

Principal's Academic Supervision to Improve Non-Formal Early Childhood Education Teacher's Competence

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ABSTRACT

The principal is an essential component of an educational institution. As the institution leader, the principal has an essential role in fostering the teachers' ability to conduct the learning process. The school principal conducts supervision to improve the teaching staff's professionalism by increasing competence, increasing discipline, providing motivation, and guidance. This study aimed to determine the Academic Supervision carried out by school principals in non-formal early childhood education, especially early childhood education centre institutions, to improve the competence of teaching staff from planning, implementation, follow-up, and the success of academic supervision by the principals. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach using interviews as a way to collect the data. This study's results are expected to give feedback and input for education practitioners, especially school principals, to improve teachers' competence in non-formal early childhood education, especially early childhood education centres, so that they can carry out their duties as professional educators.

Keywords: Academic supervision, teachers' competence, on-formal early childhood education.

1. INTRODUCTION

The body text starts with a standard first-level Early childhood education development is increasing, as seen from the increasing number of formal and non-formal Early Childhood Education institutions in each region. This situation is strengthened by the government's efforts to meet the community's needs in early childhood education by making regulations related to the implementation of early childhood education. Considering the importance of early childhood education, the government has tried to meet the community's need for conducting a good education. As stated by Dr Gutama that the legalization of Law on the National Education System Number 20 of 2003 concerning Early Childhood Education Systems and Programs (Article 28), the commitment of the nation is to place early childhood education as an essential part in preparing human resources in the future [1]. The non-formal early childhood education institution that is currently growing up is the early childhood education centres.

Early childhood education centres become one of the non-formal early childhood education institutions managed by the community. Since early childhood education is a community-based institution, the principle of its implementation is from the community, by the community, and for the community. According to the technical guidelines for early childhood education centres (2015), a centre is a form of early childhood education services whose implementation can be integrated with the program for families with children under five years and health service posts for children under four to six years. If kindergarten services are not available in the same location, the management is under the village/sub-district [2].

Based on observations in the field, the provision of the early childhood education centres is still inadequate because there is still a gap between the government's programs, especially the early childhood education centres, and readiness in the field, both in terms of human resources and infrastructure. In terms of infrastructure, almost all early childhood education centres carry out learning activities at the multipurpose building belonging to municipalities. These buildings are limited and are

used for various activities, either for the municipality's activities, family welfare program activities, youth organizations activities, etc. Based on this reason, early childhood education centres' activities are not optimal yet, starting from structuring the learning environment, storing learning media, books, and writing instruments to support learning activities, and limited infrastructures. All these limitations have an impact on the quality of teaching and learning activities. Other problems that are no less important are the lack of socialization in developing early childhood education centres and the inadequate readiness of human resources.

Early childhood education centres' management only relies on housewives/mothers who happen to be active in the family welfare program or volunteers who do not have sufficient abilities to handle early childhood. From observations in the field, family welfare program cadres involved in early childhood education centre activities generally do not have educational qualifications that are in line with the standardization of early childhood education teachers, both the principal and the educators. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 137 of 2014 concerning the National Standards for Early Childhood Education, there are two academic qualifications of early childhood education teachers and principals. The first qualification is to have a Diploma Four (D-IV) or Bachelor Degree (S1) in early childhood education and other educational degrees relevant to the early childhood education system or psychology obtained from an accredited study program. The second one is to have a certificate of Early Childhood Education Teacher Professional Education (PPG) from an accredited university [3].

Based on field observations, 60% of early childhood education centre managers are high school graduates, even 10% of them are junior high school graduates. This fact proves that early childhood education centre managers' educational qualifications do not meet with the National Standards for Early Childhood Education. However, the government has taken immediate action to improve the quality of education. The government often holds training, seminars, workshops, and others for early childhood educators and school principals. However, this training has not been absorbed optimally, even after participating in-field training as far as it is observed. They have not fully implemented what they got in the training/seminar/workshop to improve early childhood education centre services. This condition leads to the unfulfilled competency standards that educators must have as in Law No. 14 of 2005 article 10, paragraph 1 concerning teachers and lecturers [4], primarily pedagogical competencies and professional competencies. It is proven that there are still many educators who have not been able to make a daily lesson plan properly. The early childhood education centres that they have managed are more than ten years old. This

condition requires the principal as an individual who is responsible for the implementation of learning at the institution, to provide guidance and assistance, as part of the principal's academic supervision, in order to improve their quality in the process of teaching and learning activities to create quality early childhood education centres. Fatkhan Amirul Huda described the concept of modern supervision formulated by Wiles (1967), as follows: supervision is an aid in the development of a better learning situation [5].

