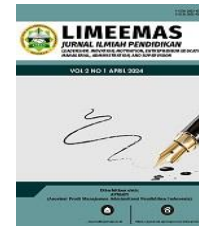


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PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Subjek pada penelitian ini adalah kepala sekolah, waka sarana dan prasarana, waka kesiswaan, guru, dan siswa. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Data dianalisis dengan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan verifikasi. Hasil penelitian dapat disimpulkan bahwa kepemimpinan kepala sekolah meliputi aspek, a) cara berkomunikasi b) pemberian motivasi, c) kemampuan memimpin d) pengambilan keputusan dan e) kekuasaan positif berada pada kategori sangat baik. Aspek mutu pendidikan didasarkan pada Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 19 tahun 2005 tentang delapan Standar Nasional Pendidikan yang telah dilaksanakan dengan baik.

Kata kunci: Kepemimpinan, Kepala Sekolah, Mutu Pendidikan

Abstract: This study aims to determine school principals' leadership in improving education quality. This research uses a qualitative method. The subjects in this study are school principals, waka of facilities and infrastructure, waka of student affairs, teachers, and students. Interviews, observations, and documentation were carried out in data collection. The data is analyzed by data reduction, data presentation, and verification. The results of the study can be concluded that the leadership of the Principal includes aspects a) how to communicate, b) providing motivation, c) leadership ability, d) decision-making, and e) positive power is in an outstanding category. The quality aspect of education is based on Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 concerning eight National Education Standards that have been implemented well.

Keywords: Leadership, Principal, Quality of Education

INTRODUCTION

The process of human resource development must touch various areas of life that must be

reflected in leaders' personalities, including education leaders such as school principals. Improving the quality of human resources, especially a principal as an educational leader in schools, is a demand and a necessity to improve the quality of education. The reason is simple considering that there is a relationship between the competence of a school principal and the success of the quality of education in the school where a principal leads. Schools with successful leaders or compelling leaders will impact the quality of education in the school (Harapan et al., 2024). This has been stated by Purwanto et al. (2024), namely that the performance and success of an organization is determined by leadership that has good competence.

The achievement of the quality and goals of education itself is determined by the ability and policies issued by its leaders to carry out their duties and functions in schools. Marsinah et al. (2024) define that people with high expectations for teaching staff and students are called school leaders who know much about their duties. This illustrates how vital school principals' leadership quality is in improving education quality and creating a pleasant organizational atmosphere, which impacts the school's success (M. et al., 2024). Nasar et al. (2024) explained that a school principal has professional competence in leading organizations in schools with the task of planning, regulating, and evaluating organizations and collaborating with the components in the school, namely teachers, in carrying out the teaching and learning process as an effort to educate the nation's life as one of the educational goals. The existence of the professionalism of the Principal and the development of the professionalism of education personnel will be easy to carry out based on the duties and functions they have (Novia et al., 2024); the Principal must understand the needs or requirements of the school he leads so that the competence of teachers increases and develops rapidly so that professional teachers are realized (Taufiqi & Purwanto, 2024).

Leading is a noble duty of a school principal. The leadership of the school principal is one of the leading efforts to encourage, influence, and direct teachers, students, and other parties who support the world of education to achieve the educational goals that are desired together (M. et al. et al., 2024). Purwanto et al. (2020) in its implementation, a school principal is required to achieve success in various aspects, including professional school management, practical learning activities, management of facilities and infrastructure, management of employment in schools, management of a comfortable school environment, and management between schools and the surrounding community. In line with this, Purwanto (2021) argues that a professional principal positively impacts schools, one of the new paradigms in education management. This positive impact can be seen from the improvement in the quality of education, professional leadership, effective management of all educational components, quality organizational culture, solid and compact team, intelligent, creative, independent, actively involved in society, transparency in the management of

willingness management towards changes both from psychological and physical aspects, continuous evaluation with various improvements (M. Purwanto, 2021).

