



IMPROVING THE COMPETENCE OF INDONESIAN LANGUAGE TEACHERS THROUGH THE USE OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEARNING COMMUNITY (KOMBEL) IN SOPPENG REGENCY

PENINGKATAN KOMPETENSI GURU BAHASA INDONESIA MELALUI PEMANFAATAN KOMUNITAS BELAJAR (KOMBEL) TINGKAT SMP DI KABUPATEN SOPPENG

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of the learning community (Kombel) at the junior high school level in Soppeng Regency, its use in improving the competence of Indonesian teachers, and the factors that affect the utilization. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The data obtained was analyzed holistically to reveal the implementation and impact of Kombel on improving teacher professionalism. The results of the study show that the implementation of Kombel at the junior high school level in Soppeng Regency has run optimally in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. The use of Kombel has proven to be effective in improving the pedagogic competence of Indonesian teachers, especially in the aspects of planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. In addition, Kombel is a collaborative medium that supports the exchange of good practices between teachers, helps solve student learning problems, and supports the selection of relevant strategies, approaches, and methods. The factors that affect the use of Kombel include: teacher commitment and motivation, time management, availability of facilities, openness, and support from various parties. These findings affirm the importance of strengthening the learning community as a strategy to improve the quality of teacher competence in a sustainable manner.

Kata Kunci : Improvement, Competence, Utilization, Learning Community.



Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan pelaksanaan komunitas belajar (Kombel) tingkat SMP di Kabupaten Soppeng, pemanfaatannya dalam meningkatkan kompetensi guru Bahasa Indonesia, serta faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi pemanfaatan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan angket. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis secara holistik untuk mengungkap implementasi dan dampak Kombel terhadap peningkatan profesionalisme guru. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pelaksanaan Kombel di tingkat SMP di Kabupaten Soppeng telah berjalan secara optimal sesuai dengan prinsip Kurikulum Merdeka. Pemanfaatan Kombel terbukti efektif dalam meningkatkan kompetensi pedagogik guru Bahasa Indonesia, khususnya dalam aspek perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi pembelajaran. Selain itu, Kombel menjadi media kolaboratif yang mendukung pertukaran praktik baik antar guru, membantu pemecahan masalah pembelajaran siswa, serta mendukung pemilihan strategi, pendekatan, dan metode yang relevan. Adapun faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi pemanfaatan Kombel meliputi: komitmen dan motivasi guru, manajemen waktu, ketersediaan fasilitas, keterbukaan, dan dukungan dari berbagai pihak. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya penguatan komunitas belajar sebagai strategi peningkatan mutu kompetensi guru secara berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci : Peningkatan, Kompetensi, Pemanfaatan, Komunitas Belajar.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a conscious and planned process that aims to create a learning atmosphere that allows students to actively develop their potential. This is affirmed in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which states that education has an important role in shaping human beings who have faith, piety, intelligence, noble character, and have the skills needed in personal life, society, nation, and state.

Furthermore, the function of national education as stated in the law is to develop abilities and form a dignified character and civilization of the nation in order to educate the life of the nation. Thus, national education does not only prioritize academic aspects, but also includes the formation of strong national character and values. To achieve this goal, an adaptive education system and qualified educators are needed.

In the face of an era that continues to change rapidly, schools as educational institutions are required to constantly improve the quality of educational services. One of the strategic steps in improving the quality of education is through improving teacher competence. Teachers not only play the role of delivering material, but also as facilitators, guides, and main drivers in the learning transformation process in schools.

Improving teacher competence can be done through various approaches, one of which is through the use of learning communities (Kombel). Kombel is a forum that allows teachers and education staff to learn from each other, share experiences, and develop professional skills on an ongoing basis. In this context, Kombel is not only a discussion space, but also a real strategy in supporting the professional development of teachers in schools.

The use of learning communities as a strategy to improve teacher competence has a strong theoretical basis. This concept is adapted from the theory of *Professional Learning Community* (PLC) developed by DuFour et al. (2016), and the *theory of Community of Practice*



(CoP) by Wenger-Trayner (2012). These two theories emphasize the importance of collective and collaborative learning as the key to improving the quality of teacher professionalism systemically and sustainably.

