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Management of the early childhood education development: an action research at cakranegara play groups, Lombok, Indonesia

Siti Zaenab

Education Researcher, Lombok, NTB, Indonesia

sita.zaenab99@gmail.com

Supriyono,

Balitar Islamic University, Blitar, Indonesia

yonsupriyono@gmail.com

Abstract:

This research focused on the improvement of Cakranegara playgroup childhood educational Management in Mataram, using an action research approach. The purpose of this research was to expand the childhood educational management especially in planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. This qualitative research was an action research that emphasized trying out the concept of ideas into practices and was expected to enhance the quality of the Cakranegara playgroup childhood educational program. This research was started with a preliminary-study at the childhood education to capture the practices of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. Data were collected by: using: (1) interview (2) observation, and (3) documentation. Results of this research showed that there was a significant improvement in the practices of Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling on the basis of management theories.

Keyword:

Early Childhood Education, Management, Improvement

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INTRODUCTION

In an effort to realize the human resources who have good character, the necessary knowledge and skills are required for early childhood education (ECD) development management. A kind of early childhood education popularly concerned in Mataram, Indonesia is Playgroup. Playgroup has been very important to encourage the growth of self-confidence and motivation, to learn knowledge and basic language skills. Given the importance of the early childhood development, to help prepare for future growth and development of early age, it would require a strong educational management. This partly because parts of the national aims in education have been developing the next generation who are independent in social and economic capacity, strong in mental and noble personality for achieving the Golden Indonesia in 2045.

The existence and essence of early childhood education institutions in the framework of national education development is Officially Recognized in the Government Regulation (PP) No. 27 Year 1990. And the PP. No. 27 1990 "The kindergarten education or early childhood education in preschool is intended to help put the basic direction of the development of attitudes, behaviors, knowledge, skills and creativity that are required or students to adjust in their environment, as well as for their growth and further development.

Related to the latest rules on early childhood education, the government has outlined the contents of Government Regulation No. 19 Year 2005 on education standards into The National Decree of Education No 58 Year 2009 on Early Childhood Education Standards. It is reaffirmed that early childhood education has been divided into three formal early childhood education, consisting of kindergarten or Raudhatul RA (RA), non-formal early childhood education consisting of Group Play, Daycare, IHC or other forms which are equal and informal early childhood education held in the family. One type of early childhood education is already known informally homeschooling (school in the family)

The National Decree on Education No. 58 of 2010 has made an impact on the management structure changes, among others: (1) The Directorate General of PNF I was turned into PAUDNI, (2) The vertical structure of Early Education Directorate which were originally consisted of the so-called Kasubdit KB, TPA, SPS and partnerships has been turned into horizontal structure consisting of so-called Kasubdit facilities and infrastructure. Learning and learners, program, evaluation agencies and partnerships were managed under the Directorate General of Early Childhood Education or the so-called PAUDNI (Arifin, 2011 I. 2-3).

According to Bafadal (2004), to provide early childhood education is not as easy as we imagine. Early childhood education is not only a substitute for the family as an institution for the students outside his home. Early childhood education is an educational institution that is prepared to assist children to create good characters through habituation behavior and the development of basic capabilities in accordance with the stages of children development.

Reflecting on the above conditions, for the realization of Law No. 32 of 2004 on Regional Autonomy which has directly affected the planning and implementation of education evaluation, It is necessary to develop proper management of human resources and other educational resources in accordance to the needs of the field. This message is also in line with the Law number 20, 2003 about National Education System. Factually, based on the researcher pre-research study, It has been obvious that the management of Early childhood education has been lacking of professional practices that resulted low achievement of the outcomes. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a professional

management. This research was done to improve the professional management practices in order to achieve good quality of outcomes.

METHOD

This research was designed by having an initial study in early childhood education institution which was Cakranegara Playgroup in Mataram West Nusa Tenggara. The reason to choose this site was to explore information from the principal about the development of early childhood education management starting from planning, organizing, mobilizing to monitoring.

The Data were collected by using (1) in-depth interviews to obtain information from the informants, (2) participation observation solely done to obtain data on the implementation of the early childhood education, and (3) documentation through direct observation by the researchers.

