

## Principal Leadership in Improving Educational Quality: A Case of SD Gugus VI Geumpang, Pidie Regency

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was: to find out: the programs, strategies, and constraints faced by school principals in improving the quality of education in the Elementary School in Cluster VI of Geumpang Geumpang Pidie Regency. This study uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques used are: interviews, observation, and documentation studies. The research subjects were: school principals, vice principals, and teachers. The results showed that: (1) The planning of the principal's program in improving the quality of education has been prepared, but is not well detailed, (2) Implementation of education quality improvement programs by implementing democratic leadership strategies. In facing teachers, principals often exchange ideas with teachers, so find an effective way to improve their performance in the development of the learning process, and (3) The obstacles encountered by principals in improving the quality of education include: lack of available funds for teacher training outside official hours, there are still teachers who are less active, and the results of upgrading have not been able to be socialized to their friends.

**Keywords:** principal leadership, educational quality, elementary school.

**Abstrak:** Tujuan penelitian ini adalah: untuk mengetahui: program, strategi, dan kendala yang dihadapi kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di SD Gugus VI Geumpang Kabupaten Pidie. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah: wawancara, observasi, dan studi dokumentasi. Subjek penelitian adalah: kepala sekolah, wakil kepala sekolah, dan guru. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: (1) Perencanaan program kepala sekolah dalam peningkatan mutu pendidikan telah disusun, namun belum terinci dengan baik, (2) Pelaksanaan program peningkatan mutu pendidikan dengan menerapkan strategi kepemimpinan demokratis. Dalam menghadapi guru, kepala sekolah sering bertukar pikiran dengan guru, sehingga menemukan cara yang efektif untuk meningkatkan kinerjanya dalam pengembangan proses pembelajaran, dan (3) Kendala yang dihadapi kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan antara lain: kurangnya dana yang tersedia untuk pelatihan guru di luar jam dinas, masih ada guru yang kurang aktif, dan hasil penataran belum dapat disosialisasikan kepada teman mereka.

**Kata kunci:** kepemimpinan kepala sekolah, kualitas pendidikan, sekolah dasar.

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## ■ INTRODUCTION

Educational leadership, more specifically for the leadership of the school principal, is the strength it has to encourage the school community to behave in accordance with the goals desired or expected together (Raymond, 2017). In an effort to achieve this common goal, the principal is the main actor, especially at the level of initiation. As a leader, the principal expands responsibility, strives for the implementation of tasks, has dreams, builds vision, and translates them into reality (Lee & Ritchotte, 2019; Juhler, 2018; Gage & Smith, 2016).

Principal in carrying out his duties and roles, also runs leadership functions, education even though the conditions needed to become a headmaster and education leader are different. In addition, the principal along with other personnel must be able to realize the vision and mission of the school that has been formulated. Through the implementation of the vision and mission, the quality of education can be realized (Shulhan, 2018; Suhan, Thahir, & Mohammad, 2017).

The quality of education is a pillar for producing good and reliable human resources, so the improvement efforts must always be carried out continuously so that the quality of education is getting better. Therefore, special policies are needed for improvement. One of them is to innovate education management through the concept of education quality management. The role of the school principal is very decisive in implementing education quality management (Halverson & Rosenfeld, 2019; Montaperto & Henderson, 2017). At the school level, principals are the driving force in efforts to improve the quality of education, so schools are expected to be able to build significant changes. Here are many factors that influence the success of implementing quality management, one of which is the ability of principals to carry out analysis in

recognizing environmental conditions in the overall management of schools (Loii et.al., 2018).

Based on the explanation above, it gives meaning that the progress or retreat of a school is very dependent on the management of the principal's leadership and the participation of stakeholders. The principal is the person most responsible for the implementation of learning activities, starting from the input, process to the output of the school he leads (Miao et.al., 2018; Harrison & Lock, 2017). To be able to carry out their duties properly, an principal understands, masters and is able to carry out various activities relating to his function as an administrator and manager who is professional and has good skills.

In order to realize quality learning, the principal must develop an effective program, starting from creating a conducive school climate, motivating, guiding teachers and other school personnel. The good and bad of the learning process in the classroom is influenced by many factors, but one of the most decisive is the principal's leadership (Van Quaquebeke & Felps, 2018). Ideally, the principal is able to provide enthusiasm for each person in carrying out their duties. Principal's leadership that implements quality management is one of the main factors that determine the quality of an educational institution. School principals should ideally have the right strategy to utilize educational staff through cooperation or cooperation, provide educational staff the opportunity to improve their profession, and encourage the involvement of all education personnel in various activities that support school programs (Dzhandzhugazova, 2018; Dee & Leislyte, 2017; Schwendimann & Linn, 2016).

