

Improving Teachers' Use of Time at the Sixth Grade of Elementary School in the Isolated Villages

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Abstract: The study was aimed at increasing teachers' effectiveness in using their time to improve students' achievement. An action research design was employed, involving ten IDT elementary schools, ten grade-six teachers, and 110 grade-six students in Hulu Sungai Selatan on the 1995/1996 school year. After three stages of the action research, teachers' use of time on tasks could be improved, teachers' violation of time on tasks was decreased by 18%, and students' achievement improved by 0,459.

Keywords: use of time, elementary school, students' achievement.

The development success of some developed countries such as USA, England, Germany, Japan, and France, seems to depend on their human resources, and not on their natural resources. Indonesia, which is well known as the fifth largest population in the world, should improve the quality of the human resources through many fields especially the field of education. The quality of human resources can be improved through the development of talent and motivation for better achievement, and such efforts and treatment which are called education (Muhadjir, 1993).

Various efforts have been made to improve the quality of education, such as UU.No.2 SPN, PP.No.28, 1990, the implementation of the 1994 curriculum with its student active-learning strategy, the implementation

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of the 9-year compulsory education, teacher professional improvement system, and national discipline movement, and other things. Unfortunately, the education quality in South Kalimantan is still lower than expected (Suryadi, 1993). The Head of Depdikbud of South Kalimantan also said that the quality of education still remained the same as that of the preceding years.

There are many factors influencing the quality of education, such as the teacher, the curriculum, learning support services, the fund, the educational supervision, and the school relationship with the society (Sudharto, 1994). The teacher component in the system of education is a dominant factor in creating educational quality. A good teacher should have professional competence, professional efforts and good time orientation (Suryadi, 1994).

In relation to orientation of teachers' time on task, it seems that there are some problems, such as inefficient use of the time in teaching and learning process, or wasting the time. It happens because of the teachers' activities either internal or external activities. In external activities, teachers often have various activities like attending meeting, up grading programs, seminars, and other national special day ceremonies. Internal activities come from teachers themselves coming into the class, or going home earlier than their schedule. In other words, internal activities are related to teachers disciplines.

As a result, many complaints have come either from students or parents. There are some schools which lose the learning time while the student have very limited time to study at home, because they have to help their family to meet their daily needs. So, the only thing that can be done is to maximize the teaching and learning time at school based on the schedule.

Based on the description above, a better alternative action seems to be worth considering. This action research was carried out to overcome teachers' problem of time efficiency. A hypothesis for action was then formulated, i.e. student will achieve higher when teachers can manage their time effectively and efficiently. The effective use of the teaching and learning time can be obtained by covering the curriculum target and optimizing the scenario of teaching learning process in every lesson (Gagne & Briggs, 1976).

The main purpose of this research was to ensure whether there was any problem in student learning time in order to prevent the student from wasting the learning time. In other words, this study was aimed at improving the teachers' discipline as well as the students, which was expected to create the efficient and effective learning time at school to increase students' achievement.

METHOD

This action research was based on the classification model proposed by Dikti (1994), consisting of 3 cycles, each of which had for steps: planning, action, observation, and reflection. This followed the one by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998). The activities in the first cycle are prerequisite for the next cycle (Davis et al, 1974:223).

In the first cycle, the first step was to arrange the preparatory plan in the field, orientation on the field, and seminars, workshops, to establish the research problem. In second step, teachers tried to be on time, base on the schedule. In the third stage the head master observed the teachers' activities and also the students' study-time. In the fourth step some reflections were done toward the results of the observation. This was in the form of discussions and rethinking about the outcomes of the observation or reevaluating the action which had been implemented with the teachers. The result of the reflection was used as the input for the next plan on the second cycle.

After arranging the activity plan, the action implemented in first cycle was continued in the second cycle. The action was in the form of applying the scenario in every teaching and learning process by paying attention to target of the curriculum, which was meant to increase the teachers' discipline.

At last, in the third cycle, the action was focused on the strict use of the time in the teaching-learning process. Teachers and students should always be on time when coming to school, entering the class, having the first or second break, and going home. The observation was done not only by the head master but also by the chairman of class VI, as well as by parent. By doing that, the discipline in the teaching learning process could be increased.

