

## PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP STRATEGY IN IMPROVING EDUCATION QUALITY

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### Abstract

Principals' leadership strategies in improving the quality of education describe the efforts and approaches taken by principals to advance the quality of education in their institutions. The main focus of this research is on participatory and collaborative leadership strategies, professional development for teachers and staff, and policy evaluation and monitoring. Through inclusive leadership and involving various parties, the principal can create a conducive and harmonious school environment. Furthermore, developing the skills and competencies of educators through various trainings and workshops is an important factor in creating quality learning. Finally, the implementation of a continuous evaluation system allows the school to identify and improve sub-optimal aspects of the education process. With these strategies, this study highlights the crucial role of school principals in improving the quality of education in their schools.

**Keywords:** Strategy, Principal Leadership, Education Quality

### Introduction

Education is one of the fundamental aspects in the development of a nation, because through education, human resources can be developed optimally. In Indonesia, efforts to improve the quality of education continue in line with global progress and the demands of the times (Ikhlas et al., 2024); (Firdausih & Aslan, 2024); (Andrian et al., 2024); (Shintia et al., 2024).

Quality of education is a term that refers to the level of effectiveness of the educational process in achieving predetermined goals. The quality of education covers various aspects, including curriculum, learning methods, teacher qualifications and competencies, educational facilities, and the involvement of stakeholders such as students, parents, and the community (Satyawati, 2024). Good education quality is characterised by the achievement of optimal learning outcomes, the improvement of

students' skills and knowledge, and the realisation of character in accordance with the noble values of the nation. Therefore, the quality of education is always related to continuous efforts to improve all components involved in the education process (Huda & Rokhman, 2021).

The quality of education plays an important role in the formation of superior and highly competitive human resources. Quality education encourages the development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies in a balanced manner, resulting in individuals who are not only academically intelligent, but also have good character and life skills that are relevant to the demands of the times (Sumar'in & Aslan, 2022). With good quality education, students are better prepared to face global challenges, contribute positively to community development and create innovations that support economic growth. In addition, high quality education also improves social welfare by reducing poverty and inequality, and strengthens national resilience in the face of various global dynamics. However, there are still many challenges to be faced in achieving the desired quality of education. One of the key factors that influence the success of improving the quality of education is effective leadership at the education unit level, especially school principals (Simarmata, 2024).

Principals have a strategic role as educational leaders and managers in their schools. They are responsible for directing, supervising and inspiring all components in the school in achieving educational goals. Effective principal leadership can create a conducive learning environment, encourage teacher professionalism, and increase parental and community involvement in the education process (Baharuddin, 2024).

However, not all principals are able to perform this role well. There are still various problems in the implementation of leadership in schools, such as a lack of managerial skills, limitations in developing an educational vision, and ineffective communication with other education stakeholders. These conditions can hamper efforts to improve the quality of education in schools.

Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research to identify and understand effective leadership strategies of school principals in the context of improving the quality of education.

## **Research Methods**

The study in this research uses the literature method. The literature research method is an approach used to collect and analyse information taken from existing written works, such as books, journals, scientific articles, research reports, and other documentary sources. This research aims to identify, evaluate, and synthesise relevant findings in order to produce a comprehensive understanding of a particular topic or problem (Suprayogo & Tobroni, 2003); (Suparlan, 2014). This method involves steps such as systematic literature search, selection of relevant materials, critical analysis, and drawing conclusions based on the available evidence. The main advantage of this

method is its ability to provide a strong theoretical foundation, identify research gaps, and build a conceptual framework that supports further research (Ainiyah, 2021).

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Principal Leadership Strategy**

An effective principal must have a clear vision and mission for the school. This vision and mission should be well communicated to all stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents and the surrounding community. This vision will be the main guide in every step and decision taken, so that all elements of the school have a clear and specific common goal. The development of the vision and mission should also involve active participation from various parties to ensure high relevance and engagement (Said et al., 2024).

Principals should play an active role in supporting the improvement of teachers' competencies as the spearhead of the teaching and learning process, which can be done through the provision of continuous and appropriate training and professional development programmes. In addition, principals should also encourage collaborative practices among teachers through activities such as teachers' working groups (KKG) and professional learning communities (PLC), so that a culture of information sharing and effective pedagogy is established (Gurr et al., 2020).

Effective and efficient management of school resources, including finances, facilities and time, is key to success in achieving school goals. Principals must have strong management skills to ensure that every aspect of school operations runs smoothly. This includes careful budget planning, adequate facilities maintenance and scheduling that supports the teaching and learning process. With good management, schools can operate optimally and reduce obstacles that can disrupt the education process (Jayanti et al., 2023).

Principals should adopt an inclusive and participatory leadership style, where every member of the school feels valued and heard. Involving teachers, students and parents in decision-making will create a more democratic and adaptive school environment. This open leadership also means providing space for innovation and initiative from various parties and encouraging constructive dialogue to solve problems that arise (Devisa et al., 2023).

