Principal’s Role in Thematic Learning Supervision That Works in Elementary School

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Abstract: The study aimed to describe: (1) the process of thematic learning supervision implementation in elementary schools; (2) the direct role of the principal in the process of thematic learning supervision implementation; (3) obstacles and impacts of thematic learning supervision implementation; and (4) techniques used thematic learning supervision implementation. This study used a qualitative descriptive approach through observation, interviews and documentation methods. The results showed that the process of thematic learning supervision implementation was carried out based on government policies that were integrated to school policies. The principal plays an active role in thematic learning supervision implementation to improve the quality of learning process in the classroom. Techniques used in the thematic learning supervision implementation include collegial and individual techniques. The problems met by teachers were striving to be immediately resolved, through every day routine supervision to teachers by the principal, both pre, process, and post-learning.

Keywords: thematic learning, supervision, principal

1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers are considered to have a major role in the learning process at school [1], [2]. If the quality of the teacher is good, the outcome will automatically be supported [3]. The principal has a very important role in encouraging efforts to improve the quality of teachers and the delivery of education and learning [4], [5]. The implementation of education will not be separated from the process of learning supervision implementation which is directly or indirectly can give effect to the behavior of teachers in carrying out tasks intended as implementing activities in the classroom for teaching processes with the aim to improve the quality of students’ learning. Learning supervision aims to help teachers in developing his mindset in realizing the success of the students’ learning process [6]–[8]. Thematic learning is a process which aims to re-integrate various competencies and indicators contained in learning themes at schools [9], [10]. The basic function of implementing learning supervision is to emphasize the process for guidance and improvement in the learning process in the classroom so that it can achieve the desired results in achieving teacher competence in the classroom.

Other functions of learning supervision implementation are to support the creation of effective learning programs, provide an assessment as the basis for optimal improvement of child’s learning situation, improve the ideas and programs owned by the school, enrich school leadership, increase teacher experience, encourage the creation of creative efforts, facilitate and provide continuous assessment to teachers and staff, conduct an analysis of teaching and learning situation, increase knowledge and skills and improve the ability of teachers and staff [6]. Various principles of supervision implementation include (1) supervision of learning is done based on the needs of teachers; (2) the relationship between teachers and supervisors is based on collaboration to improve the quality of better learning; (3) supervisors are open and exemplary to the party supervised; (4) appropriate guidance is carried out on an ongoing basis and can affect the process of improving the learning quality; (5) effective supervision will create a forum for cooperation as an effort to meet the needs of teachers in order to improve their professionalism. Through this forum teachers have the opportunity to collaborate in a group to solve problems in an effort to improve the overall learning process [9].
In conducting supervision there are also approaches that are used to meet problems. The choice of approach must be related to how to deal with teachers who have a variety of different characteristics [11], [12]. The differences in teacher characteristics can be seen from work experience, motivation or ability. Supervisors must carefully choose an approach that matches the character of teachers so that supervision can run effectively [13], [14]. As for several supervision approaches, they are: (a) scientific approach, which is an approach with scientific problem-solving methods. Supervisors must be objective and clear in viewing problems; (b) clinical approach, which is an approach used by supervisors to deal with teachers who need to get individual attention, and provide assistance to teachers through direct and individual meetings so that teachers can more openly convey their problems; (c) artistic approach, which is an approach that emphasizes the perspective and knowledge of supervisors to appreciate all efforts to improve teacher quality. The process of selecting the approach will affect the selection of suitable techniques in carrying out supervision activities.

Techniques that can be used in implementing learning supervision include individual techniques and group techniques. Individual techniques include class visits, personal conversation techniques, class observations, self-assessments and collegial supervision techniques. Whereas group techniques in supervision include joint meetings, group discussions, teacher working groups (KKG) and other discussion forums that can bring together various parties with similar problems to negotiate and find solutions to solve problems together. [15]. The discussion can also explore personal experiences that are useful and can motivate others to manage learning more optimally.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the thematic learning supervision is one way or technique for developing teacher competency and professionalism. Through various thematic learning supervision, the ability of teachers will be honed even more. In addition, teachers can also find creative and innovative ideas in order to carry out their teaching assignments, so as to be able to realize an interesting and enjoyable learning process for students. The research objective is to find out the process of implementing thematic learning supervision in Aletheia Christian Elementary School (CES) Malang.

2. METHOD

The approach used in this research was descriptive qualitative. The research activity was carried out at Aletheia CES in Malang City, located on Jl. Ir. H. Juanda No.6, Jodipan, Kec. Blimbing, Malang at the end of October 2019. The techniques used in data collection were interviews, observation, and documentation. This research focused on the process of implementing thematic learning supervision in Aletheia Christian Elementary School in Malang. The data obtained in this study were in the form of interviews, field documentation, and literature studies as support. Primary data sources come from research sources directly. The researcher explored various information in depth from the sources to get clear, accurate and accountable information. Data obtained from the field were linked to other sources that are relevant to the subject matter in the study. Data analysis techniques or methods used in this study were descriptive analysis models and verification or conclusion drawing (Ulfatin, 2015). This activity began with compiling data which included organizing, classifying and compiling data categories.