A school principal must have a clear and directed vision and mission and a complete and oriented education management strategy towards good quality education. This strategy is a systematically conceptualized and coordinated effort to improve the quality of educational services so that it is directed to students, students' parents, alums, educators, employees, the government, and the community. One of the duties of a school principal is to include aspects of education implementation that have a vital role, especially in creating and realizing educational goals, which are the main priorities that must be achieved (Agustin & Purwanto, 2022). This can be achieved because the smooth implementation of academic tasks is greatly influenced by the ability of a school principal to carry out his duties and functions as a leader. A school principal has a task that requires professionalism so that the desired quality of education can be achieved, especially in the profession he carries out as a leader of an educational institution (Hidayad et al., 2023).

The results of the observation of the Principal's leadership can be interpreted as the Principal's leadership has been carried out well despite various shortcomings. Supervising the performance of educational components such as teachers and staff is based on procedures to improve the quality of education. Good principal leadership can be seen in the discipline of teachers in carrying out teaching duties in a classroom that is always disciplined (M. et al., 2023). This is supported by the percentage of attendance where an e-finger or an electronic-based attendance system has been implemented based on teachers' fingerprints. An average attendance of 95% shows the percentage of good teacher attendance in their duties. According to the researcher's observations, this is due to the example or example shown by a school principal who always comes on time and attends if there are no crucial school affairs. This attitude improves teachers' motivation, considering the Principal has also set a good example (M. et al., 2022).

Leadership shows aspects in the form of traits a leader possesses in carrying out his duties and functions in school as someone authorized to regulate the implementation of the educational process in a good school. This is also stated by (Marsinah, Hatidah, et al., 2024). Namely, the ability of a person to move, direct, and at the same time influence the mindset, the way each member works to be independent in working, especially in decision-making, for the sake of accelerating the achievement of the goals that have been set, is the meaning of leadership. In line with this, Edi Harapan et al. (2023) stated that the success of a school principal in creating values for educators and students is greatly influenced by the ability of the Principal to direct and regulate all components of education itself.

This will be realized if a school principal can lead with good creativity and innovation in

carrying out his duties and responsibilities to achieve rapid development. (Harapan et al., 2022) Explained that the Principal's leadership aspect as a leader is a duty as an educational administrator responsible for the smooth implementation of good teaching in the school he leads. In addition, to be able to carry out their duties and functions well and professionally, a school principal must understand, master, and be able to carry out activities related to his function as a leader (Harapan et al., 2024). The Principal must realize the vision, mission, and goals by utilizing all school resources as a manager. In addition, a school principal must be able to overcome and innovate with various problems in the school, think analytically and conceptually, and always strive to be a mediator teacher in solving multiple issues faced by the education staff who are his subordinates, in addition to trying to make the decisions taken can satisfy all existing ones (Rusmaladi et al., 2021). Another aspect of a manager is that the Principal must realize planning, organizing, directing, and supervising in carrying out his duties and functions.

For this reason, the Principal should be able to make plans and work programs oriented to improving the quality of education, considering that this school has been said to be mature based on the experience of previous leaders. Therefore, the role of a school principal manager is a must so that he is always able and able to improve the quality of education. Good, from the preparation of professional teachers, the availability of facilities and infrastructure to the satisfaction of the services provided to the students (Darusman et al., 2020; Riyany et al., 2021). This very strategic task and function requires high creativity from a school principal, namely by applying all the ideas and ideas that have been obtained from the results of the meeting of teachers and the school supervisory board to create the quality of education that is expected together. Thus, to be creative and innovative, a school principal must have at least two critical variables: ideas and works. An idea and idea without real work will only give birth to wishful thinking and no change, and vice versa if work without new ideas will only create a setback.

METHODOLOGY

The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive. The informants used are school principals, infrastructure officials, student affairs officers, teachers, and students. The data was obtained through interviews, documentation, and observations. Data is analyzed by data triangulation, namely data reduction, presentation, and verification.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The utilization and use of existing resources that can be carried out effectively and

efficiently to achieve the school's vision and mission is part of the Principal's leadership. A school principal is fully responsible for implementing learning in an educational institution. As an organization and an academic institution, schools must implement and achieve the targets set by the government. This target refers to Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, later refined by Government Regulation Number 32 of 2013 concerning National Education Standards (SNP). The aspects and standards that have been fulfilled include the following:

