

Principal-Based Leadership Based on Micro-Habits Coaching in Improving the Pedagogic Performance of Teachers at Smpn 1 Maniis

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ABSTRACT

The professional development needs of teachers still rely on formal training programs. Principal's leadership interventions are only sustainable and do not focus on consistent behavior change. Micro-habits coaching is seen as an approach that is able to foster positive habits through systematic mentoring, regular reflection, and directed feedback so that it has the potential to significantly strengthen teachers' pedagogic competence. This study aims to describe the effectiveness of principal leadership based on micro-habits coaching in improving teachers' pedagogic performance. This research uses a qualitative research paradigm with a case study approach. Data were collected through non-participatory observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Respondents were selected by purposive sampling. The findings of the study show that (1) the leadership of the principal has implemented micro-habits coaching can build a culture of continuous learning in the school environment; (2) The principal plays the role of a coach who facilitates teachers to identify areas of self-development, set realistic micro-targets, monitor progress, and provide positive reinforcement for the achievements obtained. This study concludes that micro-habits coaching based leadership is an effective strategy to improve teachers' pedagogic performance and is implemented more widely as a model of sustainable professional development in schools.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The improvement of the quality of education at the junior high school (SMP) level is greatly influenced by the effectiveness of the principal's leadership in managing and developing teacher competence. In the current era of educational transformation, school principals are required not only to play the role of administrators, but also as *instructional leaders* and coaches who are able to accompany teachers through a more humanistic, systematic, and sustainable approach. One of the leadership approaches that is starting to get attention is **Micro-Habits Coaching**, which is a coaching pattern that focuses on small, measurable, consistent, and significant changes in habits that have a significant impact on improving teacher performance. The micro-habits approach sees that major changes in teachers' pedagogic practices do not always have to start from complex interventions, but

can instead be built through small but repetitive professional habits, such as the habit of 5 minutes of reflection after teaching, the habit of preparing *learning objectives* daily, the habit of giving quick feedback to students, or the habit of compiling simple formative assessments. With consistency and assistance from the principal as a coach, these micro-habits are able to create a positive work culture and improve the quality of learning more continuously.

The application of micro-habits coaching based leadership is very relevant at **SMPN 1 Maniis**, a public school located in the Maniis District, Purwakarta Regency, West Java. Geographically, SMPN 1 Maniis is located in a hilly area with regional characteristics that are still dominated by agricultural and residential areas that are scattered. This geographical condition makes access to school quite challenging for some students, especially those from hamlets with a distance of more than 3 kilometers. Nevertheless, a beautiful school environment that is relatively far from the center of the crowd provides a conducive atmosphere for the learning process, as well as a great potential for school development that focuses on character education and positive habituation.

In terms of human resources, SMPN 1 Maniis has a fairly diverse number of teachers in terms of age, experience, and educational background. Some teachers already have more than 15 years of teaching experience, while others are young teachers who have only been in the teaching profession for a few years. This variety of competencies and experiences presents its own challenges for school principals in ensuring equitable distribution of teaching quality in each subject. In addition, the dynamics of curriculum policy changes such as the implementation of the Independent Curriculum require teachers to have strong pedagogic literacy skills, comprehensive assessment understanding, and creativity in designing differentiated learning. Some teachers show stable and innovative performance, but others still require intensive assistance in terms of lesson planning, classroom management, and authentic assessment practices. Meanwhile, the condition of students at SMPN 1 Maniis also reflects the heterogeneous socio-cultural characteristics of the Maniis area. The majority of students come from farming families and informal workers with varying levels of family literacy. This causes the level of learning motivation and academic readiness of students to be not uniform. Some students have a high enthusiasm for learning and are active in extracurricular activities, while others need additional support, both in academic aspects and in character formation and learning disciplines. This challenge requires teachers to have adaptive skills, appropriate pedagogic strategies, and the ability to understand individual student needs.

In this context, the leadership of the principal based on micro-habits coaching is a potential strategy in answering the need to improve teacher performance at SMPN 1 Maniis. Through coaching that is carried out regularly, structured, but still flexible, school principals can help teachers build strong professional habits, increase their capacity for reflection, and gradually improve learning practices. Micro-habit-based mentoring also encourages teachers to be more independent, responsible for their development, and able to create learning innovations according to the school context. Thus, this study is important to examine how the implementation of micro-habits coaching by school principals can have a real impact on improving teacher performance at SMPN 1 Maniis. In addition, this research is expected to be able to make a theoretical and practical contribution to the development of school leadership models that are effective, adaptive, and relevant to the dynamics of educational needs in rural areas. The findings of this study are also expected to be an inspiration for other schools in developing sustainable coaching strategies to improve the pedagogic quality of teachers.