3. RESULTS

3.1 The Process of Thematic Learning Supervision

Aletheia CES is a private school consisting of 245 students, 16 teachers, 2 administrative staff, 2 cleaning staff, and 1 security force. Thematic learning at Aletheia CES has been going on since the inception of the 2013 curriculum. The implementation of the 2013 curriculum was not just applied by schools. However, it was implemented after the socialization from the education office of Malang. During the 2013 curriculum implementation, an evaluation is always held every year, so that schools in this case are always updating the curriculum implementation in accordance with the policies of the local education office. As education implementers, the learning mechanism in schools is always adjusted to the policies of the education department.

Schools combine the policies of the education department with policies made by the school together with the foundation. That is because Aletheia CES is a private school which certainly has its own strategy in implementing existing policies. Schools place more emphasis on deepening learning material, namely through the division of learning time per subject. Deepening of the learning material is carried out by the school with the consideration that in the graduation exam later, questions that are tested to students remain subject based. So, it is important to be prepared early on.

3.2 The Roles of the Principal in the Thematic Learning Supervision Process

Related to the mechanism of education in schools, it certainly cannot be separated from supervision, both education and learning process. Supervision activities at Aletheia CES were conducted twice in one school year. The first semester, supervision is carried out by the headmaster directly, while for the second semester, the school works closely with the headmaster in the implementation of the supervision in turn according to the agreement on the supervision schedule in the school which is in a cluster with the Aletheia CES. Thematic learning Supervision in Aletheia CES is done almost every day by the school principal independently. When a problem
occurs, the principal tries to review and meet the effective solution on the same day.

Thematic learning supervision of in Aletheia Elementary School is more oriented to the quality and quality of schools. So that the principal in the implementation of thematic learning supervision, implementing several school policies primarily for teachers, they are (1) compile a teaching preparation form intended for the school itself, which is one week before the learning process is implemented. Based on this form, schools can find out the extent of the progress of the material taught by the teacher concerned. In addition, the principal can also provide input related to learning methods or models that are suitable to the conditions of the students; and (2) when they want to hold tests or exams, the teacher must first notify the test questions to the principal to be reviewed and addressed together if there are still errors. If there are no problems, the school will approve the questions made by the teacher to be tested on students. Daily repetition of students is done once a week, midterm exam in every 3 months, Final Semester Assessment in every 6 months, and finally Year-End Assessment conducted by the school to determine the quality of learning that has been carried out.

3.3 Techniques used in Thematic Learning Supervision

Thematic learning supervision of involves the principal, the curriculum section, and supervisors from the department that usually requests school data. There are two main techniques for the supervision of thematic learning used in Aletheia CES, they are (1) collegial techniques. In this technique, schools implement the supervision of thematic learning through briefings at the beginning and end of the learning process together. In the briefing activity, the teachers usually share their progress or complaints in teaching. If there are certain problems, alternative solutions will be discussed together; (2) Furthermore, schools also apply individual techniques. Individual technique is done by calling the teacher by the school principal if personal problems are found. The existing problems as much as possible are solved at the same time if possible, schools work around this to minimize the buildup of problems.

One problem that has occurred related to the thematic learning process is the lack of creativity of teachers in determining and finding teaching aids in learning. Students usually prefer learning that can be emulated clearly. Some senior teachers at Aletheia CES still need to be fostered and developed in this regard. Principals in this case try to overcome this by accompanying senior teachers with more capable teachers (as partners). The ability in maximizing information technology to develop teaching in the current era and the ability to be creative are strongly needed. This effort is intended so that teachers who are said to be more capable can back up senior teachers. In addition, related to the mastery of information technology (IT), schools also conduct training for teachers related to the ability to master IT. In the context of other problems, if needed the headmaster will call the teacher who is having difficulty with his partner, to then conduct discussions in finding alternative solutions. Formulated in teacher learning preparation, the principal usually also provides notes of advice, and is strengthened by a direct invitation by the principal when submitting the teaching preparation form.

3.4 Barriers and Impacts of Implementing Thematic Learning Supervision

In implementing thematic learning supervision, the majority of teachers in Aletheia CES are open to receive ideas. One of the things that becomes an obstacle in implementing thematic learning supervision in Aletheia CES is when the school wants development as a follow-up to the supervision activities, there is no certainty or it may be hampered. That is because the status of the owner of the foundation, who on average is a businessman, they are not directly involved in education. In addition, entrepreneurs generally take into account more advantages and disadvantages. From the teacher’s side, the obstacles that have occurred are related to time management, such as gathering tasks and so on. Principals usually anticipate this by providing timings, or if necessary, also personally meet (called) teacher.