A thorough and continuous evaluation system is essential to maintain and improve the quality of education in schools. Principals should take the lead in developing and implementing effective evaluation tools to measure both student performance and teaching effectiveness. In addition, principals should also ensure that there is a consistent quality assurance mechanism that involves data-based assessment and feedback from various parties. Thus, schools can continuously adapt and make the necessary improvements to achieve high educational standards (Zaini et al., 2023).

By implementing these strategies holistically, a principal can fulfil his/her leadership role more effectively and lead the school towards high achievement and create a conducive and quality learning environment.

### **The Impact of Principal Leadership on Education Quality**

Principal leadership plays an important role in improving the quality of education in an institution. Effective principals are able to create a clear vision and mission in achieving quality education goals. They are able to motivate teachers and staff to work better and more efficiently. By having a clear direction and measurable goals, schools can strive collectively to optimise existing resources and improve student learning outcomes (Hartono et al., 2021).

In addition, competent principals will always encourage innovation and the application of effective learning methods. Proactive leadership will increase training and professional development for teachers so that they can develop and present more creative and relevant subject matter for students. Such training is important to ensure that teachers remain up-to-date with the latest developments in education, technology and pedagogy, which will ultimately affect the quality of classroom teaching (Triyuni et al., 2024); (Puspitasari & Aslan, 2024).

Good leadership also plays a role in creating a conducive learning environment. Principals must be able to enforce discipline and create a positive and inclusive school culture. Healthy interactions between students, teachers and parents will boost students' morale and learning spirit. With a supportive and safe atmosphere, students can focus more on learning and developing their full potential (Patraliza, 2023).

Furthermore, effective principals must also be able to manage resources well. They need to ensure that the school budget is used efficiently, school facilities are well maintained and programmes are in place that support students' learning needs. Transparent and accountable financial management can increase the trust of all parties involved, including the government, the community and student guardians (Ghafar, 2023).

Overall, strong and effective principal leadership has a significant impact on the quality of education. With a clear vision, encouragement for innovation, a conducive learning environment and good resource management, the quality of education in the school will improve. This benefits not only the students but also the school community as a whole, creating a generation that is more competent and ready to face future challenges.

### **Supporting and inhibiting factors of principal leadership**

Principal leadership, like leadership in other fields, is influenced by various supporting and inhibiting factors. These supporting factors can help principals in carrying out their duties and achieving the desired educational goals, while inhibiting

factors can become challenges that need to be overcome to maintain or improve the quality of education (Pratikno et al., 2021).

One of the main supporting factors is the support from internal school parties, namely teachers and administrative staff. A solid and committed team can assist the principal in realising the vision and mission of quality education. Competent and dedicated teachers are very influential in the success of the learning process and the achievement of student learning outcomes. Good cooperation between the principal and all school staff can create a harmonious and conducive working environment for the development of quality education (Wibowo & Inayati, 2023).

In addition, support from external parties is also very important. The active involvement of parents and the community around the school can encourage the improvement of education quality. Parents' participation not only in financial matters, but also in school activities and students' learning process at home is needed. Good relations with the government and other educational institutions can also have a positive impact through assistance programmes, training for teachers and the provision of adequate learning resources (Ghozelin & Syaifudin, 2022).

On the other hand, there are several inhibiting factors that can reduce the effectiveness of principal leadership. One of them is the lack of resources, both in terms of funding and school facilities. Lack of budget can limit educational development programmes and the procurement of necessary learning facilities. Principals must be able to overcome this obstacle by allocating budgets wisely and looking for other funding alternatives, such as cooperation with the private sector or government programmes (Dacholfany et al., 2023).

Another challenge is the resistance to change from teachers, staff and students. Changes in policies, learning methods and management systems are often met with a lack of support from those who are comfortable with the old ways. Principals need to have good communication skills to explain the benefits of these changes and involve all parties in the decision-making process, so that resistance can be minimised (Djoyo et al., 2024).

Overall, the success of principal leadership is influenced by various supporting and inhibiting factors. Understanding and managing these two aspects well is key to creating an effective and high-quality educational environment. Principals should continually strive to find ways to maximise the supporting factors and find solutions to the constraints faced, so that the desired educational goals can be achieved.

## **Conclusion**

The conclusion of the principal's leadership strategy in improving the quality of education can be outlined in several main points. Firstly, principals need to adopt a participative and collaborative leadership style. In this case, the principal should be able to involve all school components such as teachers, staff, students and parents in the

decision-making process and the implementation of school programmes. This inclusive leadership will encourage the creation of a more harmonious school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.

Secondly, the importance of professional development for teachers and school staff is one of the key strategies. Principals should be active in facilitating training, workshops and other skills development activities to improve the competence of educators. Teachers who continuously update their knowledge and skills can have a positive impact on the quality of learning provided to students. Thus, the quality of education can continue to improve through increasing the capacity and motivation of teachers and staff.

Finally, principals need to continuously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the various programmes and policies implemented. This requires an objective and continuous assessment system so that it can be known which programmes are effective and which ones need improvement. In addition, principals must be sensitive to the changes and challenges that occur in the world of education and be responsive in adjusting the policies and strategies implemented. By implementing these strategies consistently, principals can play an important role in improving the quality of education in their schools.

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