To the approach used in this research is descriptive qualitative approach is an approach that researchers conducting exploration in whole or focused, in gaining a clearer understanding and depth of the object studied. A qualitative approach is one approach that is oriented on the symptoms that are normal and natural. Due to such orientation, the naturalistic and the fundamental nature or naturalness nature and can not be done in the laboratory but directly in the field.

In addition, the qualitative approach was used due to several reasons, namely: (1) because the studies were not homogeneous, and (2) this study was intended to reveal more about the development of early childhood education management which can be concluded into reality in a special nature. Therefore, this research was designed as an action research. The following was the design of this research.

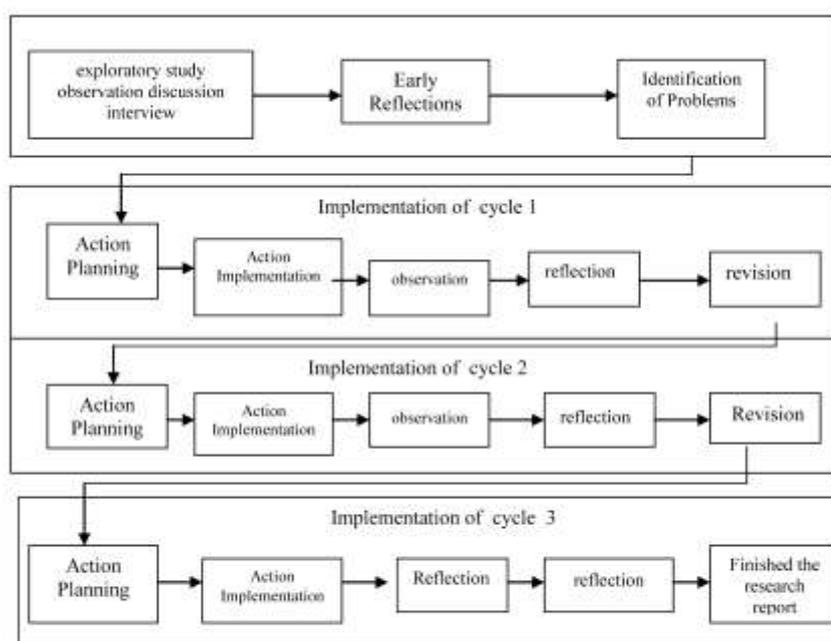


Figure 1.1 flowchart implementation of Action Research Yatim Riyanto (in Zaenab, 2008)

The Research procedures were as follows:

1. Preliminary studies consisting of both studies focus and thorough exploration through observation, interviews and documentation.
2. Based on the results of the preliminary study. The researcher identify the problem and subsequently prepared measures to carry out development actions.
3. Action research cycle was then done to focus on planning, organizing, and monitoring.
4. Development was intervened to improve the quality of management practice and to see the results, the researcher measured the level of success.
5. Finally the researcher compared the results of the initial study with the results of development.

Results and Discussion

In terms of planning, the research has shown that there have been improvement in the good planning practice. However, more efforts leading to a better level of improvement adjusted on the basis of the circumstances and needs of learners and the communities around them were concerned.

In terms of organizing, the research has shown that there have been improvement in the good organizing practice. More efforts leading to a better level of improvement based on the circumstances and needs of learners and the community around him were obviously need to be done.

In terms of monitoring, the research has shown that there have been improvement in the good monitoring practice. More efforts leading to a better level of improvement based on the circumstances and needs of the of participants as well as people around him who are concerned with early childhood education were highly needed.

Results of this research also indicated that there were surveillance activities in the field of supervision. More efforts leading to a better level based on the circumstances and needs of learners and the community around it who need early childhood education were highly recommended.

The research clearly indicated that there have been improvement in the management practices of Early Childhood Education. There have not been many changes in in the activation and control of the organization structure. Therefore, required remediation efforts were needed to make better operation of the Cakranegara Playgroup Early Childhood Education.

