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Principal Instructional Leadership within the Framework of Clinical Supervision

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to reveal the process of instructional leadership within the framework of clinical supervision. This research was carried out with a qualitative approach, participant-observer method. The participants of this study were principals and teachers. This research was conducted at MI Al Fattah, Malang City, Indonesia. The data were collected using observation technique, where the researcher observed the principal's instructional leadership behavior in fostering teachers based on the clinical supervision framework. The data were analyzed using Mason's analysis model, namely categories, codes and explanatory logic (Mason, 2020). The results conclude that the processes that can be used by school principals as instructional leaders within the framework of clinical supervision are identification of instructional problems, define and describe the problem, critical analysis, examine solutions, formulate action plans, implementation, and evaluate.

Keywords: instructional leadership, clinical supervision, school principals, qualitative research

the principal as an instructional leader must be able to play his role well so that he can lead effectively (Gunawan, 2017). An important role that must be played by the principal as an instructional leader is teacher professional development, teacher performance appraisal, providing professional teaching supervision services, and coordinating effective learning (Bafadal et al., 2019; Kusumaningrum et al., 2020). In addition, school principals can also carry out activities or programs, for example being a role model for the school community to achieve the school's vision and mission (Saputra et al., 2019), encouraging teachers to improve their academic quality (Hardika et al., 2018), strengthening the role of teacher working groups (Sultoni et al., 2018), reviewing teacher learning tools (Siska et al., 2020), helping teachers who have difficulty implementing learning effective (Zulkarnain et al., 2020), and optimize the function of the school library (Maughan et al., 2012).

Instructional leadership has a strategic role in improving the quality of schools, resulting in superior and competitive graduates. In this case, the principal as a key element that can be a driving force for all school communities, he leads to continue to strive to develop his school into a superior and quality educational institution (Pertiwi et al., 2017; Yulindasari et al., 2020). The curriculum is a component of school management that is closely related to the instructional process carried out by teachers. Principals should pay attention to the structure of the curriculum and set a curriculum paradigm (Gordon et al., 2019), so that teaching in schools is not only a transfer of knowledge, but also can provide a meaningful learning experience for all students (Agustina et al., 2018). This implies that instructional leadership aims to facilitate the learning process so that students can increase their achievement, learning satisfaction, learning motivation, creativity, innovation power, and increasing awareness for lifelong learning (Pertiwi et al., 2018; Rizky et al., 2020). This effort requires full support from school stakeholders.

Instructional leadership as a form of leading teachers is seen as being able to improve teacher performance for the better, so as to improve student achievement (Budiarti et al., 2020; Nurabadi et al., 2021, 2019). Instructional leadership plays an important role in the field of learning in schools, namely creating conditions for better learning interactions between teachers and students (Sumarsono et al., 2019; Wardani, 2008). Instructional leadership is focused on improving the academic quality of schools (Kusumaningrum et al., 2016). Principals periodically need to have a dialogue with teachers related to continuous teacher professional development, monitor the instructional process in the classroom, and facilitate teachers in carrying out instructional activities (Imron et al., 2021; Sari et al., 2020; Wardani et al., 2020). So indirectly, instructional leadership provides facilities and encourages teachers to develop themselves, make decisions together, and develop school values and visions that lead to improving instructional quality.

Our study used the clinical supervision approach proposed by Sergiovanni (2014) which consists of three steps: pre-observation conference; observation of teaching; and post-conference analysis. The pre-observation conference stage involves a conversation between the supervisor and the teacher who will be practicing his/her skills, followed by the supervisor observing the teacher teaching (observation of teaching). In this step, the supervisor collects data on the teacher's teaching behavior. Then the supervisor analyzes the initial data and determines strategies to help the teacher. The final step in the implementation of clinical supervision is the analysis of activities after the teacher and supervisor meeting (post-conference analysis). The end of this step is agreed upon follow-up actions that need to be implemented at the next time. The results of the clinical supervision that has been carried out can be used as material for the implementation of clinical supervision at the next stage. The supervisor, in this study, is the principal as an instructional leader who also has the task of providing professional supervision services to teachers.

