

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AT MADRASAH IBTIDAIYAH AL HIKMAH BEKASI CITY

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui peran kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan sehingga dapat menghasilkan proses dan produk pendidikan yang bermutu. Pendidikan yang bermutu diharapkan dapat meningkatkan kehidupan yang lebih sejahtera untuk masa depan yang lebih baik. Demi terwujudnya pendidikan yang bermutu dibutuhkan peran seorang pemimpin dalam lembaga pendidikan, yaitu kepala sekolah. Kepala sekolah merupakan motor penggerak untuk mewujudkan lingkungan pendidikan yang berkualitas. Tugas kepala sekolah sangat luas yang mencakup pengelolaan dan pengembangan sekolah, di antaranya adalah melakukan monitoring dan evaluasi secara berkelanjutan terhadap keberhasilan program yang ditetapkan, merencanakan dan menyusun program kerja yang disepakatikan melakukan komunikasi yang baik antara guru, peserta didik, orang tua peserta didik dan masyarakat. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Subjek penelitian adalah kepala sekolah, data dikumpulkan dengan teknik wawancara mendalam dengan informan, observasi dan dokumentasi. Berdasarkan hasil dan analisis temuan implementasi gaya kepemimpinan situasional kepala sekolah MI Al Hikmah. Keberhasilan suatu organisasi tidak akan lepas dari berbagai faktor yang mendukungnya. Gaya kepemimpinan situasional dapat mempengaruhi kinerja guru dan tenaga kependidikan. Hasil penelitian ini adalah: Pertama. Kepemimpinan kepala sekolah memiliki gaya kepemimpinan situasional. Hal ini berdasarkan pada proses penentuan kebijakan dan pengambilan keputusan yang menyesuaikan dengan kondisi guru dan peserta didik. Kedua, kepala sekolah dapat menjalankan banyak peran yaitu sebagai pendidik, manajer, administrator, supervisor, pemimpin, dan motivator yang baik. Kepala sekolah dapat menjadi contoh dalam menjalankan tugasnya. Oleh sebab itu tipe dan karakter kepala sekolah harus diperhatikan dan dinilai dengan baik.

Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah, Mutu

ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the role of the principal in improving the quality of education in order to produce quality educational processes and outcomes. Quality education is expected to improve welfare and create a better future. To realize quality education, the role of a leader in an educational institution is essential, namely the school principal. The principal acts as the driving

force in creating a quality educational environment. The duties of a principal are extensive, including managing and developing the school, conducting continuous monitoring and evaluation of the success of established programs, planning and preparing agreed work programs, and maintaining good communication among teachers, students, parents, and the community.

This research is qualitative in nature and uses a qualitative method. The research subjects were the principal, and the data were collected through in-depth interviews with informants, observation, and documentation. Based on the findings and analysis of the implementation of the situational leadership style of the principal at MI Al Hikmah, the success of an organization cannot be separated from the various supporting factors. A situational leadership style can influence the performance of teachers and educational staff. The results of this study are as follows: First, the principal's leadership demonstrates a situational leadership style. This is reflected in the process of policy determination and decision-making that adapts to the conditions of teachers and students. Second, the principal is able to perform many roles, namely as an educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, and motivator effectively. The principal can also serve as a role model in carrying out duties. Therefore, the type and character of a principal should be carefully considered and evaluated.

Keywords: *principal leadership, quality of education*

INTRODUCTION

One of the reform agendas in the field of education is the delegation of education management authority to local governments, as per Law No. 23 of 2014. The law states that the authority of local governments is not only limited to aspects of financing, human resources and facilities, but also concerns the curriculum, learning, evaluation and measurement, learning facilities and tools, learning methods and times, books as well as the allocation of expenditure and the use of the budget, all of which are the authority of schools. Therefore, school principals and teachers are required to be responsible for the quality of the learning process and outcomes in order to improve the quality of education nationally (Rosyada, 2013).