## ■ METHODS

This study is in the form of descriptive which is a study that explains the reality of research subjects when examined. Sources are obtained through observation, interviews, and

documentary analysis. The people studied were: School principals and teachers at SD Gugus Inti Geumpang, Pidie Regency. Selection of data through observation, question and answer, and other physical evidence (documents).

## ■ RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Principal Planning in Improving the Quality of Education*

The results of the study indicate that the head of Elementary School Gugus VI Inti Geumpang has compiled a program, including a teacher performance improvement program. The program is composed of both long-term, medium-term and short-term or annual programs. This program was prepared by involving school personnel, namely the principal and the teacher council.

In addition to the annual program, there is also a semester program, activities include: administration of new students, principal work programs, administration of workforce, learning observation, curriculum curriculum book, supervision of class visits, collaboration with committees, security and togetherness, administration of school supplies, classroom observations, administration of school inventory, library administration, and package book administration.

Administration of package books is one of the important things, because it deals directly with teacher performance. Complete textbooks and in accordance with the demands of the curriculum, will determine the improvement of the quality of education. This is because the success of the learning process relates directly to textbooks or other learning resources for teachers and students. Learning resources are everything around the learning environment that can be functionally used to help optimize learning outcomes. Optimization of learning outcomes can be seen not only from learning outcomes (output) but also from the process of student interaction with various sources

that can stimulate students to learn and accelerate understanding and mastery of the fields of study (Asadollahi & Mirzaei, 2019).

The quote above gives an understanding of the importance of learning resources as an integral part in efforts to improve student learning outcomes. Principal leadership to improve teacher performance, has compiled a written program, the program prepared is not complete and not detailed. This condition causes the compiled program to be carried out as well as possible by the principal.

The principal has made various positive efforts in the preparation of the work program. The program that has been prepared is then socialized to the teachers, so that the teacher understands the main tasks and functions of each according to the regulations and expectations of the principal. This illustrates that principals as leaders of educational institutions play an important role in improving the performance of other personnel. The role of principals to appear larger has gained academic legitimacy. References relating to the need for schools are managed autonomously and the principal as the main role taker has been written. Unfortunately, the power of bureaucracy often creates blockages, so creativity is constrained.

Based on the quotation above, it shows that principals have a large role in school management, including in improving the performance of teachers. The results of the study also illustrate that in improving teacher performance to develop learning implementation plans, carry out learning and evaluate learning processes and outcomes, the principal applies a democratic leadership strategy. Likewise, in encouraging teachers to carry out learning well, the principal also acts as a colleague, because he considers the teacher board as a work partner in the school.

The principal has made various positive efforts in the preparation of work programs. The program that has been compiled is then

disseminated to the teachers, so that the teacher understands the main tasks and functions of each in accordance with the regulations and expectations of the principal. This gives an illustration that the principal as the leader of an educational institution plays an important role in improving the performance of other personnel. The role of principals to appear greater has gained academic legitimacy. References relating to the need for schools to be autonomously managed and the principal as the main role taker have been widely written. Unfortunately, the power of bureaucracy often brings up bottlenecks, so that creativity is constrained.

### ***Implementation of Principal Programs in Improving Education Quality***

The results of the study indicate that to increase responsibility for the tasks assigned to him, the principal is very strict. This assertion is a description of the strategy that must be applied by the principal so that the school program is in accordance with the vision and mission that has been formulated (Liu, & Hallinger, 2018).

The principal divides assignments to all teachers in a democratic and open manner and then calls on all teachers to carry out the tasks that have been entrusted to them as well as possible. The responsibility of the teacher in carrying out the tasks is of course different. Some teachers feel dissatisfied if they have not carried out their duties properly, on the contrary there are teachers who carry out their tasks as long as they are finished.

Principal leadership is seen in the beginning as democratic, but if there are teachers who do not carry out their duties with full responsibility the principal reprimands with an authoritarian leadership strategy. The principal always supervises and provides guidance for teachers who do not carry out their duties properly. Principals in order to improve teacher performance are always democratic because with

the democratic leadership the teacher feels he is not made like a laborer who is only governed by superiors. In carrying out its leadership role, leaders.

