

The Principal's Leadership in Improving the Quality of Education

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Abstract – The principal has an important role in improving the quality of education. The research objective was to describe the principal's strategy in improving teacher performance at SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih. The results showed that in line with the important role given to schools at SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih, namely improving the quality of human resources (HR), his role as the principal in carrying out his function must be able to provide quality educational services to human resources, because of the leadership carried out by the principal must be oriented towards the quality of the leadership concerned. Principals are said to be qualified as leadership who always wants the best. Leadership quality basically affects the quality improvement process, in which leaders try to influence teachers to do what the principal deems important. Principals who aim at quality include three managerial functions, including planning, control, and quality improvement. The principal at SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih applies leadership qualities will share responsibilities, continuous improvement, provide materials and tools as they are needed by teachers in the teaching and learning process. In quality leadership, the principal should remove the obstacles faced, which can hinder the successful implementation of a better quality education.

Keywords – Principal's Leadership, Principal's Strategy, Quality of Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

The education sector is managed autonomously by the local government in the era of decentralization. At present the quality of education must be improved in a better direction in terms of its relevance for leadership in schools. School management currently has a tendency towards School Based Management. In the context of School Based Management, schools must increase the participation of local communities in its management to increase the participation of local communities in its management to improve the quality of education and the quality of its efficiency in a school. Schools are institutions for students in a process of change in the

context of learning with teachers as facilitators in the classroom. As educators, it is deemed necessary to conduct a study regarding the efforts made by leaders in schools in fostering teachers as a way of improving the quality of educators and motivating teachers to become truly professional teachers. In order for decentralization and the quality of education to achieve a better quality of education, the leadership of the principal should be continuously empowered by increasing the ability of the principal functionally so that the principal is able to play a role in accordance with his duties, powers and responsibilities as a leader in the school (Andriani et al, 2018; Apriana et al, 2019).

In line with the challenges of global life, education has a strategic role in advanced times, the excellence of a nation no longer relies on natural wealth but on the superiority of human resources (Tobari et al, 2018; Maryanti et al, 2020). The quality of human resources is determined by the quality of education, benchmarks for the quality of education are based on conditions of output and outcome that meet the requirements of facing the demands of the times. To realize the quality of education, it must be supported by an adequate education component (Tobari et al, 2018; Irmayani et al, 2018). These components become input to be processed so as to produce superior outputs and outcomes. In the developed world, the quality of human resources is everything, therefore people will compete to find the best schools for their children. Schools that are unable to show their best quality will be abandoned by the community. According to Stronge et al (2008), a school with problems can only be improved by having an influential leader at the school. Effective leaders set direction and influence organizational members to work together in achieving organizational goals.

Principals can fulfill this primary responsibility by providing individual support and challenging teachers to review their teaching practices. To bring about changes in educational institutions, leadership is needed by the leadership to achieve the goals of the organization, therefore, the principal must be able to design strategic steps in managing educational institutions. The leadership strategy is the key to success in an organization in achieving goals. With the right leadership will get maximum results. The leadership strategy is the first step for a leader in carrying out his duties and role in leading. The right leadership strategy will result in changes in the quality of education (Kartini et al, 2020). To meet the needs of the community, the Principal must be able to read the trends of society in the future. After knowing the needs of the community, the Principal designed a new strategy related to education quality assurance (Qomar, 2010). So by knowing the needs of the community, educational institutions are able to provide answers related to what their children get when they enroll their children in the educational institution. If the educational institution is able to prove the quality output of the educational institution's graduates, then the community will automatically enroll their children in the educational institution.

