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THE ROLE OF PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF TEACHING PERSONNEL

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the role, programs, and leadership strategies of principals in improving the quality of educators in Islamic elementary schools (SDI) in Malang City. This study uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through interviews, observations, and documentation. Data analysis is carried out by reducing, presenting, and drawing conclusions from the collected data, as well as checking the validity of the data through creativity, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The results of the study indicate that the role of the principal includes several aspects, namely as an educator, manager, supervisor, administrator, leader, innovator, and motivator. The principal's programs include program formation, assignments, bringing in expert speakers, and conducting further studies and comparative studies. The strategy for developing the quality of educators involves awards, supervision, training, seminars, workshops, and education and training. Supporting factors for principal leadership in improving the quality of educators include high enthusiasm and cooperation, while inhibiting factors are differences in educator character and lack of adequate facilities and infrastructure. This study provides important insights into how principal leadership can improve the quality of educators through various roles, programs, and appropriate strategies as well as the support and challenges faced.
Keywords: Leadership; Quality; Educators.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran, program, dan strategi kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu tenaga pendidik di

sekolah dasar Islam (SDI) di Kota Malang. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan dengan mereduksi, menyajikan, dan menarik kesimpulan dari data yang terkumpul, serta melakukan pengecekan keabsahan data melalui credibility, transferability, dependability, dan confirmability. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa peran kepala sekolah meliputi beberapa aspek, yakni sebagai pendidik, manajer, supervisor, administrator, pemimpin, inovator, dan motivator. Program kepala sekolah antara lain pembentukan program, penugasan, mendatangkan narasumber ahli, serta melaksanakan studi lanjut dan studi banding. Strategi pengembangan mutu pendidik melibatkan penghargaan, supervisi, pelatihan, seminar, workshop, serta pendidikan dan pelatihan. Faktor pendukung kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu tenaga pendidik antara lain semangat dan kerjasama yang tinggi, sedangkan faktor penghambatnya adalah perbedaan karakter pendidik dan kurangnya sarana dan prasarana yang memadai. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan penting tentang bagaimana kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dapat meningkatkan mutu pendidik melalui berbagai peran, program, dan strategi yang tepat serta dukungan dan tantangan yang dihadapi.
Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan; Mutu; Pendidik.

A. INTRODUCTION

Education is an important aspect of human life in this world. Everyone needs this aspect, especially in this global era. There are many challenges faced by humans to survive. Thus, through education these challenges will be answered and resolved for their better lives. In addition, education is actually one of the vital determinants of human resources which in the world of education are educators or educational staff. The development and progress of a nation do not only depend on natural resources but also more importantly on human resources (Octoviani, Aniza, and Afrida Sary Puspita, 2023).

Good education is usually supported by a good environment, direction, and learning system and so on. One component that has a strong influence on the education process is the role of educators who transfer knowledge and teach good behavior and moral values to students. Good and quality educators are educators who can overcome challenges in a relatively short time. However, E. Mulyasa shows that the success of a school as an educational institution is determined by three roles; educators, principals, and supervisors and all three are basically supporting elements in education (E. Mulyasa, 2012).

Among the three important figures, the principal holds the strongest authority in making policies in schools (Suherni, et al, 2023). Although the other two authorities have their specific authority, they still have to obey the principal. Therefore, the success of educational institutions is highly dependent on the role of the principal. Madrasahs as Islamic educational institutions specifically take an

important place in empowering the quality of educators in making learning effective.

Quality education is highly dependent on effective principal leadership. Transformational leadership, in particular, has been shown to have a positive impact on staff motivation and school culture. Research shows that transformational leadership can create positive change, increase teacher morale, and strengthen collaboration between them. Principals who apply this leadership style encourage continuous professional development and create a culture that supports educator growth (Wilson Heenan I, et al, 2023).

It is undeniable that the strongest element in every educational institution is the principal who has strong authority to manage all activities in the educational institution. According to Tony Bush, the principal must have a professional background. Interestingly, on average, the principal is a successful educator as an educator who has credibility in the profession and has a good background (Tony Bush, 1986). In addition, the principal does not only function as a functional educator, but also as a manager. Abdullah Munir stated that the growth of the performance of educators and employees depends on the interpersonal communication of the principal, and the ability to lead the madrasah (Abdullah Munir, 2008).

Furthermore, according to Mulyono, the principal is not a manager in a production unit that produces inanimate objects, such as a factory manager that produces shoes, paper, sugar, and so on (Mulyono, 2009). But more than that, they are managers as leaders who are responsible for a conductive environment of opportunity for members to utilize and improve their potential to the maximum.

As an educational leader, the principal also plays a role in creating an environment that supports the professional development of teachers and strengthens the quality of learning in schools. Therefore, the quality of education is greatly influenced by leadership that is able to manage and empower teachers effectively (Luo X, 2024).