Differences in the initial study results with the results of development

Based on the data obtained by investigators at the time of the initial study and after development of the first cycle, the reserach results indicated that the planning activities in the beginning could not be done well. This was evident from some of the activities, especially the teaching and learning processes as well as setting or grouping students performed in a simple and yet organizing against active learners, so that the results have not been so maximized.

In the second cycle of observation activities, the research showed an increase in management process with reference to learning activities pattern both in terms of planning, organizing, activation and monitoring. This could be seen in terms of room arrangement and grouping of students which made teachers easier to manage classroom or educational staff to work for the monitoring process of learning activity. Likewise with the results shown in the third cycle, the observations indicated improvement in good practice of management which were better than the second cycle when compared to previous activities. The results of this research can be discussed as the followings;

1. **Planning**

Planning is one aspect which should be formulated in advance in order to set organizational goals. This is in line with the opinion of Boone & Kurtz (1984) which says that planning is a process by which principals set goals, future value and developed a set of actions to achieve the goal.

Pidarta (1990) divides into two types of planning when viewed from the original or not objects are planned. The first plan is called development planning, while the second type is called planning improvements. The development plan is a plan that intends to develop an educational institution, so that it becomes more complete. On the other hand, the repair plan is an attempt to improve one of the existing units at an institute for early childhood education; while the old unit was enhanced productivity in terms of both quality and quantity.

Based on the findings in the field at the time of the initial study through observation and interviews with principals and stakeholders of related parties, the researcher found out that there were other indications or symptoms showing the principal's lack of ability to do the planning. Zaenab (2008) suggested that planning, namely: (1) the problems that are related to the destination with its resources, (2) how to achieve the goals or objectives to plan its resources and attention to alternative or combination of alternatives were considered good, (3) translation plan in a concrete work program, and (4) determination of period of goals or objectives achievement. If it is associated with the statement above, it can be seen that the principal did not understand the concept of planning, although the operational planning was done. The practice was still following the guidelines and technical instructions obtained from the relevant agencies in charge of non-formal education.

From the observation of the actions conducted, it was found out that at the beginning, the principal, teachers and other education personnel still did not understand the concept of program planning, especially the reference program of learning activities. This was evidenced by the activities carried out mainly related to the teaching and learning process. The activity showed satisfactory results.

Based on the findings obtained by subsequent researchers, the researcher identified the problems faced and held discussions with the principal along with other educators in order to find the best solution and carry out the cycles of development as stated in the previous study design. The researcher also held discussion with educators along with other education personnels who have not been able to plan learning activities well. It was proved that every educator still had the tools and the preparation of teaching and learning which needed to be improved.

After the development of the learning plan and the views from the observation cycle-by-cycle, an increase in the ability and skills in the learning process planning was obvious. Each stage of the cycle was an exercise for school principals and teachers and in planning based on existing concepts of management theory. The findings obtained in the first cycle of activity showed that it still needed the guidance to principals and teachers to improve and develop ways of planning.

The guiding issues consisted of the followings:

1. How to identify the needs of learners;
2. How to recruit prospective students;
3. How to put together a program of learning activities take place;
4. How to shape the development of behavior, development of basic language ability;
5. How to prepare tools and teaching materials;
6. How, draw up a schedule of learning activities.

At this first cycle school principals as well educators still carried away by the habit of doing the conventional planning. This was evident from the way teachers delivered reference materials without having a complete preparation. Therefore, before performing the second cycle, the researcher invited principal and educators together to discuss and to provide input on how to construct a reference learning activities plan in order to obtain satisfactory results.

Based on the results of the discussions, the second cycle was conducted with the school principal to immediately apply the suggested principles and the result was quite good which could be seen from the increased capacity and skills of the principals and teachers in planning, especially, the reference learning activities planning. The improvement in the second cycle did not mean that the third cycle was not performed. While the third cycle was done in order to further improve the ability of planning to get better results from previous activities.

2.Organizing.

After the planned program, the next step was organizing the program. Organizing is the process of dividing the work into tasks that are smaller, imposes duties to the people who according to his ability, and allocating resources, and coordinate them in order of effectiveness and the achievement of organizational goals (Fattah, 1999).