The leadership of the principal is a central factor in determining the direction, quality, and work culture in the school. According to Mulyasa (2013), an effective school principal is an *instructional leader* who is able to provide guidance, supervision, motivation, and ensure that all elements of the school move towards improving the quality of learning. The principal also plays a role in building interpersonal relationships, developing vision, and creating an environment conducive to teacher professionalism (Hallinger, 2011).

In addition, transformational leadership in the context of schools emphasizes behavior change and competency improvement through teacher inspiration, example, and empowerment (Bass & Riggio,

2006). This leadership model is the basis for strengthening the *micro-habits coaching approach*, which emphasizes the formation of small behaviors through the internal encouragement of teachers.

Micro-habits coaching is a coaching strategy that focuses on developing micro-habits, which are small but consistent behavioral changes that can have a big impact in the long run. Clear (2018) emphasizes that microhabituation helps a person make gradual changes through habit design that is easy to do and maintain. In the context of education, this kind of coaching allows teachers to develop their competencies through a series of reflective actions, selection of target behaviors, and regular monitoring of progress (Knight, 2017).

Micro-habit-oriented coaching strengthens the coaching process that is not only instructional, but also fosters the teacher's intrinsic motivation, increases confidence, and builds a culture of continuous self-improvement (Whitmore, 2017). The principal as *a coach* facilitates teachers to set micro-goals, identify obstacles, and celebrate small progress to strengthen positive change.

Teachers' pedagogic performance includes lesson planning, the ability to manage classes, the use of active learning methods, and the ability to conduct assessments effectively. According to Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, pedagogic competence is the ability to manage learning which includes student understanding, learning design, learning implementation, and evaluation of learning outcomes.

Arikunto (2012) explained that teacher performance can be measured through how effectively teachers carry out their professional duties in learning. Good pedagogic performance has a significant impact on the success of students in achieving learning goals. Therefore, the intervention of school leaders through coaching is very necessary to ensure that teachers continue to develop according to the needs of 21st century learning.

The *micro-habits coaching* approach provides a practical framework to gradually improve teachers' pedagogic performance. Micro-habits such as improving *lesson plans*, increasing the variety of learning strategies, or applying formative assessments consistently, if done regularly and supported by the principal, will result in significant changes in teaching behavior (Coyle, 2018). Knight's research (2017) shows that coaching that focuses on small and realistic practices is more effective than general training because it allows teachers to feel directed, accompanied, and have personal responsibility for their development. Thus, *micro-habits coaching* is a very relevant leadership strategy to improve the pedagogic quality of teachers.

2. METHODS

The researcher uses a case study approach. Suharyanto H. Soro (2023) defines a case study as a scientific activity carried out consciously, both singular and plural problems using observation, interview, questionnaire, and documentation data collection methods or the like so that they can comprehensively and exploit the findings comprehensively and in-depth. In qualitative research, the instrument is a person or human instrument, that is, the researcher himself. Thus, researchers must have broad theoretical and insight provisions, so that they are able to ask, analyze, photograph and construct the social situation being researched to be clearer and more meaningful. The theoretical foundation can be used as a reference for evaluators, so that research is in accordance with the facts that occur in the field. This qualitative research is used to obtain in-depth and meaningful data. In this case, the data in question is the data that actually occurs in the field which is a value behind the visible data.

In this case, the researcher analyzes the objects being studied regarding phenomena, events and facts that occur in the field. Starting from observation and information search for the object being researched, conducting interviews with informants who are competent in their fields and related to the object being researched. recording and analyzing related information that has been gathered so that it can be presented in the form of scientific writing. The researcher uses a data collection method in the form of observation methods, which is the observation of an object that is researched either directly or indirectly to obtain data that must be collected in the research Observation is a complex process, a

process that is composed of various biological and psychological processes. Two of the most important are the processes of observation and memory. Observation or observation is an observation activity that can be carried out in a participatory (involved) or non-participatory manner. (Sugiyono 2020).