In short, the position of the principal can determine the direction of the institution (Sumiati, Teti, 2023). The principal as an educational leader is expected to coordinate, mobilize, and develop the potential quality of educators, students, and employees. Educators are the most important component in the learning process, therefore improving the quality of an educator must always be improved. In addition, in securing the quality of learning services in schools, the professionalism and performance of educators in managing the teaching and learning process must be improved through total and continuous principal supervision services.

Achieving good quality schools will require various quality school network activities. School quality here is meant as a complete school that can provide satisfaction to the school community. Therefore, it can be said in this connection that school quality is inherent in the role of the principal's leadership to utilize

various available educational resources, one of which is by improving the quality of teaching staff (Etisnawati, 2020).

According to the Researcher, SDI Surya Buana has very good quality, which achievement has an impact on students, thus suppressing the quality of the school, including the first, an Islamic school with character always makes new breakthroughs in developing education with a local perspective. One form of developing learning activities that are insightful of work. Second, the facilities and infrastructure are quite complete. The achievements obtained have experienced quite rapid development and are able to compete with other elementary schools both in academic and non-academic fields (https://sdisuryabuana.sch.id/).

B. RESEARCH METHOD

In accordance with the problem that is the focus because the data to be captured has qualitative quality. The researcher uses a qualitative approach because in accordance with the focus of the research the data presented is qualitative descriptive data and not numbers. In addition, the qualitative approach is more widely used in research on social aspects.

Qualitative descriptive research is used in this study, because the researcher wants to describe and illustrate "The Role of Principal Leadership in Improving the Quality of Educators at SDI Surya Buana Malang".

The location of this research was carried out at SDI Surya Buana Malang. The first research instrument is an interview guide, the second is documentation, the third is stationery and the fourth is an information provider or resource person. While the research subjects in this study are the Principal, educators and students at SDI Surya Buana Malang.

The method of observation includes activities at school, the school environment, the history and profile of the school, and the condition of educators and students at the school. The second interview that the researcher used was a structured interview. The third is documentation from several notes and websites owned by the school.

In addition, the most important thing in this study is analyzing data. The intention is to verify or ensure the data that has been collected into the data that has been entered by carefully re-checking whether the existing data is relevant or in accordance with what is in the field. There are various types of data analysis techniques, including: First, data condensation, second, data display, third, drawing conclusions (Majid, A. 2017).

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Role of Principal Leadership in Developing the Quality of Educators

Educators are like the foundation in the world of education. The success of education in achieving its goals in realizing it in life, educators must grow in their profession and develop to acquire new skills and diverse knowledge to modify old experiences to influence and guide students and help them how to think and

benefit from their lessons and understand their needs to achieve the desired educational goals which are the basis of the educational process (Ritonga, et al, 2024).

The teaching profession is one of the dangerous professions because in reality an educator is someone who is most responsible for preparing the nation in developing construction and work in all fields needed by the nation (Hambali, M. Ridlwan, et al., 2021).

In developing the quality of teaching staff, the leadership role of the principal at the Surya Buana Islamic Elementary School in Malang has obtained various leadership roles. From the findings in the field, it shows that the principal of SDI Surya Buana Malang has provided a good example (role model) as an educator by creating an innovative and creative atmosphere (Aminah, S., & Nursikin, M. 2023). It is proven that when meetings are held or when supervising teaching and learning activities, the principal of SDI Surya Buana Malang always accepts suggestions and criticisms from educators during meetings and makes decisions based on deliberation so that they can be accepted by all parties and in his activities as a supervisor, the principal of SD Surya Buana Malang gives creative freedom to educators in the classroom when teaching as long as the activity supports the needs of the students (Supriati, R., et al, 2022)

As the principal, carry out tasks and make plans and facilities needed as interview results as follows: Based on the results of the interview with the principal of SDI Surya Buana "program: Curriculum, determination of KKM, student administration, personnel administration, student administration, staff administration consisting of RAPBS; and report the realization of budget and equipment use" (Interview with the principal and school documents).

To find out the implementation of educator learning, the supervisor always supervises by visiting the class, monitoring the learning process directly using learning media. From the results of supervision, efforts that are being made to guide educators can be corrected for deficiencies in order to maintain effectiveness in the learning process. Based on the findings in the field, the principal of SDI Surya Buana has many new ideas such as implementing development and conducting comparative studies of the interview results: "Forms of innovation in improving learning, educators are given the freedom to be creative as long as they support the needs of children" (Interviews, documents, and observations).

As the principal, always provide work motivation for all educators and staff involved in the school. The principal of SDI Surya Buana provides a lot of motivation to educators and students. The principal of SDI Surya Buana always gives awards to his subordinates once a year so that they are more enthusiastic in carrying out their duties (Ihsan, et al, 2024).