The belief of the community will have a positive impact on the image of educational institutions, and educational institutions will no longer compete only in the level of grandeur of the building. But educational institutions are now able to compete on the promised quality assurance. The promise that is offered to the community must be able to be

realized by the educational institution. Of course, the leadership of the Principal can affect the performance of its members, both teachers and employees of educational institutions. So that the optimization of performance will bring the success of students to the peak of achievement. But there are several problems that occur in education providers that have an impact on the quality of education. Mulyasa (2012) suggests problems in this case, including the unreliable educational resources to support the achievement of educational goals. Educational resources, both teaching staff, budgets, facilities and infrastructure, educational management including educational leadership and others that are still considered weak in realizing educational goals, both in realizing faith, intelligence and noble morals among students and teachers. Therefore, it is necessary to reorganize the implementation of education. The rearrangement regarding the implementation of education can be carried out by a good principal, the leader is also obliged to act as a manager who has a professional and functional performance. The principal must be able to arrange so that all the potential of the school can function optimally in achieving the goal of quality education in schools.

Based on the experience of researchers as teachers, the quality of high-quality education can largely be produced by schools in providing services to students so as to produce quality education that meets excellent standards and also produces quality students from the output produced by quality schools. The service in question is a quality education service in developing the maximum potential of students. The quality of education in schools can only be achieved if the principal, teachers and school administration staff and school members are able to develop the quality of education in the components of leadership, teamwork, cooperation, accountability and togetherness that are bound in an organization, because the school is also an organization that moves in the field of education, which is headed by the principal as the leader. Efforts to create quality education in schools have many benefits for the surrounding human resources, it is necessary to agree on the achievement of organizational goals carried out by school principals, teachers and guardians of students as parents who have a large enough influence to realize the smooth work program controlled by the school principal (Salwa et al, 2019; Fitria et al, 2017).

Educational management is something that must be prioritized for the continuity of education, so as to produce the desired output. In fact, many educational institutions do not yet have good management in the management of their education. This is due to inhibiting factors in its management, it could also be that the management system is not good in its

application. Visionary education with a clear mission will produce quality output. From there the importance of educational management is applied. In its development, education management requires good management for its management. But in practice, this is still something that has not been maximally done because many factors influence it. Many education providers think that this is not an important thing. Quality education is produced by the leadership of quality school principals, quality school principals are professionals. Professional school principals are those who are able to manage and develop schools comprehensively, therefore the principal has a very important and strategic role in realizing the vision, mission and goals of the school (Khasanah et al, 2019).

Professional school principals in carrying out their duties are full of quality improvement strategies, so as to produce quality outputs and outcomes. The professionalism of the principal will show the quality of school performance. The achievement of the goals of school education institutions is very dependent on the skills and leadership policies of the school principal. The school principal is a professional official in managing the school organization as well as in charge of regulating and managing all sources, organizations and in collaboration with school committees, communities, other institutions and existing stakeholders. The leadership of the principal in developing and managing the school must understand the needs of the school he leads, including the needs of teachers, students and school members. Professional school principals will always motivate all school components to increase their competence so that the competence of school residents can increase and develop well. Principals and teachers as professional educational staff not only master the fields of science, teaching materials, and methods, but are able to motivate students to have broad skills and insight into education. Many factors inhibit the achievement of the quality of school principal leadership when viewed from the low performance of the principal. Based on empirical experience, it shows that the average principal lacks academic ability, lacks self-motivation, lacks enthusiasm and work discipline, and has narrow educational insights. This phenomenon is due to the fact that the filtering process does not meet competence, lack of procedural, lack of transparency, lots of content, is not competitive and internal and external factors of the principal can be an obstacle to his growth and development to become a professional school principal. Low professionalism results in low productivity of school principals in improving the quality of education (Irmayani et al, 2018).

There are several decision-making steps that need to be followed in order to obtain a high quality decision. These steps are the determination of objectives and measurement of results, identification of problems, development of alternatives, evaluation of alternatives, choosing alternatives, implementing decisions, controlling the implementation of decisions and evaluation. In making decisions, school leaders and residents should know the goals the school wants to achieve and how the achievement of these goals can be measured. The intended objectives can be seen from the achievement of student achievement, increasing the performance value of teachers and school employees, or increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the performance of the school organization. In order to be measured, the objective should be to state quantitative measures. For example, achieving a grade point average of 80 for all the subjects tested; or achieve an average teacher performance level of 90 at the end of the year. Every education system must be able to make changes to improve and increase the quality of education (Tobari et al, 2018).