In its implementation, Kombel in schools is an effective forum to overcome various learning problems faced by teachers. Through routine activities such as reflective discussions, analysis of teaching practices, and joint planning, Kombel assists teachers in designing, implementing, and evaluating learning in a more quality manner. In addition, Kombel also acts as a medium to share good practices and strengthen collaboration between teachers in the school community.

However, the success of the use of Kombel is highly dependent on various supporting factors. Some of the factors that can affect the effectiveness of Kombel include teacher commitment and motivation, time and opportunity management, availability of facilities, openness in sharing experiences, and support from principals and other stakeholders. Therefore, a deep understanding of these factors is important so that Kombel can run optimally.

Based on this background, this study was conducted to describe the implementation of learning communities at the junior high school level in Soppeng Regency, examine how Kombel is used in improving the competence of Indonesian teachers, and identify factors that affect the effectiveness of Kombel utilization. The results of this research are expected to contribute to the development of teacher development models that are relevant to the needs in the field and in accordance with the direction of national education policies.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. This approach aims to describe the phenomenon in depth and holistically in a natural context, especially related to the implementation and utilization of learning communities (Kombel) in improving the competence of Indonesian teachers at the junior high school level in Soppeng Regency. Data is collected through direct interaction with the research subjects and analyzed in narrative form.

The focus of this research is Indonesian language teachers who are members of Kombel, both at the school level, between schools, and through online communities on the Merdeka Mengajar Platform (PMM). The teacher's competence includes the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate learning. Meanwhile, Kombel is defined as a collaborative learning platform designed to improve the quality of learning through reflection and sharing of good practices.

Data collection was carried out through documentation, observation, questionnaires, and interviews. Documentation is used to obtain administrative data related to Kombel activities; observation to observe the Kombel implementation process directly; questionnaires are used to capture teachers' perceptions; and interviews were conducted to dig up in-depth information from school principals and teachers about the benefits and challenges of using Kombel.

The collected data is analyzed in a qualitative descriptive manner through the process of identification, classification, and interpretation. Each finding is described systematically based on the main theme, namely the implementation of Kombel, its utilization, and the factors that affect it. This analysis is strengthened with a simple percentage to illustrate the tendency of the data quantitatively in support of qualitative findings.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study reveals three main aspects in the utilization of the learning community (Kombel) at the junior high school level in Soppeng Regency, namely the implementation of Kombel, its use in improving the competence of Indonesian teachers, and factors that affect its



effectiveness. Data was obtained through in-depth interviews, direct observations, and the distribution of questionnaires to teachers who are active in Kombel.

a) Implementation of Learning Community (Kombel)

The results of interviews with several teachers of Kombel participants showed that the implementation of Kombel had gone well and was in accordance with the spirit of collaboration in the Independent Curriculum. Teachers understand Kombel as a shared learning space to overcome learning problems, improve professional competence, and share good practices. All respondents stated their active involvement in Kombel activities, both in planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. Observations also show that Kombel activities are carried out in a structured manner, with a clear division of roles, and show a high level of participation.

Observation data showed that all teachers (100%) were active in various aspects of Kombel, including discussions, sharing good practices, and applying the results of discussions to Indonesian learning. Teachers also actively choose the right learning strategies, approaches, models, and methods based on the results of the discussions in Kombel. In addition, Kombel is used as a means of increasing professional capacity, where teachers are given the opportunity to be resource persons in turn. All Kombel activities are carried out according to schedule and show a high commitment from teachers to be actively involved.

b) The Utilization of Kombel in Improving Teacher Competence

The results of interviews and questionnaires show that Kombel plays a major role in improving the competence of Indonesian teachers, especially in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning. Kombel also provides support for teachers in dealing with students' difficulties through reflective discussions and joint problem-solving. Teachers feel more confident, motivated, and have the opportunity to explore new ideas in learning after taking Kombel.

