needs and goals. The teacher is referred to as the coordinator, developer and curriculum assessor (Allen, 2005). Teacher leadership and literacy as leaders are sensitive, accept changes, advice and input and support changes for mutual progress.

We can observe the common concept of teacher leadership in schools including learning, organization, self-development and ownership. The concept of teacher leadership is increasingly recognized to face severe challenges of the 21st century because of the needs of schools, therefore, organizations must be increasingly innovative and quality (Charlotte, 2006; Murphy, 2005). Leadership quality includes knowledge of change strategies, knowledge of curriculum alternatives and development processes, ability in group processes, and decision making (Ngang, 2012). Similar issues cover the six dimensions of teacher leadership, namely building capacity, securing environment, extending the vision, meeting and minimizing crisis, and seeking and charting improvement dimensions (Lovett, 2018). Teacher leadership includes role models and enthusiasm, trying to do their best to work together, develop learning with teachers based on pedagogical abilities, cultivating, appreciating, and respecting values in society (Murphy, 2005). They are also important for early childhood teachers because they are professional teachers.

Literacy and leadership skills for teachers and educators are always needed in the daily sphere. Both of these are a unity in the scope of work in early childhood education. Pedagogy, innovation, self-development, and cooperation become the capital to be able to work with colleagues. Teachers who have literacy and leadership skills will be able to see interest and develop children's potential. In addition, the teacher will be able to see opportunities to

guide children in the learning process and in a pleasant atmosphere. Teachers are also expected to be sensitive to threats that can interfere with children in learning, assess things that can be done in learning that is relevant and well organized and able to work together.

Leadership in learning instills value for the formation of thought and action; appreciate children, manages goals, academic structure, processes and students; and be strong in building cooperative relationships (Lovett, 2018). In this regard, it is necessary to make efforts to optimize the teacher's ability.

2.2. The Stimulus Program Function of Early Childhood Education Teachers

Building a strategy to develop teacher leadership is certainly needed every time. The closest activity that can motivate leadership begins with teaching and learning activities (Lovett, 2018). Leadership activities can be done through direct practices to students. Through learning activities, we can see students' interests and potentials directly. Learning requires fun, because every human being needs fun in their life. In relation to early childhood education life, fun and joyful learning stick to its main character. Regardless of doing good or bad, naturally humans want things that make them happy. Recreation is awaited thing for teachers. Teachers need to relax outside the room together to be able to feel new things in order to get new inspiration. Inspiration and motivation are very essential in increasing teacher professionalism (Lourmpas & Dakopoulou, 2014).

Important stimulus that is carried out as abovementioned, refers to the training strategy for teachers as literate leaders. It must be based on investigations, reflections, and experiments that are driven by participants, collaborative, sharing knowledge, focusing teacher practices in the community, sustainable, intensive, supported by example, coaching, and solving a collection of specific practice problems, connected and derived from the work of the teacher with students, involving the teacher in the concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, observation, and reflection that illuminate the process learning and development, connected with other aspects of school change (Allen, 2005; Andreasen et al., 2019). What is done to support teacher leadership can be related to rewards or symbols of appreciation, levels in the organization, attitudes, training, and material support (Murphy, 2005). Activities that are jointly designed must include the process of planning, implementing, and monitoring programs carried out collaboratively (Dempster et al., 2017). Leadership practices can also be done with training conducted with teachers and educators together with parents in community members (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). The Discussion Forum for school residents aims to enrich understanding and

increase school community awareness about cultural literacy and citizenship. Leadership activities for teachers are adjusted according to the autonomy of the school or the principal (Petrovska & Sivevska, 2014).

There are several steps in preparing a program and stimulus that will be carried out in this program, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation referring to lifelong leadership competencies in accordance with pedagogical and leadership activities (Petrovska & Sivevska, 2014). The following details the activities that can be carried out.