The education system must be able to empower various components of education, which include learning activity programs, teachers, students, learning facilities and infrastructure, funds, community environment, principal leadership and others. The most important factor in learning is the teacher. Teachers are professions or jobs that require special skills or teacher professionalism. The meaning of professional is a profession that cannot be done by just anyone. Teachers and educators play an important role in supporting and motivating students. This is because the main purpose of learning is to prepare students to become successful workers in the world of work (Kristiawan & Rahmat, 2018).

Furthermore, the existing problems need to be identified. The problem in question is the gap between what is the goal of the school and the reality. When we have determined a student achievement score of 80 but from a number of tests it turns out that only 70 is obtained, then this is a problem that can be rooted both in terms of the process or even the lesson planning including the availability of the necessary learning resources. Now, what must be done is to be able to work seriously with each other's main duties as a smart and qualified teacher. Professionalism is a need that must be followed by its development. It takes teachers who have the ability and ability in high professionalism (Kristiawan & Rahmat, 2018).

Professional teachers certainly produce outstanding students. Achievements that have been achieved by students

especially at SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih. The achievements obtained are one of the efforts of the coaching program given to students. For the religious sector in the guidance of the tahfidz program, from the results of the interview with Ms. Nurhasanah, S. Pd. I that the principal at SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih programmed these activities under supervision, namely he did not want those who had not passed the tahsin not to participate in the Quranic tahfidz program. So those who are allowed to directly participate in the tahfidz program are those with good reading, this is intended as academic achievement achievements that are already in accordance with the concept of tahfidz learning. Then the achievements in academics such as the Olympics, which are followed by students under the supervision of their respective class teachers. Achievements in the arts also show that the quality of education at SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih by winning O2SN and FLS2N activities at the city level and the last two years at the national level in the field of theater arts accompanied by Ayu Mardiana, S.Pd. Mulyadi (2016) said that teachers are an important factor in achieving the desired educational goals. This is because teachers have a very influential role in helping students build attitudes and behaviors in learning. This is all because teachers can build positive attitudes, arouse curiosity, encourage independence, and create a good atmosphere for learning. However, to play this role, teachers are required not only to have broad skills and knowledge but also to be wise and able to socialize well with students. With qualified knowledge and skills, the teacher can carry out the transformation of the orientation of students from not knowing to knowing, from hesitating to being sure from dependence to being independent, from unskilled to skilled which in the end can create and develop certain ways of solving problems relating to life. This means that the role of teachers is very large in determining the quality of education. In order for teachers to be able to play a real role, guidance and supervision by the principal as manager is needed.

Researcher's experience in working as a classroom teacher in an elementary school educator environment assumes that the quality of education in schools can be achieved if the principal, teachers and school administration staff and school members are able to develop work programs prepared by leaders who focus on leadership, teamwork, cooperation, Accountability and togetherness Quality schools are closely related to the provision of quality education services. In accordance with Government Regulation no. 19 of 2005 on National Education Standards in Indonesia include 1) content standards; 2) competency standards of graduates; 3) process standards; 4) standards of facilities and infrastructure; 5) Management standards; 6) Educator and

education staff standards; 7) financing standards; and 8) assessment standards (National Education Ministry, 2006).

Schools as an organization engaged in education must be prepared to face educational problems in the future which are increasingly complex, so that the function of the principal to always make various efforts to improve the competence of all school components is highly prioritized in efforts to improve the quality of education.

In this study, we chose SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih because there are several things that researchers want to know through case studies of principal leadership in improving the quality of education. SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih is located in the middle of Prabumulih City. The educational system already uses computer technology in learning, administrative matters and other activities, so that when viewed from technological advances, the research location is exactly in accordance with the above background. Researchers also found temporary data that the principal of SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih in carrying out his leadership was able to assign teachers, students and school members to always improve the quality of education according to their respective functions, so that the results of academic and non-academic achievements can adjust to the achievements achieved by another school.