1. Content Standards

Content standards have been determined, including aspects of content in the curriculum that are applied in schools' teaching and learning process. This is important because content standards can guide educators in developing material delivered to students. According to Tuckman, the educational curriculum can be classified into two parts, namely content and process. The content is related to the material or material that will be delivered to students, while the process is associated with the implementation rather than the content itself. These two components must be considered, considering that they are closely related. The curriculum also describes the methods, teaching models applied, planning, implementation, and evaluation techniques of a teaching and learning process in the classroom. A school principal must conduct educational supervision by checking the content standards in a learning implementation plan that teachers will implement. Teachers' authority in curriculum development is a teacher's right and the Principal's obligation to achieve it. The curriculum must be by the content standards set by the government, in this case, the South Sumatra provincial education office, which is the supervisor of the implementation of education for the high school level and equivalent.

2. Process Standards

The education that is carried out is a process that must be passed and implemented, considering the existence of the curriculum in its application or application through a stage or what is called a process. The fact of process standards is by operational standards. The procedures set by the government make a significant contribution to targeted education in line with the established regulations outlined in a decision. Implementing a good teaching and learning process will create the efficiency and effectiveness of an educational program designed by the government in such a way. The process aspect is one part that should be considered. Considering this aspect, the implementation of education needs to improve the quality of education.

3. Graduate Competency Standards

The existence of predetermined competency standards for graduates from an educational institution is essential. This is because the quality of graduates is the benchmark for an education

from a school. Graduates with good competence tend to have good quality education, and vice versa. At this time, graduate competency standards are based on implementing the Computer-Based National Examination (UNBK), which is the government's decision to select graduates. The success rate of graduates is characterized by the achievement of results or grades obtained by students, which teachers cannot manipulate because it has been implemented computer-based. The phenomenon that occurs today, where the evaluation is carried out computerized by involving the internet network in its implementation, has produced graduates with almost 100% achievement in implementing the Computer-Based National Examination (UNBK). However, implementing the entrance exam at state universities is still far from the expectations, as only 10% of students have successfully entered state universities.

4. Standards for Educators and Education Personnel

As educators, teachers are expected to be able to provide exemplary performance in the teaching and learning process, especially in education. There are rapid changes in this era of globalization, and teachers must adapt to the development of the existing times. The phenomenon that is happening today is the need for equitable distribution of educators who have good quality. In urban areas, there are professional, quality, and reliable teachers. It is another case where remote areas need more good teacher quality. If studied more deeply, this indicates that the low level of education in remote areas is something the government must consider by creating an equitable distribution of education personnel. Thus, the competence of graduates and students can be evenly distributed, not only in urban areas.

5. Facilities and Infrastructure Standards

Educational facilities and infrastructure include several things, be it learning rooms, workshops, laboratories, sports facilities, teaching resources, and other aspects, including cutting-edge technology, to achieve good learning outcomes. Fulfilling facilities and infrastructure as an educational standard is essential, considering that this supports the teaching and learning process. This is also determined by the allocation set by the government to fulfill facilities and infrastructure standards. The existence of educational reforms that prioritize improving the quality of education is essential to pay attention to. The standard of the facilities and infrastructure is in management and maintenance, which is charged directly to the school. This is a significant task and responsibility for educational institutions. There are aspects and standards whose management, procurement, and maintenance involve all components of the school. Be it teachers, students, or parents of students, we support and ensure the fulfillment of learning facilities suitable for the world of education.

6. Management Standards

The management standards set by the government are contained in the education management of the National Education Standards (SNP), which includes aspects of management at the level of regional and central educator units. The existence of this management shows that the division of authority is expected to be a guideline in fulfilling national education standards. Good education management is needed to support and create synergy in the learning process in an educational institution. Regional and central synergy is a benchmark for fulfilling educational facilities and infrastructure.