METHOD

Research Design

This study was conducted using the participant-observer method. Researchers in this case are directly involved in the principal's program of providing professional services in the form of clinical supervision. Clinical supervision, in this study, refers to the instructional leadership behaviors manifested by principals in coaching teachers (Gunawan, 2011, 2015). By using the participant-observer method, we were able to be directly involved in order to experience the instructional leadership model practiced by the principal. Participatory observation is a very important data collection technique in qualitative research for the field of education (Sherman & Webb, 2005), because in order to be able to appreciate the feelings, attitudes, mindsets that underlie the behavior of the subjects studied in depth (Mack et al., 2005; Stake, 2010) which is not sufficient if it is only done by interview.

Participants

The participants of this study were principals and teachers. The principal as an instructional leader is observed when he provides assistance to teachers who are having difficulties in teaching. Teachers as people who receive and feel the services of principals who apply instructional leadership. The collaboration of principals and teachers in solving teaching problems is expected to have a positive impact on student learning outcomes. This research was conducted at MI Al Fattah, Malang City, Indonesia. This school is an educational institution that provides learning in Islamic religious knowledge, which is equivalent to elementary school education.

Data Collection

The data collection technique used in this study is observation. The researcher observed the principal's instructional leadership behavior in fostering teachers based on the clinical supervision framework. Observations were carried out using an observation protocol which was designed based on the stages of instructional supervision (see Appendix 1). The stages in question are preliminary

meetings, class observations, and feedback meetings (see Appendix 2). By referring to these stages, it is expected to get accurate and real data that can describe the teacher development process.

Data Analysis

The data analysis steps used in this study refer to Mason's analysis model (Mason, 2002), namely categories, codes and explanatory logic. The first step, categories, in this case the researcher observes the stages of clinical supervision carried out by the principal to the teacher. Each stage carried out by the principal is classified into categories, namely the stages of planning programs, compiling learning assessment instruments, making observations, making observation notes, analyzing data, and providing feedback. Each stage was recorded in detail and made comments (observer notes) from the results of the notes.

The second step, codes, from the participant-observer data is summarized and then the researcher checks other data, such as interview data, researcher memos, and meeting minutes). Then the data was examined systematically to find similarities as material for confirming the qualitative findings obtained from the interviews. Each note will be coded, for example planning (P), class observation (CO), and reflection (R).

The third step, explanatory logic, the researcher then describes from the field notes generated from the participant-observer activities. The description referred to here is an attempt to reflect on the notes produced from the observation activities of the clinical supervision program implementation. From the reflection of the field notes, the researcher then created an instructional leadership model within the framework of clinical supervision.

RESULT

Stage 1 Pre-Observation Conference

Supervisors and teachers at the preliminary meeting, met in a friendly and open atmosphere. The supervisor in the preliminary meeting did not look for the teacher's mistakes, let alone scold the teacher. Clinical supervision is carried out on the basis of the needs of the teacher, not the needs of the supervisor. For this reason, at the preliminary meeting stage, the supervisor discusses the teaching abilities that the teacher wants to improve, the aspects are determined, then mutually agreed upon by the teacher and supervisor. The implementation of clinical supervision at this preliminary stage requires supervisor tips in creating a pleasant atmosphere, a family atmosphere, camaraderie, and warmth.

The teacher does not feel afraid or pressured, so the teacher is willing and brave to express problems and needs in teaching in the classroom. If the teacher has not dared to express the teaching problems he faces, the supervisor is expected to be able to stimulate the teacher's conversation with good questions. And so on until there is good communication between supervisors and teachers. If the teacher has revealed what he wants to develop or what abilities he wants to improve, then it is mutually agreed to become a kind of contract between the teacher and supervisor. This contract is the center of attention in the class observation stage and feedback meeting.

