

Management Innovation and Principal Leadership in Private Junior High School

Muhammad Subhan Iswahyudi¹, Amrizal², Akhmad Ramli³, Merdi F. Mamonto⁴, Sudadi⁵

¹ICTCS-Indonesian Center for Team Coaching Studies

²Institut Agama Islam Nusantara Batang Hari, Jalan Gajah Mada, Teratai, Muara Bulian, Teratai, Batang Hari, Kabupaten Batang Hari, Jambi

^{3,5}Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda, Jl. H. A. M. Rifaddin, Harapan Baru, Kec. Loa Janan Ilir, Kota Samarinda, Kalimantan Timur

⁴Institut Agama Islam Muhammadiyah Kotamobagu, Jl Piere Tendean Gang Bohusami, RT 22 Rw 10 Lingkungan V Kel. Gogagoman Kec Kota msubhan.iswahyudi@gmail.com

Abstract

The type of research used in this research is field case study research using a qualitative descriptive approach. Data collection was carried out through interview, observation, and documentation techniques. Data analysis includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The findings from this study are that, first, management innovations carried out by school principals are in the areas of curriculum management, infrastructure management, and staffing management. Second, the leadership innovations carried out by the principal seem to be reflected in the principal as an innovative leader, with the dominant character being a friendly, democratic, intelligent principal who is good at seeing opportunities and building relationships. Third, innovation is carried out by school principals through three stages, namely initiating innovation programs, compiling innovation programs, and implementing innovations.

Keywords: Innovation, Management, Leadership, Principal

Abstrak

Jenis penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah penelitian studi kasus lapangan dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui teknik wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data meliputi pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Temuan dari penelitian ini adalah, pertama, inovasi manajemen yang dilakukan oleh kepala sekolah adalah di bidang manajemen kurikulum, manajemen infrastruktur, dan manajemen kepegawaian. Kedua, inovasi kepemimpinan yang dilakukan oleh kepala sekolah nampaknya tercermin dari kepala sekolah sebagai pemimpin yang inovatif, dengan karakter dominan kepala sekolah yang ramah, demokratis, cerdas yang pandai melihat peluang dan membangun relasi. Ketiga, inovasi dilakukan oleh kepala sekolah melalui tiga tahapan yaitu menginisiasi program inovasi, menyusun program inovasi, dan mengimplementasikan inovasi.

Kata Kunci: Inovasi, Manajemen, Kepemimpinan, Kepala Sekolah

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Corresponding author: Muhammad Subhan Iswahyudi

Email Address: msubhan.iswahyudi@gmail.com (Jl. Ahmad Dahlan No.76, Mojoroto, Kec. Mojoroto, Kota Kediri)

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a very vital component in the development process of a country, and it influences the economy positively. Education is an investment in the future of our workforce, where the belief that improving one's skills and abilities can be a helpful support in dealing with life's uncertainties. This is why education is important for those who want to improve their lives as a basic need (Afrizal, 2014).

At the same time, Indonesia as a large and complex nation faces serious problems, including its low ability to compete, which is an indicator indicating that education in this country has not been

successful in producing competent human resources in their respective fields. This problem is based on data from a World Bank report released at the end of 2020 relating to the quality of human resources, or the Human Capital Index. Indonesia's human capital index was stated to be below Singapore's, which produced a point of 0.54, which is stagnant from what they achieved in 2018. Singapore is in the top position of the Human Capital Index globally. Singapore is able to improve the quality of its education to improve the quality of life for its population. Including improving the quality of health, which is very different from Indonesia, where the life expectancy is only around 0.54, meaning that every child born in Indonesia has a 54 percent chance of being able to grow and develop in good and healthy conditions, provided that the child can get a proper education and is facilitated in terms of health. In the local realm of Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, it ranks 6th in the life expectancy ranking (databox, 2020).

For these reasons, educational institutions must be managed properly by education practitioners, both principals and educators, considering that educational institutions are the main means of improving the quality of human resources (HR). Management carried out in educational institutions is a work process to achieve a common goal, which is manifested in the form of the vision and mission of educational institutions. Operational management is related to the running of an institution efficiently and effectively (Astuti et al., 2023).

The education management function must be carried out by the school principal, including the ability to plan, organize, implement, and control all administrative matters by using resources to achieve organizational goals (Idris & Mokodenseho, 2021). In other words, teachers or educators must be able and accountable for fulfilling the tasks assigned in their field of expertise (Naim & Mokodenseho, 2022). The principal, in his leadership role, is tasked with developing character, carrying out processes, and evaluating teacher effectiveness (Ramli et al., 2023). This evaluation is important because it serves as a tool for the principal to evaluate his leadership (Nugroho et al., 2023; Zaid et al., 2020). This statement shows that the success of teachers in performing is the result of a leadership process in managing all components in the school, especially the teaching staff (Tilar, 2001). The strategy for improving teacher performance that is often carried out by school principals is to provide reinforcement, which is generally in the form of certain prizes as appreciation for the efforts that have been made (Parinussa et al., 2023). Therefore, teaching boards are encouraged to work professionally because their own competence, especially their professional competence, will be enhanced. This means that principal administration and teacher effectiveness are closely linked when determining educational goals (Mulyasa, 2009).