The work environment and coworkers are aspects that greatly affect one's emotional elements, so that in carrying out their daily tasks one's professionalism can grow if supported by a co-worker who is compact and in line in carrying out the task. Commitment to work is strongly supported by colleagues who remind each other and help each other so that a sense of togetherness and continuity in work will be established. The principal is the spearhead of a school institution, and plays an active role in improving teacher performance that will have a positive impact on the institution he leads.

One other factor that influences teachers' work commitments is the comfort and safety factors at work. The results showed that the principal's leadership style in an effort to improve teacher's work commitment was participatory and consultative leadership style to strive to provide all the facilities and media needed by the teacher. That is, the principal always discusses the needs of teachers in implementing the learning process especially textbooks and other media.

### ***Constraints Faced by Principals in Improving Education Quality***

The results of data processing indicate that there are several obstacles encountered by the principal in making plans, that the Annual Work Plan Program in which there are several sub-fields with general details, has not been implemented optimally so far. The program did not go well, mainly due to the limited budget available at Elementary School in Cluster VI of Geumpang Geumpang in Pidie Regency.

One of the excellent programs for improving teacher performance is the teacher training program and the participation of teachers in KKG activities, every year it is programmed, but it does

not work effectively due to limited transportation funds for teachers. Moreover, there are more than two teachers participating in the training or teacher activities in one semester.

Constraints found by principals in fostering teachers in mastering the educational foundation and implementing performance improvement programs, lack of available funds for teacher training outside official hours, there are still a small number of teachers who are not active and the results of upgrading have not been able to impact their friends. This illustrates that a small proportion of teachers in Elementary School in Cluster VI of Geumpang in Pidie Regency have not been able to master the educational foundation, so that it has an impact on their performance in implementing learning. Teachers who are unable to master the educational foundation will experience obstacles in teaching and guiding students.

There are three important aspects that the school must continue to develop, namely: professionalism, career formation and welfare. Professional teachers must always be creative and productive in carrying out educational innovations to improve the quality of education. However, to prepare innovative teachers is very difficult, if it is associated with a welfare system for teachers in Indonesia that is far from adequate. To increase the professionalism of teachers in educational institutions, to increase work motivation, work performance or productivity, and to provide various types of professional training and education to teachers, it is very necessary.

In line with the quote above, it can be understood that the process of producing quality human resources for teachers, one of which is through professional training and education. To increase human resources must go through the stages of screening, appointment, placement, introduction to the work environment and career development. While ways to improve and

develop personal careers can be done through the process of education, training, or upgrading. Principals must strive for teachers to improve their performance.

Constraints in fostering teacher performance capabilities in compiling teaching programs. The obstacle arises from the teacher and the principal. Constraints on their teachers have no desire to develop a program, they only used last year's program with a slight revision. The obstacles we faced, we were not able to properly check the programs of a number of teachers and there was almost no time for that. This, illustrates that improving teacher performance has not been implemented properly.

Principals have encountered obstacles in implementing programs that have been prepared, especially programs that are concerned with improving teacher performance. With indications that the coaching effort has not been able to improve teacher performance. Thus the individual teacher has not been able to compile the program and implement a program to improve performance properly. Existing or compiled programs are only to fulfill the administration for staff coaching data used by the principal, and have not been well informed. For this reason, every program that has been prepared needs to be optimally socialized to the teachers, so that all teacher performance improvement activities run effectively and efficiently.

The obstacle experienced is that the principal does not have time to supervise teachers in activities for improvement and guidance in improving teacher performance. The reason is that there is no time for the principal because time is more used for other tasks, namely official meetings, financial problems, and school work programs with school committees / parents of students. The task of the principal to supervise teachers is delegated to the vice principal and senior teachers. They supervise by using teacher observation sheets in learning activities, but do

not make improvements and guidance to teachers more optimally. To be able to determine whether or not education and teaching goals are achieved, it is necessary to carry out an effort or evaluation or evaluation action. Evaluation or evaluation is basically giving consideration or price or value based on the criteria.

## ■ CONCLUSIONS

Planning of the principal's program in improving the quality of education has been prepared, but is not well detailed. The compiled program is still carried out as well as possible by the principal to improve teacher performance.

Implementation of education quality improvement programs by implementing democratic leadership strategies. In facing teachers, principals often exchange ideas with teachers, so find an effective way to improve their performance in the development of the learning process. Teachers whose performance is low, their attitudes and personality are hard, with a persuasive approach the principal recommends that they improve their performance.

The obstacles encountered by principals in improving the quality of education include: lack of available funds for teacher training outside official hours, there are still less active teachers.

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