2.2.1. Planning

The planned implementation will be different from the unplanned results. In this planning step, things that need to be done by early childhood teachers are: (1) socialization, aims to explain the objectives, plans, and implementation of the program; (2) forming a committee, the committee which is composed must be from, by, and for families in the school, in this case teachers and educators; (3) equating perceptions in the administration of programs, teachers and educators must have the same aim that the programs that would be carried out, provide a family spirit in the work environment at school; (4) Identification of needs, in conducted meetings, it is necessary for school families to express their hopes, needs, and dreams in this program; (5) determining the time and place, select the agreed time and place and all can participate in the activity; (6) preparing program activities and schedules, teachers and educators have to propose at least one activity to be carried out together.

2.2.2. Implementation

The implementation process would be prepared with 3 sessions namely opening, core, and closing as done in early childhood learning. In the concept of this implementation, the teacher acts as a teacher and students. The implementation of this program refers to the schedule that has been agreed and arranged together. In implementation process, it can refer to lifelong leadership competencies (Petrovska & Sivevska, 2014).

2.2.2.1. Opening

The Proposal for Opening Activities begins with a welcoming officer. Welcoming still uses the slogan "Smile, Greetings, Salutation, Politeness, and Good Manners". After all, personnels are present, they can then conduct Guided Activities where teachers can take turns leading joint activities. Activities which are carried out together can be in form of ceremonies, gymnastics, song movements,

yoga or singing together. In the opening, habituation activities that are usually carried out with early childhood can be performed again, for example Dhuha prayer, daily prayer memorization, or Qur'an verses memorization. In the opening, core, or closing activities the responsible person (Person in Charge) must be prepared to coordinate the various activities in each session.

2.2.2.2. Core

At the core session, after teachers and educators have opened the activities, all the organizers and audiences prepare to carry out the core activities that have been prepared. The concept of implementing this activity can be done by exploring the campsite, or to make it more interesting it can be called the "Detective Game". These activities might make teachers recall their old memories when they were in elementary school or high school participated in exploring activities by passing posts containing challenging games or activities. In this program, it can be done as well. All personnel roam, and each personnel leads the activity at each post.

Some examples of early childhood teacher activities that can be done at each exploring post are: (a) setting up a tent together; (b) peer teaching or peer nursing which is carried out alternately; (c) team building games prepared by each personnel; (d) writing simple songs; (e) writing simple poetry; (f) making group movements and songs; (g) making a simple story; and (h) cooking together.

In these activities, the skills needed by the teacher such as Collaboration Skills, setting group norms, choosing leaders, determining roles; Facilitation skills, presenting new ideas, leading discussions, keeping groups on track, clarifying, mediating, summarizing and integrating, dealing with negativity, knowing when to call in outside expertise; Planning skills, problem posing or problem finding; action and evaluation skills (Charlotte, 2006).

2.2.2.3. Closing

Closing in this activity can be done by eating together, or "Ngariung". It can be done by making a circle by writing the strengths and weaknesses of coworkers alternately in a "circle time" like the usual closing for early childhood learning at school.

2.2.3. Evaluation

Evaluation can be done as an evaluation of activities, and evaluation of each personnel's performance carried out by all school families. Meanwhile, personnel evaluations are carried out by the principal in the context of supervision of teachers and educators. This program can be carried out

before the beginning of the new school year or mid school year.

3. CONCLUSION

Early childhood educators are one of the educators who need to be encouraged to improve their professionalism according to the mandate of Indonesian law number 14 year 2005 about teachers and lecturers. In practice, early childhood teacher's function must also be increasingly optimized for almost every day of interacting with learners, or colleagues through efforts undertaken as a culture at school. Basic literacy in this paper refers to cultural and citizenship literacy as outlined in the daily teacher leadership function in schools, namely teaching, guiding, educating, and training children. Stimulation can be done in the form of initiative programs from, by, and for school residents, one of which is the Literacy Leadership Camp Program. The Program can be done as part of the cultural literacy activities in the school with the goal of improving the teacher's performance and keeping up the spirit of the teachers and educators in early childhood education institution.

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