Related to the learning process, the problems that are often faced by teachers in teaching are divided into two, namely: (1) teachers lack basic teaching skills, so that the learning process of students in the classroom is still not optimal; and (2) lack of self-confidence and awareness on the part of the teacher. These two problems can be used as material for discussion at the preliminary meeting stage.

The activities in the introductory stage are: (1) the supervisor creates an intimate and open atmosphere; (2) the supervisor reviews the lesson plans that have been made by the teacher, including: learning objectives, materials, teaching and learning activities, and evaluation tools; (3) the supervisor reviews the skill components that will be achieved by the teacher in learning activities; (4) the supervisor together with the teacher selects and develops the observation instrument to be used; and (5) supervisors and teachers discuss the instrument, including how to use it, as well as the data to be collected, and the result is a mutually agreed contract.

Stage 2 Observation of Teaching

The time span between the preliminary meeting and class observation, should not be too long, because to avoid forgetting the nature of the contract at the preliminary meeting stage. Class observation is the second step in the clinical supervision stage. Class observation is the supervision of observing the teacher who is teaching. Class observations really need to be done by the supervisor. At this stage the teacher teaches in the classroom by applying the components of the skills that have been agreed upon at the preliminary meeting. The supervisor observes the teacher using an agreed-upon observation instrument.

Supervisors also objectively record teacher behavior in teaching, student behavior in learning, and teacher-student interactions in the learning process. In addition to using the observation sheet that has been agreed upon by the supervisor and teacher at the preliminary meeting, the supervisor can also use electronic tools in terms of recording learning activities, in the form of audio, visual, or audio-visual. Activities in classroom observation are: (1) the supervisor and teacher together enter the classroom to be taught by the teacher; (2) the teacher explains to the students about the purpose of the supervisor's arrival in the classroom; (3) the teacher invites the supervisor to occupy what has been provided; (4) the teacher starts learning as usual (according to the contract at the preliminary meeting with the supervisor); (5) the supervisor observes the teacher's teaching performance, using the agreed observation sheet; and (6) after the learning process is complete, the supervisor and teacher together leave the classroom, and go to a special room to carry out the next stage of supervision activities.

Several things that must be considered in the implementation of observations, are: (1) the observation notes must be complete, so that the analysis is correct; (2) the object of observation must be focused on certain skill aspects; (3) in addition to recording observations, in certain cases supervisors need to make comments that are located separately from the results of recorded observations; (4) if there are words from the teacher that interfere with the learning process, it should also be noted by the supervisor; and (5) supervisors should try so that during observation, the teacher looks reasonable and does not get nervous.

Stage 3 Post-Conference Analysis

The time span between class observations and meetings should also not be too long, because to avoid forgetting the contract at the preliminary meeting stage and the observations at the class observation stage. The supervisor and teacher at this stage hold a meeting to discuss the results of the teacher's teaching observations. Just like at the preliminary meeting stage, the supervisor always maintains a collegial attitude with the teacher, and keeps from being trapped in the act of judging or judging the teacher. The supervisor presents the data as it is to the teacher. Previously, the teacher was asked to rate his performance. Then look for a solution to the problem. In order for the discussion to focus on the problems faced by the teacher, the supervisor and the teacher must understand the contract that was built together at the preliminary meeting stage. So that the conversation does not drag on and stay focused on the teacher's problems. Based on the results of this discussion, it will be known the level of achievement of the learning process that has become a joint contract.

The activities of supervisors and teachers at this stage are: (1) supervisors provide reinforcement and realize the feelings of teachers in general during teaching. This is to create a friendly atmosphere in the return meeting; (2) the supervisor reviews the learning objectives; (3) the supervisor reviews the skill level and the teacher's main concern in teaching; (4) the supervisor asks the teacher's feelings about the course of the lesson based on the main target and concern. Questions begin with things that please the teacher because of their success, then continue with questions that are considered less successful; (5) shows the observation data that has been analyzed and interpreted by the supervisor, then gives the teacher time to analyze and interpret it, together; (6) ask again the teacher's feelings about the results of the analysis and interpretation; (7) ask the teacher's feelings about the actual desire to be achieved; (8) conclude the results by looking at the actual desire achieved; and (9) jointly determine future teaching plans in the form of encouragement to improve things that have not been mastered at the previous stage (teaching and learning processes that have been carried out) as well as skills that need to be perfected.