The next method is interview, which is a conversation with a specific purpose The conversation is carried out by two parties, namely the interviewer who asks the question and the interviewer who provides answers to the questions (Moleong, 2017) In this study, a structured interview method is used. This interview is conducted by researchers by first preparing the screening materials that will be submitted in the interview later. This method is used to obtain data that are further analyzed from the data obtained and data that has not been covered from the results of observation and documentation

The last method is a document in the form of writings, drawings, or monumental works of a person. (Moleong, 2017) Some studies even rely only on (combination) of these documents, without being equipped with interviews, and the data in these documents are considered complete. This method is used to be related to the general gains of State Junior High School in Tangerang City in Targerang Regency such as school profiles, geographical location, vision and mission, organizational trucks, and so on which of course support research. The research location of SMPN 1 Maniis, Purwakarta Regency.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following is a description of the findings and discussion of research sourced from data in the field.

Implementation of Micro-Habits Coaching by School Principals:

1. Prepare an outline of the lesson plan 10 minutes before entering class
2. Writing daily reflections
3. Use one simple medium per meeting
4. Conducting a quick assessment (exit ticket)

Based on data sourced from observations in the field, it shows that school principals implement weekly routine coaching sessions, setting small habit targets (micro-goals). Basically, the leadership of the principal is oriented to achieving the goals of the educational unit. This is in line with the definition of leadership itself which is the essence of organizational management, the main resource, and the central point of every activity that occurs in an organization. So leadership is a very important factor in leading and influencing organizational achievement. Some consider that the core of management is leadership and the core of leadership is decision-making, while decision-makers are the core of management. According to Mary Paker Follet (Sudarwan, Suparno 2009) defines management as the art of completing work through others. Here the manager is in charge of organizing and directing others to achieve the organization's goals. Meanwhile, Griffin (Sudarwan, Suparno 2009) defines management as a process of planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling resources to achieve goals effectively and efficiently.

As the principal, I always pay attention to the targets or achievements for each program. Like the micro habit coaching program, one of the programs that gets priority from me as the principal. So I always monitor these activities comprehensively and deeply. This is done to ensure that the activity runs according to plan.

The data above shows the leadership of the school principal in achieving the goals of the Education unit. This is in line with the definition of leadership can be interpreted as "the ability of a person to move, direct, and at the same time influence the mindset, and way of working of each member to be independent in working, especially in decision-making for the sake of achieving the goals that have been set". Meanwhile, John D Pfiffner (Wiyani, 2017) leadership is the art of coordinating and motivating individuals and groups to achieve desired ends. Meanwhile, Wiyani (2017) argues that leadership is an effort made by a person to move all members of his organization to carry out various activities effectively and efficiently in accordance with the value system.

Hadari (2006) leadership is as the ability or intelligence to encourage a number of people (two or more) to work together in carrying out activities that are directed at common goals. William A. Cohen argues that leadership is the art of influencing others to complete tasks, goals, or projects, with the maximum performance they have. With dernikian, it can be concluded that both management and leadership encourage people to act. Management prioritizes the arts that enable people to act, while the leadership prioritizes the influence that motivates people to act (Sudarwar, Suparno, 2009).

Micro-Habits are developed by teachers in order to build habits and have proven to be effective such as:

1. *Develop short learning objectives each day*
2. *Writing student progress notes*
3. *Use discussion starter questions*
4. *3–5 minute formative evaluation at the end of the lesson*

Teachers as one of the important elements in the Education unit. Teachers are responsible for educating students. Therefore, teachers are required to get used to carrying out learning activities in their entirety. Teachers are also leaders in fostering and educating their students both in the classroom and outside the classroom. Leadership in particular can be divided into several fields, according to the field in question. For example, in the company, namely the leadership of the company, in banking it is called the leadership of the bank. In the context of learning teachers as leaders in the subjects taught to their students.

The field of education is called educational leadership (Wiyani, 2017) Therefore, the leadership of school principals can be defined as leadership in education. So it can be concluded that leadership in education is a process to influence that is carried out by a school administrator (head of seolan towards his subordinates, in order to perform the sacred of quality teaching together. Komang Ardhana (2009 106 factors that affect the function of leadership, which are as follows:

a. *Leader's Personal Characteristics*

What stands out is intelligence. Generally, leaders will have a higher level of intelligence than those they lead. Leaders need analytical skills to be able to see the vast problems and complex relationships that stand in their way. In addition, good language skills must also be possessed by a leader. This is so that in the delivery of opinions, a leader of the DAP expresses it clearly. And can activate their subordinates so that they can communicate well with others. Other characteristics are social maturity and relationships, which are broad. Successful leaders have a wide range of interests and activities. Emotionally stable and not having many negative attitudes and having enough confidence. The other is having motivation from within that encourages him to keep trying. Keep striving for success. This concerns personal characteristics such as a positive understanding and attitude about others and respect human relationships, because through others he can achieve results.