The principal of SD 8 Negeri Prabumulih is committed to carrying out his functions and various motivations to advance the high quality of education. So that the selection of the object of this research is appropriate so that the purpose of this study can be described precisely according to the identification of the problem. Another thing that became the reason for the researchers to take the object of the problem at SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih was that the existence of teachers with a percentage of 70 percent of their age were still categorized as new teachers age was still young who still needed a lot of teaching experience and coaching from the principal is also one of the principal leadership efforts in improve the quality of education. This research is considered important because it will be useful for teachers who carry out guidance and improve the work system of the leadership, namely the principal in carrying out his main duties and functions as a manager. Based on the above background, this study focused on the principal's leadership in carrying out its main duties and functions as a manager in the school.

II. METHODS

Qualitative research methods are often called naturalistic research methods because the research is carried out in natural conditions (Sugiyono, 2010: 15). The qualitative approach is indeed social reality as something holistic,

complex, dynamic, full of meaning, and symptomatic relationships are interactive. Qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of writing about people or people's words and behaviors that are visible or visible. Based on the problems posed in this study emphasizing process problems, the best type of research and strategy is descriptive qualitative research. This type of research will be able to capture a variety of qualitative information with thorough and nuanced descriptions that are more valuable than simply number or frequency statements in numerical form. The strategy used is a case study. Because the problems and research focus have been determined in the proposal before the researcher jumps in and delves into problems in the field, this research can also be categorized as Embedded Case Study Research (Sutopo, 2002). Based on the research of the Principal Leadership in Improving the Quality of Education, especially in SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih, the type of research used was descriptive qualitative field research, which means that the data collected is in the form of words and not numbers. Thus, the research report will contain data quotations to provide an overview of the report presentation (Moleong, 2010).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The role of a school principal in improving the quality of education is very important. The quality of the school is, of course, inseparable from the actions of the leaders in regulating and supervising all school members. According to Maskawimbang (2011) defining quality is the best result that a person or group of people has for what is done so that it is able to provide satisfaction, comfort, welfare and does not receive complaints from customers. The involvement of all school members in improving the quality of education is the responsibility of the Principal. One strategy to improve the quality of education is to carry out routine supervision. According to Sah Understanding (2008) supervisors function to help, provide support, and invite. Meanwhile, according to Satori (2007) supervision is not only seeing and reporting, but means correcting and improving the situation to be better in accordance with the objectives. From this understanding, it can be concluded that routine supervision is an activity to examine, supervise and correct and improve conditions for the better so that the goals are achieved. The principal as a communicator who acts as an intermediary is required to display the ability to foster cooperation with all school members in an open work climate which is partnership in nature so as to be able to provide a sense of comfort and serenity in working for all school members. The routine supervision carried out by the Principal of SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih aims to inspect and supervise and correct the

duties and functions of each teacher and education staff that have been carried out on time and run well, checking that students follow each stage of learning carefully according to the rules and directions.

With this routine supervision, it affects the effectiveness of the work of teachers and education personnel to be more disciplined and professional so that it can improve the quality of education. Routine supervision carried out by the principal during class hours around the entire class to see the teaching and learning process. This is done to see the activity of the learning process. By frequently going around the school, Mrs. Rusheniliah wants to know firsthand how the learning process is taking place. Knowing which classes are empty and which are not so that school order is well maintained. The principal also supervises the teaching of teachers, this is done by directly monitoring the supervision, not just receiving reports. Teachers are required to have higher quality abilities, namely having communication skills, having the ability to cooperate, having certain skills or skills, individuals who are resilient, disciplined, have a high work ethic, and have a passion for progress. On the other hand, the training pattern by examining the components of the curriculum in relation to other components is an experience that inspires the learning process. By improving the quality of teachers' understanding of the 2013 Curriculum, in addition to providing academic abilities, such as rational changes and updates, philosophical foundations, competency contexts, and the use of textbooks, it also seeks to provide teachers with work intelligence in the realm of learning and assessment implementation. Implementation is very important so that good ideas that have been translated into curriculum change designs can be implemented consistently.