Several things that need to be considered in carrying out feedback meetings are: (1) feedback meetings must be held as soon as possible after observations are made, so that each party (teachers and supervisors) still has fresh memories of the process of teaching and learning activities that have just been carried out; (2) prior to the feedback meeting, the supervisor needs to conduct a preliminary analysis of the recorded observations; (3) the atmosphere of the meeting is intimate, open, and free from the atmosphere of judging or judging; and (4) supervisors should strive so that teachers can determine their own strengths and weaknesses.

Instructional Leadership in a Clinical Supervision Framework

Efforts to improve the quality of teacher teaching must have the full support of a principal as an instructional leader. Various leadership behaviors can be applied by principals to implement instructional leadership. Referring to the observations made in this study, the researcher proposes an instructional leadership model within the framework of clinical supervision that can be used as a guideline by school principals in order to develop teachers professionally. The processes that can be used by school principals as instructional leaders in the clinical supervision framework are identification of instructional problems, define and describe the problem, critical analysis, examine solutions, formulate action plans, implementation, and evaluate. There are five aspects that must be considered in the process, namely: (1) problem discussion; (2) critical problems; (3) collegial support; (4) evidence-based problems; and (5) training and development for teachers. The framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

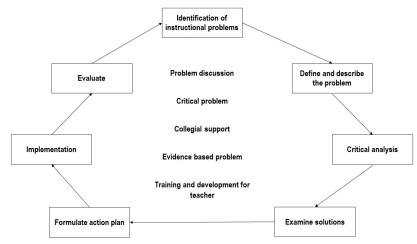


Figure 1 Instructional Leadership in the Clinical Supervision Framework

DISCUSSION

Instructional leadership will create an academic atmosphere that supports the school in achieving its vision, mission, and goals (Bafadal et al., 2018; Sobri et al., 2019). A good academic atmosphere will increase teacher motivation in teaching. To build a good academic atmosphere, principals need instructional leadership behaviors, such as technical behaviors, human relation behaviors, educational behaviors, symbolic behaviors, and cultural behaviors (Sergiovanni, 2014; Ubben et al., 2000). The leadership behavior is an integral unit. Creating a strong academic climate in schools requires a strong foundation as well, and this can be realized through the participation of all human resources in the school (Heck et al., 1990). Instructional leadership implemented by the principal aims to mobilize the important components owned by the school and empowered as optimally as possible to improve the quality of teacher instruction. These components are curriculum, learning process, teacher performance assessment, teacher professional development, excellent service in learning, assessment of student learning outcomes, and development of learning communities in schools.

The development of a professional learning community, innovative classroom development, student-centered instruction, and a comfortable school environment can create an effective teaching ecology (Bafadal et al., 2020; Faizah et al., 2020). Instructional leadership is basically to improve teaching programs in schools, increase teacher professionalism, and also improve student learning outcomes which lead to the achievement of school quality. The main motive of instructional leadership is to improve: (1) the teaching skills of teachers; (2) implementation of a quality curriculum; and (3) instructional organizational structure (Ubben et al., 2000). The principal as an instructional leader has the task of developing a productive and satisfying work environment for teachers, and ultimately being able to create improved student learning conditions. Instructional leadership is a multidimensional construct, meaning that it relates to how principals can organize and coordinate work life in schools which are not only in the form of learning experiences and student achievement, but also the environment in which work is carried out (Harmini et al., 2017; Heck et al., 1990; Kusumaningrum et al., 2019; Ng et al., 2015).