Based on the questionnaire, more than 85% of respondents stated that they strongly agreed that Kombel improved their competence. Teachers also recognize Kombel as a collaboration space that encourages self-reflection and professional development. Kombel is considered effective in introducing new learning strategies, developing creative ideas, and improving the quality of Indonesian learning. Respondents also appreciated the practice of sharing experiences, focused discussions, and increasing confidence and peer support obtained through Kombel.

c) Factors Affecting the Utilization of Kombel

Based on interviews with seven teachers from various Kombels, five main factors were found that affect the effectiveness of the use of Kombel, namely: (1) teachers' commitment and motivation to learn and collaborate; (2) managing time and opportunity to participate in Kombel activities consistently; (3) the availability of supporting facilities such as space, media, and internet networks; (4) openness in sharing knowledge and experience; and (5) support from the principal and other stakeholders.

Structural and managerial support from schools is an important factor in the sustainability of Kombel. In addition, teachers who have intrinsic motivation tend to be more active and benefit more from Kombel activities. The openness factor also strengthens the effectiveness of Kombel, as it allows for in-depth discussions, exchange of good practices, and collective improvement of competencies. These findings confirm that the



optimal use of Kombel requires synergy between personal, institutional, and structural aspects to realize professional teachers and quality learning.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that the learning community (Kombel) has a strategic role in improving the competence of Indonesian teachers at the junior high school level. This is in line with the concept of *Professional Learning Community* (PLC) put forward by DuFour et al. (2016), which emphasizes the importance of collaboration, focus on student learning outcomes, and continuous professional development. Kombel has proven to be a space that allows teachers to share, reflect, and grow together in a collective spirit for the improvement of the quality of education.

The results of the study also show that the use of Kombel not only contributes to the technical aspects of learning, but also to the affective and motivational aspects of teachers. Teachers feel more confident, more inspired in developing learning strategies, and have a sense of belonging to their professional community. This is in line with Wenger's (1998) *Community of Practice* theory, which states that learning occurs effectively in social and collaborative contexts.

In addition, the results of questionnaires and interviews show that Kombel functions as a bridge between theory and practice. Teachers not only gain new insights, but also implement the results of discussions in daily learning activities. This shows that Kombel is not just a formal forum, but rather a professional work culture that lives in the school community.

However, several challenges were also found in the implementation of Kombel, especially related to time and facility limitations. These factors can hinder the sustainability of Kombel's activities if not managed properly. Therefore, support from school principals and education policy makers is very important so that Kombel can continue to be sustainable and have a real impact on improving the quality of education in schools.

Overall, the findings of this study strengthen Kombel's position as an effective approach in teacher professional development. With a structured design, institutional support, and high teacher commitment, Kombel can be the main pillar in creating quality and relevant learning in the era of the Independent Curriculum.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that the implementation of the learning community (Kombel) at the junior high school level in Soppeng Regency has been running in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum, with the active involvement of Indonesian teachers in discussion, collaboration, and sharing of good practices. Kombel has proven to be an effective forum in improving teacher competence, both in terms of planning, implementation, and learning evaluation. However, challenges such as time constraints are still obstacles that need to be overcome so that Kombel's sustainability is maintained.

The use of Kombel has a real positive impact on the learning process in the classroom, especially in terms of improving the quality of teaching methods, implementing appropriate strategies and approaches, and teachers' ability to overcome students' difficulties. In addition, Kombel is a reflective and collaborative forum that strengthens teachers' confidence and professionalism in carrying out their roles in the educational environment.



The effectiveness of Kombel is influenced by a number of important factors, including teachers' commitment and motivation, good time management, availability of supporting facilities, openness to change and innovation, and institutional support from principals and other stakeholders. Therefore, the sustainability of Kombel requires a synergy between structural support and a collaborative spirit at the individual and institutional levels.

Overall, Kombel can be used as a sustainable teacher professional development strategy that is relevant to the demands of 21st century learning. By optimizing supporting factors, Kombel has the potential to become the main pillar in building an adaptive, collaborative, and learning culture that has a direct impact on improving the quality of education in schools.

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