However, this situation does not mean generalizing all early childhood education centres. It is believed that there are early childhood education centres that are well managed by educators who are willing to work hard, want to learn and try to improve their quality as educators to improve the quality of their services and competencies.

Based on the rationales mentioned above, the writer intended to find out more about how early childhood education centre managers, especially the principal, guide their teachers to improve their learning activities in their institutions.

2. METHOD

The research design employed in this study was a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through interviews. According to Darmadi (2013: 6), descriptive research is related to data collection to provide an overview or affirmation of a concept or symptom and answer questions. [6]. In this study, the researcher intended to know the extent to which academic supervision was carried out by the principal of non-formal early childhood education institutions, especially at the early childhood education centres, to improve their teachers' competence in Antapani District, Bandung City.

The research data was obtained through interviews conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic via telephone calls. Respondents who participated in this study were ten principles of the early childhood education centres in Antapani District, consisting of: (1). Intan Sari Early Childhood Education Centre, (2). Tarum Sari Early Childhood Education Centre, (3). Pelangi Early Childhood Education Centre, (4). Mawar Sari Early Childhood Education Centre, (5). Tulip Early Childhood Education Centre, (6). Harapan Bunda Early Childhood Education Centre, (7). Teratai Early Childhood Education Centre, (8). Dahlia Early Childhood Education Centre, (9). Flamboyan Early Childhood Education Centre, and (10). Warna Sari Early Childhood Education Centre.

The questions used in the interview activities include three indicators, namely indicators of academic supervision planning, which include: definition and understanding of supervision, methods, instrument preparation, and academic supervision techniques.

Simultaneously, the indicators of the implementation of academic supervision include implementation time, assessment, and supervision results. Evaluation indicators and follow-up supervision include obstacles and difficulties, follow-up, and monitoring.

3. ACADEMIC SUPERVISION BY PRINCIPALS IN NON-FORMAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTERS

The results described in this study include three indicators: planning academic supervision, implementing academic supervision, and evaluation and follow-up supervision, based on the results of interviews conducted with ten principals at early childhood education centres in Antapani District, Bandung City.

Supervision is one of the competencies that must be owned by school principals. It is stated in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education Number 13 of 2007 concerning Principal Competency Standards. [7]. Academic supervision is an effort to improve the quality of education mandated to supervisors and school principals as supervisors; one essential thing is improving educators' quality [8,9,10]. Regarding how academic supervision is carried out by the principals of non-formal early childhood education institutions, especially in the early childhood education centres, at Antapani District of Bandung City, the following result would describe the research results gained from interviews.

3.1. Supervision Plan

3.1.1. Definition of supervision

The definition of supervision understood is limited to the school supervisors' visits to inspect and assess the institution administratively. Whereas supervision is also a competency that school principals must possess to foster and help develop their educators' quality [11]. Academic supervision is a necessary effort that must be made by the principal as the person in charge of the institution in providing education [12]. Lack of understanding of academic supervision will affect the principals' performance in developing the institution that they lead and will impact the quality of educators, which decreases due to a lack of motivation and guidance and supervision from the principal.

3.1.2. The way to conduct supervision

The lack of understanding of academic supervision will also impact observation, supervision, and spontaneous evaluation activities without any planning being carried out on teachers during teaching and learning activities. Though unconsciously, they have carried out supervision activities. Therefore, supervision activities were not maximal. Suitable supervision

activities are carried out through three stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation [13].

3.1.3. Planning a supervision

Almost all school principals do not make plans for academic supervision activities in their institutions. It is due to their lack of understanding of the steps that should be taken in supervision activities. Supervision planning is an initial step that should be prepared so that its implementation can be done correctly, effectively, and efficiently [14].

3.1.4. Supervision schedule

In general, there is no specific schedule for when academic supervision is conducted. Coaching and supervision are carried out directly in the form of a briefing or discussion after observing the teaching and learning activities of their teachers.