The implication of the important role of instructional leadership is that the principal's leadership must shift his attention from just doing administrative coaching to fostering teacher professionalism, by emphasizing efforts to improve teacher instructional performance in schools (Sukawati et al., 2020; Wardani, 2010; Wardani et al., 2018, 2016). Strong instructional leadership should set high expectations for the quality of teacher teaching performance, understand well the instructional program, understand the needs of teachers in the instructional process, and periodically observe the teacher's teaching process and provide feedback to teachers in order to improve their learning problems (Gorton & Schneider, 1991; Gunawan et al., 2019). The principal has the main task of leading the instructional process in schools towards achieving maximum student learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The results of this research propose a process that can be used by school principals as a guide in implementing instructional leadership within a clinical supervision framework (see Figure 1). This research confirms that instructional leadership requires other aspects in order to increase its influence on effective schools. This means to create an effective school, the principal does not only apply instructional leadership, but must pay attention to other aspects that exist in the school.

Although this study used reliable methods, there are limitations that should be noted. First, this study was conducted in elementary school, therefore, the results may not be generalizable to junior high school and senior high school. Future researchers may resolve this issue by investigating at these levels. Second, the participants of this study were senior teachers who have teaching experience, so future studies may consider this gap by conducting studies on novice teachers.

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Appendix 1 Observation Protocol

No	Subject Research	Observation Activities	Observation Notes
1	Principalship	a. School meeting	
		b. Instructional supervision (when the principal provides supervision services to teachers)	
		c. Principalship behavior	
2	Teacher	a. Instructional activities	
		b. Action research activities	
		c. Service to students	
3 School environment a. Library		a. Library	
		b. Learning garden	
		c. Reading garden	
		d. Sports arena	

Appendix 2 Brief Notes of Observation

Stage 1 Pre-Observation Conference

No	Steps in the Preliminary Meeting	
1	Creating a relaxed atmosphere	
2	Reveal the lesson plan/learning objectives	
3	Disclosing teaching and learning activities	
4	Disclosing the evaluation to be applied	
5	Disclosing the skill target to be achieved (contract)	
6	Determine the data collection instrument	
7	Discuss with the teacher the contract that has been written in the observation format for mutual agreement	

Stage 2 Observation of Teaching

Students and teachers carry out the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The classroom atmosphere seems conducive; between teachers and students, there is interaction during the learning process in the classroom. So, they are very active in the teaching and learning process. This observation was conducted to determine the learning process and student activity in the classroom. The atmosphere in the teaching and learning process is very enthusiastic about the teaching materials in the classroom. The spacious classroom conditions are very adequate with several learning methods in the classroom. The summary of observations related to student activity in learning is presented in Table 2.1. From several aspects (Table 2.1), it can be identified that student activity in the classroom is very supportive in the learning process.

Table 2.1 Summary of Observations

No	Aspect	Description
1	Students pay attention to what the teacher says	Students pay attention to and understand the lessons delivered by the teacher
2	students ask lessons	Students ask for lessons they don't understand
3	Students ask the teacher at school	On observation, students ask the purpose of the lesson and are active in the teaching and learning process
4	Take notes	The teacher focuses on students' understanding of plants
5	Students respond to what the teacher says	In the classroom students respond with learning, here the teacher directs with active learning media

No	Aspect	Description
6	Students are happy with the learning method	In the learning method, children like the method that is better understood by the method of pictures accompanied by letters
7	Students understand the lesson delivered by the teacher	The activeness of students in class by being given tests and assignments, then seen from their ability to answer questions
8	Active participation students with classmates	Active participation in class is seen by their ability to socialize, they learn in class

Stage 3 Post-Conference Analysis

Encourage teachers to make future teaching plans

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No Steps in a Feedback Meeting 1 Asking about feelings in general 2 Ask the teacher to restate the purpose of the lesson 3 Ask the teacher to analyze the lesson results 4 Discuss the results of the analysis about the lesson 5 Ask the teacher to reiterate the target to be achieved and what percentage has been achieved 6 Recall the contract 7 Show / provide feedback on observations based on the contract Give time to analyze 8 9 Discuss the results of the analysis 10 Asking the teacher's feelings 11 Summarizing the results of the discussion