According to the principal of Aletheia CES, learning supervision is important to carry out. This is because, supervision related to improving the school quality as well as learning. Students is one of the subjects of school promotion, especially for private schools. The school and learning quality will determine the school’s output quality. So, to obtain good quality schools, supervision must be carried out continuously. The image of the school in the midst of the community, will affect the acceptance of further new students. The principal of Aletheia CES state that parents of students were very critical in monitoring their children’s development. When school gives the wrong learning material or may give a wrong information, they will complain to the school. Parents can receive or give information from each other. Parents always check children’s learning outcomes when at home. So, the teacher’s responds, teacher’s explanation, and the modules used in learning are usually examined by parents.

The results of the supervision activities began to be felt by Aletheia CSE teachers when supervisors and school principals from the cluster came to school. Some time ago when checking the Character Education Program (PPK), which required completeness of all administrative documents, the results of the supervision were also very helpful. At the time of class promotion, parents also accept the results, there is no protest or turmoil. The participation of the community is also very big. Like this year when schools together prepare learning programs, more parents can be invited to work together, this could be because they begin to see and feel the development of the school. This
Thematic learning supervision of in Aletheia CES is carried out almost every day. So that the supervision activities carried out are used as creating optimal learning programs, assessing and improving children’s learning situations, improving various businesses owned by the school, completing school leadership, broadening the teacher’s experience, stimulating creative businesses, providing facilities and assessments which continuously to the teacher and staff, analyze the situation of teaching and learning, provide knowledge and skills of teachers and staff and help improve the ability of teachers [6], [21]. In this supervision phase it is actually intended as an effort to improve the quality of education and learning [22].

When a problem occurs, the principal tries to make repairs on the same day. Supervision of thematic learning in Aletheia CES is more oriented to the quality and quality of schools. So that the principal in the implementation of thematic learning supervision, implementing several school policies primarily for teachers, they are (1) compile a teaching preparation form intended for the school itself, which is one week before the learning process is implemented. Based on this form, schools can find out the extent of the progress of the material being taught. In addition, the principal can also provide input related to methods and learning models that are suitable; and (2) when they want to hold a test, the teacher must first notify the test questions to the principal for review. If there are no problems, the school will agree. Student exams are conducted once a week, midterm exam in every 3 months, End of semester assessment in every 6 months, and finally year-end assessment.

Teachers at Aletheia CES are still not creative enough in managing learning and are unable to utilize learning media to sustain the learning process optimally. Teachers should be able to manage learning optimally, because teachers are an important component in the implementation of learning in schools and teachers also determine the overall quality of education [23], [24]. Improvement efforts in any form needs to be done to optimally improve the quality of education [25], [26]. Educational programs cannot run optimally without the support of professional and quality teachers, so that teacher quality improvement must be carried out continuously including increasing teacher creativity in managing learning [27].

The problems faced by teachers in this school are often overcome by implementing collegial supervision [25], that is, supervision is carried out by senior teachers to junior teachers or vice versa as partners to improve the quality of teaching of each teacher. Senior teachers who are less proficient in technology can also learn from junior teachers who have mastered technology. This supervision is called collegial supervision. Collegial supervision is done based on an agreement between the teachers concerned and can adjust the conditions of each teacher [28], [29]. The form of collegial supervision activities is adjusted to the needs and conditions of the teacher.
concerned [29], [30]. The implementation of collegial supervision is very beneficial for teachers because through this activity teachers can develop themselves through their role in schools as implementing learning. Teachers can become supervisors for other teacher peers through collegial supervision. So that later fellow teachers can work together in developing their performance in managing learning in school effectively and efficiently.

Principal of Aletheia CES state that supervision of learning is important to be carried out to improve learning in the next time. Because the quality of schools is very important to achieve community satisfaction regarding the implementation of education in schools. Supervision is a preventive effort for people who need it in order to be able to achieve goals optimally including goals in learning at school [31]. The quality and quality of schools and of course the quality of teachers will determine the output produced by these schools [32]. So, to create good quality schools, supervision must be carried out continuously [33]. Teaching supervision is carried out based on an analysis of teacher needs in order to get help to overcome difficulties in learning activities by guiding and preparing teachers to be able to carry out their duties responsibly and creatively [34].

Teaching supervision techniques that are individualized in this school are carried out through class visits, classroom observations, and personal conversations also carried out by the Aletheia CES in Malang with the teachers concerned. Supervision activities actually provide assistance to teachers to be able to carry out teaching duties and responsibilities whose targets are set at the beginning of the school program plan. Supervision of learning as an effort made to improve the learning process and forms of assistance for teachers in teaching to help students to be able to learn optimally [35], [36].

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the study results, it can be concluded that: (1) Aletheia CES in Malang has conducted thematic learning supervision well with supervision twice a year in each semester; (2) Parents of students at Aletheia CES in Malang can help supervise teachers with parents always checking the teacher’s answers, teacher’s explanation, and the modules used in learning; (3) Supervision of thematic learning in Aletheia CES is more oriented to the quality and quality of schools; and (4) the problem often meet is related to the lack of teacher creativity in determining and finding teaching aids in learning.

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