Based on the above explanation, the treatment of the action research could be done in the series of action in order to create the effectiveness

of teaching and learning. It was expected to increase the students' achievement i.e. the increase of the average mark of the class.

The villages involved in the insolated village program (IDT) at Hulu Sungai Selatan (HSS) were 53 in number spread out in 10 districts. Considering many similarities of the elementary school conditions found in those village, it was then decided that the subjects were selected from the 3 agricultural districts which were relatively traditional, comprising 10 public elementary schools in 10 IDT villages, ten teachers of the sixth grade and the students. All the elementary schools were involved in the research because they had problems in managing time for teaching and learning process.

The technique to collect the data was designed based on the guidelines by Alberto and Troutman (1990). Observation was also carried out to obtain data concerning teachers' and students' activities and necessary document, as suggested by Latunussa (1988). The data collected were then classified, tabulated, and calculated to get the percentage. This was meant to see the progress.

RESULTS

The results of the action research are reported based on the changes happening throughout the three cycles. The action was implemented to overcome the problem occurring in the field, i.e. losing the time of learning and teaching at the 10 IDT elementary school. Therefore, the teachers agreed to revise the working time according to the schedule of elementary education.

At the second cycle, the agreement to improve the teachers' activities at the cycle was continued. After the monitoring, some violation cases were found. In the second cycle the action was to improve the time efficiency in teaching and learning process by maximizing the activities in the teaching and learning process. The monitoring toward the two activities found some weakness in applying the scenario of the teaching and learning process of about 12%.

Based on the reflection result toward the action in the second cycle, the action in the third cycle should be done strictly toward the teachers. The monitoring was focused on the teachers' activities, which was done

not only by the head masters of the elementary schools involved but also by the chairmen of Grade 6 and the parents association. Supervisors of elementary school and kindergarten and the chiefs of the educational and culture office at the districts guaranteed that there was no intimidation to the chairmen of Grade 6 from the teachers. In other words, the results of the observation were assumed to remain objective. At last, it was found out that teacher-violation cases at the beginning of the third term of 1995/1996 school year were greater (59%) than those at the end of the third term (41%), which means that the cases decreased up to 18%. There was an increase of the average score from the first term to the third one (about 0.459).

DISCUSSION

A closer observation indicates that the violation cases of the teachers and the students include being late to come back to the class after the first and the second breaks. Another case was that the student went home earlier than the schedule. In addition, when they had breaktime, some of the students watched TV at a house near the school, while the teachers were having some drink in the school cafe. To prevent such a case, the teachers did not allow their students to watch TV even for a short time, and the teachers boiled some water by themselves at school. Furthermore, most of students went home earlier than the schedule generally because of the school habit, especially non-IDT schools. Other students who did not participate to this research went home earlier, which distracted the concentration of the students who were still learning.

To overcome such problems the supervisor and teachers agreed that the school learning schedule in all elementary schools should be uniform. However, some teachers said that there were some parents who asked the teachers to let their children go home earlier because the children should go to religion schools in the afternoon.

Some teachers tried to be on time. After doing those activities, there were some advantages especially in improving teachers' working disciplines and students' achievement. There was an increase of the average score from the first term to the third one (about 0.459). In short, this research showed an increase in improving teachers' disciplines as well as students' performance.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that it is actually difficult to improve the teachers' use of time to be more effective and efficient. Through the strict action on the teaching and learning process at the school such as coming to school, entering the class, having the break time, and going home, as scheduled, the discipline of the teachers' time on task could be improved by 18%, in the students' achievement by 0.459 from the first up to the third term of 1995/1996 school year.

It is then suggested that the educational supervisor build up teachers' awareness of their duties, so they will be more diligent and be always on time. In addition, considerations for teachers' placement or tour of duty should be based on their home town. Teachers are also suggested to live in the teachers' housing, which is close to the school to encourage time efficiency. Finally, the efficient use of time in teaching and learning process should be trained from the beginning, namely when teachers are still studying at the elementary school teacher education colleges.

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