2. Principal's Programs and Strategies in Improving the Quality of Educators

School program planning is an integral part of effective and successful education management. In the context of education, planning is not just a series of administrative activities, but also reflects the direction and goals of education that an educational institution wants to achieve. As the principal, the main manager of the school, has a very big task in ensuring that every program that is run is in line with the vision and mission of the school and the needs of educators and students. In this case, the principal must have the courage to design and implement programs that can not only improve the quality of education, but also improve the quality of educators in the school.

School program planning is a process in the entire series (Rahemi, et al, 2023) of school education that depends on the courage of the principal as a manager and educator to have the task of developing his personnel, especially in the task of developing the quality of educators. The principal explained:

"In the development of educators at the Surya Buana Islamic Elementary School in Malang, it is always carried out together with all educators and involving the school committee in a harmonious manner" (interview).

Educator quality development activities. It can be seen in the description in order to develop the quality of educational resources can be connected at least once every two weeks. And always participate in other training (Interviews, documents, and observations).

"The principal allows teachers and educators to continue their education, want to go to college on the weekend. He even really supports helping to find information" (Interviews, documents, and observations).

The strategy for managing facilities and infrastructure implemented by the principal is by delegating tasks. The principal also gives freedom to each section to manage the administration of facilities and infrastructure in their respective sections so that it facilitates the administration of the management of facilities and infrastructure as a whole.

Another strategy is to be given a mandate, the way the principal fosters a sense of responsibility in the school community is to often be given a mandate, namely by being given a job which is involved in the committee, responsibility as a homeroom teacher, becoming a coordinator of the Koran reading, so the division of tasks whose duties are clear will foster a sense of responsibility (interviews and documentation).

One important aspect in school program planning is the development of human resources, especially educators (Mohzana, M., et al, 2024). Principals play an active role in creating an atmosphere that supports the improvement of educator capacity through training, professional development, and providing opportunities to continue education. By providing strong support to educators, such as providing information about further education opportunities or providing regular training, principals can ensure that educators remain motivated and skilled in facing the ever-evolving challenges of education.

Furthermore, principals must be able to manage other educational resources, such as facilities and infrastructure, to support the success of the learning process. In this case, delegating tasks and giving clear responsibilities to all staff will increase their sense of ownership and responsibility for the quality of education. By implementing an approach based on collaboration and good communication between principals, educators, and other related parties, the quality of education can be improved as a whole.

In order to achieve higher education goals, principals must also be able to create a clear vision that can be understood by all parties in the school, including staff, students, and parents. A strong vision will motivate the entire school community to work together to achieve common goals, create a conducive learning environment, and ensure that every student gets a quality educational experience.

Overall, careful planning, consistent implementation, and continuous evaluation are the keys to developing quality schools that are able to compete locally and globally. By paying attention to the quality of educators, efficient resource management, and creating a motivating vision, principals can ensure that schools can achieve their goals and have a positive impact on students and the wider community (Marisa Carvalho, et al 2022).

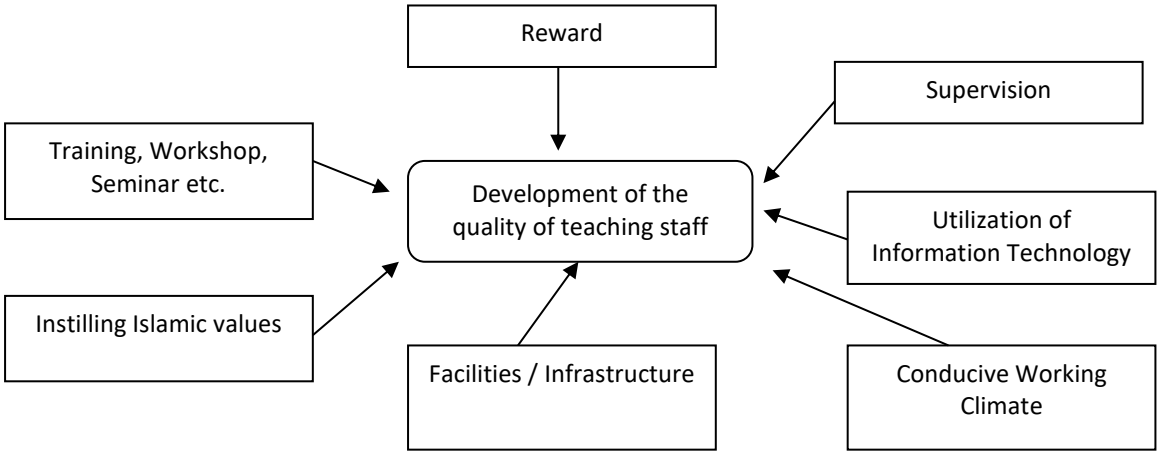


Figure 1: Form of principal's strategy in improving the quality of educators

3. Supporting and inhibiting factors of principal leadership in improving the quality of educators at SDI Surya Buana.

Supporting and inhibiting factors in the educational environment often play an important role in determining the quality of education produced by an educational institution. At SDI Surya Buana, the enthusiasm and high commitment of educators are one of the main factors that support success in achieving educational goals. In this case, the enthusiasm of educators at SDI Surya Buana is quite high, which is reflected in their willingness to work together, as well as the

close relationship between educators that facilitates coordination in carrying out various tasks (Ekmekci A, 2022).