Referring to the law that was revised three times from 1999, 2004, and 2014, shows that the era of educational reform is a monumental in the history of education in the Republic of Indonesia, where great authority is given directly to schools. Schools can develop their own innovations in developing the treatment of students in learning, even schools are given the authority to set their own policies, for

example, at school will apply a learning time of five days or six days a week. In addition, whether the school will compile its own textbooks used according to the curriculum used, or buy books by other teachers. The most important thing is that students will be more accomplished, ready to participate in competitions both at school and outside of school, in accordance with the set competency standards. Therefore, if the achievement of students decreases, then the public cannot blame the education office, both district and city. On the other hand, the public can ask the principal and teachers, because the issue of curriculum and learning is entirely in the hands of the school.

In line with the times, education is one of the determinants of the quality of human resources. Nowadays, the excellence of a nation is no longer identified with the natural wealth it has, but rather emphasizes the excellence of its human resources, because the quality of human resources contributes positively to the quality of education. The quality of education is often assessed by good conditions, conditions that are met, and complete components in education. These components are inputs, processes, outputs, education personnel, facilities and infrastructure, and costs.

The principal is the key driver for the development and progress of the school and is responsible for increasing accountability for the success of students and their programs. In order to achieve it well if the leadership of the school principal is able to carry out his duties, authority, and responsibilities (Purwanti, Murniati and Yusrizal, 2014). School principals must be good at leading groups and delegating tasks and authority to their subordinates, both teachers and education staff in their schools.

Reflecting on this explanation, the principal received a very large task demand. He must be strong and have a situational leadership style to encourage all his teachers to work totally in educating his students, have a vision for the progress of the school, be consistent with his vision, but remain democratic and respect the views of the staff. School principals must have good expectations of their students, provide strengthening of basic skills for their students, so that they can develop well in any profession, and be able to create a conducive atmosphere for teachers and employees and create a comfortable atmosphere for students (Rosyada, 2013).

There are two factors that can explain the efforts to improve the quality of education so far have not been successful. First, the education development strategy so far has been more input-oriented. Such a strategy relies more on the assumption that if all educational inputs have been fulfilled, such as the provision of teaching materials and other learning tools, the provision of educational facilities, teacher training and other education personnel, then the school will automatically be able to produce quality outputs as expected. It turns out that the input-output strategy does not fully function in educational institutions, but only occurs in economic and industrial institutions (Hanushek, 1981). Second, the management of education has been more macro-oriented, regulated by the bureaucracy at the central level. As a result, many of the factors projected at the central level do not occur or do not work as they should at the school level. In line with regulations on the delegation of authority from the central government to regions and schools, the role of madrasah heads has become very vital. The role of the principal will greatly determine the movement forward or backward of education.

Schools are educational institutions that have various dimensions that are interrelated and mutually supportive, in which there are teaching and learning activities to improve the quality and development of students' potential. The principal has the highest position in the school, therefore the principal and teachers must work together so that they can improve the quality of the school. According to Priansa (2014: 49) the principal is a professional official in the school organization, who is in charge of managing all school resources and working with teachers, staff and other employees in educating students to achieve educational goals. Professional school principals will adjust the needs of the world of education and be able to develop in accordance with the development of the times in the era of globalization.

Quality schools are not born by themselves. Quality schools must be formed, planned and implemented properly. In its implementation, cooperation between stakeholders is needed, and commitment from school residents. Wahyusumidjo (2011: 83) explained that the principal is a functional teacher who is given an additional task to lead an institution or school where the teaching and learning

process is held or a place where there is interaction between the teacher who gives the lesson and the students who receive the lesson.

Leadership is an important factor that must be possessed by a school principal. According to Kartono in Priansa (2014:162), leadership is the ability to provide constructive influence to others to make a cooperative effort to achieve the planned goals. Meanwhile, according to Syarifudin (2011: 108), leadership is a process of interaction between leaders and other people who are led in a group or organization. The leader in carrying out his leadership influences and directs and moves all members of the group to empower the resources of the organization he leads to achieve the organization's goals.