Figure 1. The principal together with the curriculum representative and SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih teachers when evaluating the implementation of the curriculum during the online learning period (May 2020).

Quality schools, of course, must be supported by all school members. Principals must be role models in terms of

discipline. In terms of supervisory activities, the Principal must take firm action both for himself and all school members. The principal's commitment to achieving the vision certainly cannot be done alone without a team that is willing to work together. Affirmation of the rules must also be balanced with objective judgment.

The conclusion of the research results is that there are positive implications of school strategies in improving the quality of education involving the Principal, teachers and education personnel, students and society in general, in order to have the same mindset to get quality results. The research implications can be presented as follows 1) that schools must have a principal who is broad-minded, open, disciplined, assertive, has a high commitment to the quality of education, is creative and innovates, so that it can become an example of leadership for school members; 2) other than that there is good cooperation between teachers and education staff in carrying out their respective duties and functions professionally; 3) optimal use of facilities and infrastructure in the learning process; and 4) systematic school management starting from input, process, to quality output using the concept of Total Quality Management as has been studied on the theoretical basis.

The training program for teachers at SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih in addition to achieving the quality of educators and education personnel can be done by improving the discipline through routine supervision, either daily or monthly in the form of supervision carried out by the school principal. Then there is a delegation of authority from the principal to teachers or education personnel through an accountable decree. Furthermore, the increase in professional analysis of teachers and education personnel is carried out through trainings, workshops, upgrades, technical guidance, and education and training. The results of teacher performance are evaluated by the principal as a job responsibility to get a reward. The strategy of the Principal of SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih in improving the quality of facilities and infrastructure is carried out in coordination with the deputy head of the school in the field of facilities and infrastructure to budget for plans to provide learning facilities, especially according to needs and budgeted for in the early year program. Fulfillment is carried out in stages through foundation funds and boss funds. The addition of facilities and infrastructure is also carried out with innovation and creativity so that it can be useful effectively and efficiently with not too large funds. Comparative studies are also needed in finding innovations to be taken and applied in schools so that the quality of the school becomes good (Kristiawan and Rahmat, 2018).

A series of problems covering the world of education today still need attention from all parties. Starting from the quality of teaching staff who have not reached the target to the problem of teacher welfare. Often judged to be out of sync, as a result the principal was hesitant to take his policies. Other factors that influence the presence or absence of community and parental support are also challenges for school principals. What is often encountered is that the community and parents have not fully supported school programs so that schools cannot develop optimally. Problems are much more complex in an educational setting.



Figure 2. Meeting Academic Year Student 2019/2020

Then the principal also strives for computer facilities and information that can support the learning process so that students can understand the use of computer technology correctly and in accordance with the desired results and also make SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih teachers proficient in the field of technology, not based on nervousness because of the age factor. Based on the data collection techniques that the researcher uses, it can be discussed that there are three strategies implemented by SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih in improving the quality of management 1) planning; 2) program implementation; 3) monitoring and evaluation activities. In this management the school uses the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) starting from the admission of new students, the recruitment process for honorarium teachers in particular, the implementation of activities and until the end of the program using the principles of openness and transparency and supported by clear, effective and efficient reporting administration. so that it can be accounted for in every performance evaluation.

IV. CONCLUSION

The principal of SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih in carrying out his leadership has carried out his main duties and functions as a manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator and motivator with good results. With the leadership style, the principal of SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih has great enthusiasm and courage in using his strength as a leader at SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih, taking advantage of opportunities, facing

challenges, and having the ability to build good relationships with human resources at SD Negeri 8 Prabumulih. Suggestions from this research are that before being sent to become school principals, they should first be provided with leadership training so that they are ready to lead, manage, and mobilize human resources in schools so that they become professional and work-ready principals.

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