For example, many educators have competencies in various fields, such as art, information technology, and research. These different competencies are not an obstacle, but rather a source of strength that can support and complement each other. Educators who have expertise in certain fields can make a major contribution to the development of learning materials or extracurricular activities that are in accordance with their fields. For example, educators who are experts in the arts can facilitate arts and cultural activities in schools, while educators who have more knowledge in the field of information technology can play an important role in advancing the use of technology in the teaching and learning process. This diversity of expertise helps create a work environment that is not only productive but also comfortable for all parties involved.

The comfort felt by educators at SDI Surya Buana is one of the key factors in improving their performance. When they feel comfortable, both in social and professional aspects, they tend to be more open in collaborating, more creative in overcoming existing challenges, and more enthusiastic in carrying out their duties. Therefore, a conducive and mutually supportive work atmosphere plays an important role in creating better achievements in the field of education. By creating a sense of mutual support between educators, the work atmosphere becomes more harmonious, and each educator feels appreciated and motivated to give their best for the school.

In addition, the principal at SDI Surya Buana also has a very important role in creating this supportive environment. The principal's leadership style applied in this school tends to be more democratic, which means that the principal does not only rely on authority or power alone, but rather prioritizes communication and cooperation with all team members at the school. This democratic leadership encourages educators to actively participate in decision-making related to the progress of the school. It also provides an opportunity for educators to express opinions, ideas, and constructive input in order to improve the quality of education at SDI Surya Buana. The principal who applies a democratic leadership style provides space for educators to develop professionally, and encourages them to hone their skills and knowledge. The principal not only acts as a leader who directs, but also as a facilitator who supports the process of self-development of educators. In this case, the principal gives each educator the freedom to explore their potential, both in developing learning materials, implementing activities outside the classroom, and in improving their personal competence. Through this approach, the principal is able to create an inclusive and collaborative atmosphere where each educator feels they have an important role in achieving the school's educational goals.

However, although the supporting factors at SDI Surya Buana are very strong, there are several obstacles that need to be considered. One of the obstacles often faced by schools is the lack of adequate facilities and infrastructure

(Jacob, O. N. 2021). Although most of the facilities already exist, some supporting facilities, such as learning aids or adequate classrooms, are still under repair and development. This problem certainly needs to be addressed immediately so that the learning process can run more effectively and efficiently (Masfufah, et al. 2023).

In addition, differences in character between educators are also one of the obstacles that must be faced (Istiyono et al, 2021). Each educator has a different way and style of teaching, which can sometimes cause incompatibility in the approach or methodology used. However, this can be overcome with ongoing training and workshops to improve educators' abilities in dealing with various student characters. Through structured training, educators can better understand various teaching methods that are appropriate to the characteristics of their students, so that the quality of learning can be improved (Rosni, 2021).

Thus, despite several obstacles, strong supporting factors, especially the high enthusiasm of educators, harmonious cooperation between educators, and the democratic leadership style of the principal, are important elements that contribute to the success of SDI Surya Buana. The diversity of competencies possessed by educators and comfort in working are very supportive factors in achieving better educational goals. By overcoming existing obstacles, SDI Surya Buana has great potential to continue to grow and provide quality education to students (Hajri, Muhammad Fatkhul, 2023).

D. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of several descriptions and based on the focus of the research on the data presentation and the researcher's findings, states that: first, the principal plays a role 1) as an educator; 2) as a manager; 3) as an administrator; 4) as a supervisor; 5) as a leader (leader); 6) As an innovator; 7) as a motivator. These seven things are done by the principal in order to improve the quality of educators in their school environment.

Second, the principal's program includes forming study programs, assignments, bringing in expert speakers, conducting further studies, conducting comparative studies. The form of teacher quality development strategy includes awards, supervision, training, seminars, workshops, education and training and others. The programs and strategies carried out by the school are able to improve the quality of educators, especially in the academic and non-academic fields in schools.

Third, the supporting factors for the principal's leadership in improving the quality of educators include high enthusiasm and cooperation, while the inhibiting factors are the different characters of educators and inadequate facilities and infrastructure. These two things are important notes for schools in continuously improving the quality of education.

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