7. Financing Standards

Financing standards are related to the budget for fulfilling the National Education Standards (SNP). In today's era, financing standards are determined by the government and are reported by the school periodically. Although the education budget that the government has set is 20% of the State Expenditure Budget (APBN), its implementation tends to improve teacher performance and the quality of education with the provision of adequate facilities and infrastructure. Performance in education will only be good if it is balanced with a sufficient budget. The modern life of the global community must experience the reality that "education is expensive." The leaders of this country realize that the education budget is essential, and they know that the nation's future depends very much on the quality of education. However, knowledge and awareness of the importance of education funds, according to Munawar S., need to be balanced with adequate commitment and discipline.

8. Educational Assessment Standards

Educational assessment includes assessment of learning outcomes by educators, by academic units, by the government, and by graduation. Evaluation is an effort to improve quality. Implementing teacher evaluation is more appropriate if it is carried out to help students learn or by the school to explain the achievement of student learning outcomes correctly. Classroom assessment is a process of collecting data and using information by teachers to make decisions, in this case, assessing students' learning outcomes based on their learning stages. Class assessments are carried out through various methods such as written tests (paper and pencil tests) and portfolios (assessment of work results through a collection of works, product assessments, project assessments, and performance assessments). The Curriculum Center of the Ministry of National Education presents classroom assessment guidelines with assessment techniques: performance, attitude, written, projects, products, and portfolios, as well as self-assessment as a reference for teachers in implementing competency-based assessments. If teachers in learning activities fully enforce this system, then the consequence that must be faced is that teachers must be more professional in carrying out their duties.

Discussion

The Principal plays a vital role in implementing content standards that ensure that the curriculum and learning materials follow national regulations and student development standards. Good leadership will encourage the development of competency-based learning programs that focus on academic aspects and 21st-century character and skills development. School principals must also actively integrate cultural values and localities to make education more relevant to the community's needs (Astawa, 2015).

The Principal ensures that teaching and learning activities occur effectively and interactively in the standard process. Direct supervision of the implementation of learning, as well as providing feedback to teachers, is one of the keys to the success of the educational process. School principals also facilitate training and professional development for teachers to use innovative methods, such as project-based learning (Nurlina & Bahri, 2021). Thus, the educational process not only focuses on academic outcomes but also encourages the active participation of students.

The Principal's leadership plays a vital role in achieving graduate competency standards. He must ensure graduates have adequate knowledge, social skills, and good attitudes. Continuous evaluation of student competency achievement and analysis of learning outcomes are used to develop improvement programs. The success of this standard will improve the quality of graduates who are ready to contribute to society (Habsy et al., 2024).

The Principal is also responsible for ensuring that educators and education personnel in the school meet the standards that have been set. This includes academic qualifications, professional certifications, and the ability to develop yourself continuously. Effective principals will encourage teachers' professional development through training, seminars, and collaboration between teachers (Yanti et al., 2023). Thus, the quality of teaching can improve along with improving teachers' competence.

Regarding facilities and infrastructure standards, school principals must ensure the availability of adequate facilities to support the learning process, such as classrooms, laboratories, and libraries. Good infrastructure dramatically affects student learning outcomes and comfort in teaching activities. In addition, school principals need to ensure that all facilities are maintained and managed correctly to function optimally (Permendikbud No. 24 of 2007).

Effective leadership can also be seen in applying management, financing, and assessment standards. School principals must be able to manage the budget transparently and accountable to support educational programs. In addition, the assessment system must be comprehensive,

including students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor evaluations. Collaboration with all stakeholders, such as teachers, school committees, and parents, ensures that schools are managed professionally and sustainably (Widayanthi et al., 2024). Balanced implementation of all these standards will improve the overall quality of education.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion of the Principal's leadership in Improving the Quality of Education, it can be concluded that first, the leadership of the Principal includes aspects: a) how to communicate, which is in the outstanding category by providing clear, sound, fluent, well-structured and efficient information, b) providing motivation that is in the outstanding category by motivating, directing, and provide solutions, c) leadership skills are in the outstanding category with participatory and active, d) decision-making is in the outstanding category with decisions based on consensus deliberation, and e) positive power is in the outstanding category with a sense of comfort and family atmosphere by the Principal. Second, the quality aspect of education is based on Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards for Education, including graduate competency standards, process standards, content standards, assessment standards, education standards, and education personnel, facilities, and infrastructure standards, management standards and financing standards have been implemented well.

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