Zaenab (2008) suggests that things must be done in detailing the work is to determine what tasks should be done by principals and educators, to peak at the organization's goals. While the work is split divides the workload into activities that can be undertaken by individuals or groups. As the purpose is to combine combine work educators work rationally and efficiently and grouping of related tasks if the principal has been advanced or complex, the educators working mechanism to coordinate the work in a single entity would be harmonious.

Based on the findings obtained in the field, it seems that the field organization has not received serious attention by both principals and other managers. Similarly, reference organizing learning activities is still not close to perfect. This is evident from the learning process that takes place before any action development still showed unfavorable results.

However, after taking action through the development of cycle-by-cycle there is a significant change, which means that the activities that had yet to be implemented properly can be improved for the better. Indications are used as yardsticks of success in the field of organizing, among others, (1) capable of elaborating a good job by determining the tasks to be done by educators to achieve the objectives, (2) capable of dividing the entire field of work into activities that can be implemented by principals and teachers, (3) is able to combine the work of educators with a rational and efficient manner.

In the field of organizational issues that require serious treatment is not commonly found because most of the problems of organizing can be overcome. However, improvement and development is still needed to obtain optimal results. Therefore, cycle-by-cycle activities is still being done to determine the level of progress obtained for each of the principals and educators with the existing measures. While the ability of educators in organizing benchmark learning activities still need to be considered and improved. Because based on the observation that most educators do not understand how to organize learning well despite the learning process can be carried out. Therefore, through improvements made in each cycle is expected to improve the understanding of the educators in organizing learning activities with a good reference.

After doing repairs on the first cycle, the second cycle there is a significant increase in the understanding of the organization of good learning. The educators already organizing

learning activities and reference necessary learning tools. This condition is in line with the opinion Riyadi (2003) which says that the organization is (1) the determination of the resources and activities required to achieve the objectives of the organization, (2) planning and development of an organization or working groups that will be able to bring these matters to direction, and (3) the responsibilities and assignment required for individuals to perform duties that are expected to activity showed significant improvement.

Despite a rise in the second cycle can not give a guarantee for not doing the third cycle which is a further stage in order to carry out improvements better. By doing a cycle-by-cycle continuously significant increase can be obtained and activities can be done well.

3. Mobilization

Mobilization or activation correlates with the workforce or human resources, namely the relationship between the individual posed by the setting of the subordinate tasks and the division of labor more effective and efficient. Koontz and O'Donnell (in Hasibuan; 1989) suggested that mobilization has a close relationship between individual aspects espek caused by lack of regulation of the subordinates to be understood and division of labor that is effective and efficient for a real purpose.

After planning and organizing done well then the next step is how, move or perform the activation of the programs that have been planned and organized well. Activation activity is the effort made by the principals to those that exist in the body can work optimally. One effort that can be done is to motivate or stimulate educators to perform the task well.

In order to implement the activation function properly need to be given directives in order to improve the performance of principals and other educators. Handoko (1999) suggested that moving means directing activity, lead and Affect subordinates. Meanwhile, According to Koontz and O'Donnell (in Zaenab; 2008) that the mobilization of the close relations between individual aspects the caused by the setting of the subordinates to be understood and division of labor that is effective and efficient for a real purpose.

In principle, every person will be motivated to do something if (1) sure will be able to do, (2) believe that such work can provide benefits for themselves, (3) not being burdened by personal problems or other task is more important or urgent, (4) The task is for the relevant trust, and (5) the relationship between friends within the organization harmonic (Depdiknas: 2000).

In this study it was found that the steps taken by the principal and educator were likely at first it was not good due to the principal's level of understanding of the concept of activation is still low. Similarly, program managers and educators still did not understand the technicalities of how to do these in order to enable better learning. After conducting action on the development of the first cycle researchers already understood that the weaknesses possessed by the principals and teachers, therefore researchers did the steps as these were done in previous activities, namely discussions with principals to gain a better understanding to be implemented the next event.

The second cycle proved the improvements made managers and learners. It was evident from the attendance percentage of educators and learners had increased over time. One of the efforts made by the head of the school was to motivate educators and their students by increasing the harmonious relationship between learners and parents and people who care about early childhood education with the managers. With this, reference atmosphere could enhanced the learning activities and relationships. Among participants vote, learners with managers ran more conducive.