Based on the results of the initial interviews, it is known that in 2024 the principal of MI Al Hikmah will make many changes in all fields so that it will obtain more than 400 students. The change began with the implementation of the Independent Curriculum which requires active learning and explores the interests and talents of students, so that many activities carried out in the school receive considerable attention from students' parents, the surrounding community and the social media user community. The changes planned by the principal are to habituate the character in the school environment, adding special programs for religious and extracurricular learning hours. This has a great influence on the consideration of parents in sending their children to MI Al Hikmah. The increase in the number of interested people also uses a strategy carried out by the principal, namely promotion through social media about the activities carried out by students. The efforts made by the principal turned out to attract the attention of the parents of students because the school was able to compete with other schools that excelled first.

Schools are complex and unique institutions. It is complex because the school as an organization has various dimensions that are interrelated and mutually determining. Schools are said to be unique because they have their own character, where the teaching and learning process occurs. Because of its complex and unique nature, schools as organizations require a high level of coordination. According to Wahyusumidjo (Priansa, 2014: 33) the success of a school is the success of the principal. According to Sumayang (Priansa, 2014: 12) it is explained that quality is the level at which the design of the specification of a product of goods and services

is in accordance with its function and use, in addition to that quality is the level at which a product of goods and services is in accordance with the design of its specifications. In this regard, the quality of education can be seen in two ways, namely referring to the educational process and educational outcomes. A quality education process will be achieved if all components of education are involved in the educational process itself, meaning that quality schools are the same as quality schools which refer to the achievement of planned goals.

MI Al Hikmah emphasizes more on the formation of student character as well as the learning outcomes of its students. The principal can manage the school conditions well even if new students are not selected for their academic ability. This makes MI Al Hikmah have students with various characters and abilities. The parenting style of teachers at MI Al Hikmah for students is to pay attention to the needs of students in understanding their character. The school applies the same curriculum as the government curriculum, only the difference lies in the addition of hours for religious subjects, namely tahfidz and muhadhoroh.

The principal at MI Al Hikmah also implements learning based on pluralistic intelligence. This school is an elementary school that has parallel classes, with 3 rombels each for grades 1 – 3 and 2 rombels each for grades 4 – 6. Every teacher in the school also makes learning fun and interesting. It starts with marching on the front porch of the classroom, nail checks and uniform neatness and memorization of daily prayers. This is done to prepare students to receive learning. The leadership carried out by the principal to build a quality school is quite successful because the principal makes programs that attract the interest of students and the school is able to compete with developments.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach. This type of research is qualitative research. This research uses a qualitative method. The subject of the study was the principal, the data was collected by in-depth interview techniques with informants, observation and documentation. Based on the results and analysis of the findings of the implementation of the situational leadership style of the principal of MI Al

Hikmah Bekasi City. In general, the steps in analyzing data are as follows: Data presentation, observation, and drawing conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 2007)

The formulation used in this study: 1) What is the leadership style of the principal at MI Al Hikmah Bekasi City?, 2) What is the role of the principal in building a quality school at MI Al Hikmah Bekasi City?

DISCUSSION

According to Nawawi, leadership is the process of directing, guiding, influencing or supervising thoughts, feelings or actions (Hadari Nawawi, 1985: 33). Meanwhile, according to Robert G. Owens, leadership is an involvement that is done deliberately to influence people's behavior (Robert G. Owen: 132).

As for Jacobs' view, leadership is a process of giving meaning (meaningful direction) to collective efforts and that results in the willingness to make the desired effort to achieve the goal (Jacobc and Jaques, 1990: 281). From some of the definitions above, it can be understood that leadership is the process of activities of a person who has the art or ability to influence, coordinate, move individuals without being forced from any party to be able to work together regularly in an effort to achieve common goals that have been set or formulated. The leadership factor in leadership cannot be separated from the person being led factor, both are interdependent so one cannot exist without the other. Leadership is a process of interaction between both parties, namely the leader and those who are led in human relationships.