b. *The group led by the group rather than the personal characteristics of a leader as described above does not mean anything, before the leader uses it as a tool to interpret the goals to be achieved.*

c. *Situation Every leader will function in a situation, which is in the form of human, physical, and time situations. Every change in the situation requires a change in leadership skills. With the understanding that every situation is unique, a specific leader is needed for each situation. So a leader must be flexible and have a great ability to adapt himself.*

Impact on Teachers' Pedagogic Performance

My own When applying micro-habits coaching has an impact on:

1. *Improved learning planning*
2. *Creativity of teaching media*
3. *Quality of teacher-student interaction*
4. *Classroom management*
5. *More routine formative assessments*

Teachers conduct learning by following the procedures that have been made beforehand. Activities carried out in schools are inseparable from the supervision and attention of the principal. Therefore, there is a great emphasis on the productivity carried out by teachers. The principal has the right and obligation to carry out the rules that apply in the school. In accordance with the designation, the word principal comes from two words, namely, principal and school. The word head can be interpreted as "chairman" or the leader of an organization or an institution. While a school is an educational institution where it is a place to receive and teach lessons. In simple terms, a school principal can be defined as: "a functional personnel is given the task of leading a madrasah where the teaching and learning process is conducted or a place where there is interaction between the teacher who gives the lesson and the student who writes the lesson. (Wohjos Midjo. 2011)

The principal as an agent of change in the school has an active role in improving the quality of education. Therefore, the head of the school must have good leadership skills. A good principal is a school principal who is able and able to use all educational resources to achieve educational goals The principal should be able to create a good organizational climate so that all components of the school can play themselves together to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. (Baharuddin 2006)

In the teachings of Islam itself, there are also many verses and hadiths both verbally and indirectly that explain the meaning of leadership.

From the description above, it can be concluded that leadership is a deliberate behavior carried out by a person towards others to structure activities and relationships in groups, organizations or educational institutions. The principal or what is more popular now is referred to as the teacher who gets the additional task of being the Principal. It is not those who happen to be recruited to occupy that position, with a rigid performance and cannot develop., they are expected to become a strong personal figure, reliable in order to achieve the goals of the school organization. From some of the explanations above, we can underline that the position of the Principal will determine the direction of an institution. The principal is the regulator of the program in the school. Therefore, the Principal is expected to be the spirit of the teacher's work, as well as the school culture in improving quality.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the leadership of school principals who implement micro-habits coaching has proven to be effective in improving the pedagogic performance of teachers at SMPN 1 Maniis. This activity works through the formation of small habits that are carried out consistently, accompanied by systematic, personalized, and continuous coaching. The principal conducts regular coaching sessions, provides directed feedback, and facilitates teachers to set micro-goals such as daily reflection, preparation of short learning objectives, and the use of simple teaching media. This approach creates a culture of continuous learning in schools.

Teachers are getting used to doing simple but important professional actions, for example: preparing a quick lesson plan outline, making notes of student progress, using triggering questions, applying brief formative assessments. These habits provide a solid foundation for improved teaching practices in the classroom. Micro-habits coaching has a positive impact on various aspects of teachers' pedagogic performance. Through the application of consistent habits, teachers experience improvements in: the quality of learning planning, the variety of teaching methods and media, the ability to manage classes, pedagogical interaction with students, the implementation of more routine and meaningful formative assessments. This impact can be seen not only in learning practices, but also in teacher motivation, confidence, and collaboration between teachers in the practice community.

This approach is in accordance with the context of SMPN 1 Maniis. Geographic conditions, diverse teacher backgrounds, and heterogeneous student needs demand an adaptive and contextual approach to leadership. Micro-habits coaching has proven to be the right strategy to facilitate gradual but sustainable changes in teachers' behavior. Micro-habits coaching deserves to be adopted more widely as a model of teacher professional development. The results show that small, consistent changes are easier to implement and maintain than a one-time training program. Therefore, this model can be used

as a strategic alternative for other schools in improving the quality of learning through teacher empowerment

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