To ensure the smooth implementation of the tasks of an institution or organization shall enforce all the rules and disciplines that exist within the organization.

As for coaching carried out in order to improve proficiency and skill of educators or education personnel through education and training to subordinates willing to support and implement programs that have been planned by the employer as well as inform their tasks, as it also principals need to give directives so that subordinates know and always remember their duties.

Enhancements or improvements resulting from the second cycle does not end up there. However, these increases continue development better direction through the third cycle. Activity in the third cycle is expected to further enhance the improvement obtained in the first and second cycles so that the results tend to be increased again.

4. Monitoring

Basically supervision consists of aspects that are used to measure the level of success of a program. Supervision is an activity undertaken to supervise or monitor the process and progress of programs implemented within an organization through a systematic process undertaken to determine the level of success of the implementation of programs with specific criteria for decision-making purposes. Surveillance activities emphasize more on the monitoring of program implementation and the achievement of the objectives of the program aspects. This is also an activity carried out by the principals and all parties responsible for the implementation of early childhood play group education programs to determine the level of achievement of the program effectiveness and resource efficiency as well as results of the mplemented program.

There are some basic principles that can be done under supervision in order to obtain good results, among others:

- a. Supervision is to guide and help overcome the difficulty of instructional processes. In terms of the monitoring process, the supervisors should focus on their attention on overcoming barriers faced in the implementation of early childhood education play group programs. They do not consider focusing on instructional misatkes.
- b. Feedbacks or suggestions should be given immediately. This is intended that supervisee can understand the problem clearly and considere the suggestions and feedbacks for improvement. The feedback should be given in the form of discussion on the occurring problem to solve.
- c. Surveillance check shall be conducted periodically in clear scheduled. This is to avoid recurring problems or new encountring problems. The presence of the principals during the surveilance process also foster moral support for teachers or education personnels who are performing the task.
- d. Supervision shall be carried out in an atmosphere of partnership. Such condition allows teachers and education personnels to express the barriers they face so as to immediately find a solution. This also fosters a harmonious working relationship which create team solidity.

The preliminary findings of this research proved that the level of supervision carried out previously was still relatively weak. This was evidenced by the level of supervisory presence of the government, in this regard Mataram Department of Education (the so-called Diklusepora) at the provincial level. They lacked of both quntity and quality in the field supervision process. To improve the supervision of early childhood education program, researchers held discussions with the head of school-associated educators to find the best solution that must have been taken. This also was aimed increasing surveilance activities of which the results would be the reference of learning activities needed by the principals to guide teachers by giving exemplary actions in instructional activities.

Management of the early childhood education development:.....

The roles of the principals were to make improvements and to increase surveillance capability. The fact was that the results from the activities undertaken in the research cycles tended to show significant improvement. This showed that the ability to conduct surveillance could be improved well. It was very important to note that the instructional supervision process allowed teachers to nurture and grow their professionalism. Teachers and other education personnels were able to cope with educational developments and innovations growing rapidly. They were expected to apply them in the development of quality for learners. Finally, teachers and education personnel were expected to always improve their competency and quality of instruction in their teaching and learning process.

CONCLUSION

In general, there has been a significant change in planning of early childhood play group education programs, namely: analyzing students' need, recruiting students, putting together a program model study area, forming behavioral development of basic language abilities, preparing tools and infrastructure, instructional materials, and preparing a schedule of learning. There has been a significant change of organizers, especially in organizing learning patterns such as defining the tasks that must be performed to divide members into a working field activities that could be carried out in personal or groups, and cooperating the work of teachers and education personnel with a rational and efficient manner. There were significant changes in mobilization such as enforcing all rules and discipline, deviding tasks among supervisors and their subordinates, and cooperating the supervisors and subordinates in which the supervisors provided directions so that the subordinates understood and remembered their duties. The success of the program monitoring especially associated with the existing theories and development process was obviously a significant change. This included fostering and growing the professionalism of the teachers and thus they were able to follow the rapid development and innovation of educational science and best practices.

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