Situational leadership theory is a further development of trait and behavior leadership theory that is considered to fail to explain the best leadership model for various situations. The situational approach or contingency approach is a theory that tries to find a middle ground between the view that says that there are universal principles of organization and management, and the view that each organization is unique and has different situations so that it must be faced with a certain leadership style.

According to Majir (2014), to achieve a successful leadership in an organization, including the world of education, leaders need a leadership style to influence their subordinates. Leadership style can be studied in several approaches,

one of which is the situational approach. This approach focuses on the various leadership styles that are most effectively applied in a given situation. According to Fred Fielder, successful leadership depends on applying leadership styles to certain situations. This means that the success of a leadership in any organization, including education, depends on the leader in understanding the different circumstances or situations he or she is facing.

This situational leadership model arises because previous leadership models could not provide answers to the problems that arise in leadership. From the results of the experts' study, the situational leadership model contains the following points of thought:

- 1) Where the leader is in carrying out his duties is influenced by situational factors, namely the type of work, the organizational environment, the characteristics of the individuals involved in the organization.
- 2) The most effective leadership behavior is leadership behavior that is adjusted to the maturity level of subordinates.
- 3) An effective leader is a leader who always helps subordinates in developing themselves from immature to mature.
- 4) Leadership behavior tends to vary from one situation to another. Therefore, in situational leadership, it is important for every leader to make a good diagnosis of the situation Leadership behavior patterns vary according to the existing situation.

The leadership of the principal has a huge influence on the development of the school because this situational leadership style contributes as much as 75% to the development of the school. Considering the history of the development of MI Al Hikmah which ten years ago was still lagging behind in terms of buildings or learning outcomes with other schools.

Based on the results of the interviews, documentation data, and interview process above, it can be concluded that the leadership system of the principal of MI Al Hikmah has a situational leadership style. This statement is supported by some administrative evidence and excerpts from interviews with several teachers and principals concerned.

This leadership is also closely related to the role of manager, where managers often apply several things in managing and organizing an institution and institution, a school system that is formed in an organizational structure that each has a coordinator as the person in charge. This is often referred to as control management. This control management is the source of strength of the leadership system at MI Al Hikmah.

The role of the leader as an administrator is to carry out the administrative system as well as possible and will create several programs and policies. The implementation is based on the formation of the organization and the teams involved. Like every teacher, they must make teaching materials that are outsourced and collected to the curriculum coordinator. The system of archives related to incoming and outgoing letters has been regulated by the SOP.

The role of leaders as motivators must be clear, at MI Al Hikmah a program is held that will motivate teachers and education staff to update their abilities. The teacher learning program is a form of appreciation that should be proud. The training is held by the Central Ministry of Religion which is carried out once a month. In addition, the principal encourages teachers or education staff to continue their studies to S1 or S2. Several teachers and education personnel are regularly sent to conduct comparative studies to more advanced schools. The principal as a motivator does not have to be the principal who has to provide motivation because he has listened every day but by sending teachers to compare and motivate himself to be better.

As an innovator, an effective 5-day school policy was made for students who previously carried out 6 days of school. So from Monday to Friday is an effective school day for students. On Saturdays in the first and third weeks, students are used to channel their talents and interests through extracurricular activities. Meanwhile, the second and fourth weeks of Saturday are used by teachers to study together.

The principal must first improve himself before determining the quality of the school. Sudarwan Danim (Priansa, 2014: 21) suggested that improving the quality of schools or quality schools can be done by involving five dominant factors, namely:

1. The leadership of the Principal must have and understand the work vision clearly, be able and willing to work hard, have a high work drive, be diligent, steadfast in work, provide optimal services, and strong work discipline.
2. The approach taken to students is to make "children the center" so that students' competencies and abilities can be explored so that schools can inventory the strengths that exist in students.
3. Teachers must improve the competence and professionalism of teachers' work in seminars, MGMP, workshops and training so that the results of these activities are applied in schools.
4. The existence of a fixed curriculum can facilitate the expected quality standards so that the goals can be achieved optimally.
5. The Cooperation Network is not limited to the school environment and the community alone (parents and the community) but with other quality and quality schools.