3.1.5. Supervision instruments

The instrument used by the institution in academic supervision activities is in the form of an assessment document. Several kinds of supervision documents can be used [15] to facilitate the evaluation process. An instrument is a tool or device used to identify the profile to be supervised.

3.1.6. Supervision technique

Class visits and classroom observation are techniques often used by principals besides individual meetings. The institution's limited physical infrastructure, which generally uses multipurpose buildings in its local environment, supports direct observation techniques because it is easier for school principals to do. The multipurpose room used as a classroom, and the principal's room closed by a cupboard or a curtain, make supervision activities carried out spontaneously because teaching and learning activities can be directly observed by the principal every day. Principals can do various techniques to achieve the goals of supervision. [16] This technique is vital in planning supervision so that the implementation of supervision activities runs effectively.

3.2. The Implementation of Academic Supervision

3.2.1. Academic supervision schedule

In general, the principal did not determine the schedule for the supervision activities. There are three institutions that schedule supervision activities. Two of them carry out supervision activities every six months, and one institution carries out supervision activities every three months. Each institution determines the

implementation time of supervision according to its readiness.

3.2.2 *Supervision assessment*

The assessments carried out by school principals include preparation of teachers in learning activities, starting from lesson planning, preparing tools and materials for teaching, class mastery, material mastery, communication with children, and evaluations conducted by teachers during the learning process. The assessment component above is one of the competencies an educator must have, namely pedagogical competence [17]. This competence is a unique competence that is not owned by any other profession besides educators/teachers. Substantially, this competency includes understanding students, designing and implementing learning, evaluating learning outcomes, and developing students to actualize their various potentials.

3.2.3 *Supervision results*

Teachers' pedagogical competence is generally good, especially in terms of mastery of material and preparation of learning tools and materials. However, there are still some teachers who do not understand the making of lesson plans. They should make lesson plans together with the principal.

3.3. *Evaluation and follow-up*

3.3.1. *Obstacles*

The difficulty in motivating educators, especially in participating in training activities or workshops to help improve their quality, is one of the obstacles in supervision activities. In general, they come from family welfare program cadres who are senior, have a high school and even junior high school education qualifications, but have had quite a lot of teaching experience. The reason is that they feel they are old and are no longer able to gain more knowledge. They only rely on their long-standing teaching experience at the early childhood education institutions. Hence, they are less interested in participating in training conducted by the Education Office and other related institutions. Professional educators or teachers are needed to improve education quality, who have competence as learning agents [18,19]. Therefore, every teacher is obliged to improve their competence in order to improve the quality of education. Another obstacle is dealing with children who have different characters from children in general, such as hyperactive children or children with special needs. This situation happens because the managers do not have the skills to deal with children with needs.

3.3.2. *Solutions and follow-up*

The principal conducts discussions with teachers in solving problems, especially for the problem of improving the quality of educators. One solution to solving this problem is by sharing knowledge among teachers, especially those who have attended training or have more experience than others. Involving teachers in training, workshops, and webinars is an effort to increase teachers' professionalism, which is an essential part of supervision activities [21]. Regarding monitoring and follow-up supervision, school principals see to what extent the implementation of the guidance and assessment that has been carried out can be implemented in teachers' duties. If there are problems in the institution, it must be immediately followed up, such as dealing with children with special needs. The follow-up that was carried out advised parents to be referred to experts in handling it, such as paediatricians, psychologists, and others. Reaching a quality education certainly requires much effort; all elements in it must be maximized. Among the most decisive elements are the principal and teachers—these educational practitioners' efforts to make education better and have a synergy between them. As the leader and the one who has the most role in improving the quality of education, the principal must coordinate joint efforts to achieve education goals [21]. One of the principal's duties is to guide educators to improve their competence so that they can carry out their duties optimally. Academic supervision becomes an effort to help teachers improve their quality to become professional educators to create quality education.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the principles of early childhood education centres in the Antapani District conducted academic supervision to increase teachers' competence. However, the reality is not yet optimal. The lack of understanding about academic supervision of school principals affects the implementation of supervision in their institutions. Therefore, it is necessary to improve academic supervision activities, starting from deepening knowledge and support from the government to improve early childhood education quality.

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