This leadership is also closely related to the role of manager, where managers often apply several things in managing and organizing an institution and institution, a school system that is formed in an organizational structure where each has a coordinator as the person in charge. This is often referred to as control management. This control management is the source of strength of the leadership system at MIM PK Kartasura. Stoop & Johnson in Samino (2014: 56) put forward the fourteen roles of elementary school principals, namely: (1) principals as business managers, (2) principals as office managers, (3) principals as administrators, (4) principals as professional leaders, (5) principals as organizers, (6) principals as motivators or staff drivers, (7) principals as supervisors, (8) Principal as curriculum consultant, (9) Principal as Educator, (10) Principal as Psychologist, (11) Principal as School Administrator, (12) Principal as a Good Executive, (13) Principal as School Relations Officer with the community, and (14) Principal as Community Leader.

Based on the results of this study, it can be described that at MI Al Hikmah has a role in leadership, namely as an administrator as well as a supervisor. So it is very relevant to the theory above of the fourteen roles, which can be classified into two, namely the principal as an education administrator and as an education supervisor.

In accordance with the results of Setiyati's (2014) research, there is a positive and significant influence between the leadership of the principal on teacher performance with an effective contribution of 18.22%.

The strong character that the leader has will also have a positive influence on his leadership style and success. therefore in determining the type and character of the leader must be observed and assessed properly. The factors that affect the success and failure of leadership in developing the institution they lead can be measured or marked by four things, namely morality, discipline, esprit de corps, and self-proficiency (Praire, 2015: 23).

1. Moral. Morality is a state of a person's soul and emotions that affects the willingness to carry out tasks and will affect the results of the implementation of individual and organizational tasks.
2. Discipline. Discipline is unwavering and sincere obedience to the orders or instructions of superiors and applicable regulations. The best discipline is one that is based on personal discipline.
3. The Soul of the Corpse. The soul of the korsa is the loyalty, pride and enthusiasm that is instilled in the members including their leadership towards their organization. In an organization that has a high corsa spirit, the sense of dissatisfaction of subordinates can be extinguished by the spirit of the organization.
4. Proficiency. Proficiency is the ability to carry out tasks with good results in a short time by using energy and facilities as efficiently as possible and taking place in an orderly manner.

The perception of the principal as a good leader at MI Al Hikmah is a leader who is able to realize good school quality and is trusted by the community. A quality school is one that can serve all walks of life. Because currently many superior schools are still holding academic selection. MI Al Hikmah is a school that can serve all conditions of children, because it implements multiple intelligence learning.

CONCLUSION

Educational leadership is a strategic process in moving, motivating, and directing all elements of educational institutions collaboratively in order to achieve the goals that have been set effectively. One of the prominent approaches is the situational leadership model, which was born as a solution to the complexity of leadership problems that cannot be answered by conventional models. This model emphasizes that a leader's effectiveness is highly dependent on the ability to adapt to situational factors as well as the leader's active role in helping the development of subordinate maturity. There are four main styles in this model, namely Telling-Directing, Selling-Coaching, Participating-Supporting, and Delegating-Monitoring. The real implementation of this model can be seen at MI Al Hikmah, where the principal applies a situational style in policy-making that is adjusted to the level of readiness of teachers and education personnel. In addition to adopting a flexible style, the principal also carries out a multidimensional role as an educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator who is able to be a role model for his environment. The strong character of the leader in assessing the needs of subordinates has a positive influence on the success of the organization, where coaching is carried out personally—both to improve weak characters and strengthen good characters. Through effective communication and proper division of responsibilities, situational leadership is able to create work harmonization that prevents misunderstandings and encourages sincere and professional performance in educational institutions..

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