However, due to various internal and external obstacles, there are still school leaders and teaching boards who have not been optimal in carrying out their responsibilities as educators according to student expectations (Panji et al., 2023). In determining the continuity of teaching and learning activities in schools and their impact on students' daily lives, the principal uses his experience

and authority. This truth creates difficulties for any school principal or teacher who wants his profession to be truly professional.

METHOD

research approach that is qualitative. The type of research used is case study research, namely the type of contextual investigative research in which the subject of research is a single phenomenon from a certain period or activity. Collecting data using interviews, observation, and document study. The data analysis that the researchers did was to use the concept coined by Miles and Huberman, they explained that the steps in qualitative data analysis included data reduction activities, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In implementing the program, the school principal emphasizes all members coordinating all problems that arise during program implementation and also provides directions regarding various risks and actions that must be taken when facing obstacles in program implementation. In managing the curriculum, school principals make innovations related to teacher learning activities and improving the moral quality of students. The implementation of curriculum programs in schools places more emphasis on moral or character education, religious education, and skills education. Moral and character education is fostered for students through discipline programs to enter school on time, duha prayers together, khotmil Quran, and social activities such as cleaning places of worship and others. Religious education is emphasized in schools through the tahfidz extracurricular program, reading and writing the Koran, and Islamic spirituality. Meanwhile, skills education that is emphasized in schools is culinary and ICT.

In managing infrastructure facilities, the school principal focuses on building new infrastructure and fulfilling the completeness of learning media, so that in the last 5 years the school principal and school administrators have succeeded in building 2 classrooms, one computer laboratory, and a prayer room, in addition to fulfilling the lab needs of 20 computer units. The construction and completion of these facilities are in accordance with the principal's vision that if a school wants quality, we must first improve its appearance and then slowly improve quality. Assistance for the construction of school infrastructure facilities was obtained for several reasons, namely: the principal's broad relationships with parties from outside the school; the activeness of the principal in seeking funding opportunities for school construction; and the personality of the principal, who is easy to get along with so that it attracts people to participate in development activities at the school.

The school principal has a business background, so it is synonymous with developing new ideas, wise problem solving, and quick but effective decision making, as formulated by Noviyanty

(2020:34) regarding the characteristics of innovative leaders. Based on the recognition of its members from the teacher council and administrative staff, the head has totality in leading so that the principal's focus is to give the best to the school. The principal really respects the opinions of others by being democratic and maintaining relationships by treating subordinates as whole human beings. The principal places himself as the boss in official situations and becomes a friend or relative in certain situations. Besides that, in building relationships with external parties, the school principal is very selective so that it does not lead to dependence on assistance from certain parties, compromising the independence and future orientation of the school principal. All of the characteristics presented are based on data from the results of interviews that the researchers conducted with the research informants. It was the characteristics of these leaders that made the school experience rapid development in the last ten years.

The principal is a person who is flexible and easy to get along with but remains a professional by being able to communicate and place someone according to their conditions. The principal can respect other people and be respected by his members, as well as be firm in making decisions. The principal has an interesting vision. The vision that the principal has is based on the problems and needs of students. An analysis of the problems and needs of students requires the sensitivity of the principal in seeing situations that occur around the school environment as well as demands made by parents as well as things that will need to be prepared for students in the future. The school principal's sensitivity to current problems experienced and possibly experienced by students gives rise to an interesting and pragmatic vision, so that staff and student guardians support the vision created by the school. These visions include improving student morals, strengthening students' understanding of religion, meeting the needs of learning facilities, and training students' skills in technology.

The principal has been able to build a healthy culture in the school environment, which is evident in the state of the school environment, which is safe, comfortable, and neat. The condition of a healthy school environment and a clean and comfortable culture is evidenced by the trust of the government and the community to appoint schools as pilot schools. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this was the only school in the sub-district that met the criteria to be able to carry out face-to-face learning and was trusted by the local health office to be used as a vaccination site.

Implementation of innovations in innovating school programs, the principal also involves all teachers and administrative staff, as well as committees. The principal is aware that the implementation of program innovations will not take place without the support of all parties. The involvement of many parties in innovation does not only specialize in parties within the scope of the school, but also several parties from outside, such as entrepreneurs and alumni. The participation of alumni in the construction of the Musholla to meet the needs of students is an illustration of the effectiveness of innovation implementation that must be supported by various parties. Programs that involve external parties are also packaged and modified to fit the organizational situation; this can be

seen in the foster parent program for orphans who go to school. Which program is implemented refers to student statistical data, which shows that many students are orphans.

From the presentation of leadership innovations that have been carried out by the principal, an overview of the innovation strategies carried out by the principal can be obtained. In his leadership, the principal carried out three strategies: a facilitative strategy, an educational strategy, and a persuasion strategy. The facilitative strategy carried out by the school principal is to meet the needs of school infrastructure in the form of adding new classrooms, computer laboratories, and computers, as well as building a prayer room, while the educational strategy is carried out by the principal by providing understanding, guidance, and reinforcement to teachers in each program implementation. And the persuasion strategy is to manage new and old teachers fairly; the principal directs new teachers to continue to innovate and provides understanding to old teachers for the decisions and policies taken.

CONCLUSION

Management innovation is carried out by school principals in curriculum management, infrastructure, and staffing management. Innovations in curriculum management are carried out in the form of religious extracurriculars, ICT learning, culinary crafts, and religious activities such as duha prayers in congregation and Quran khotmil. Meanwhile, leadership innovation by the principal is reflected in the principal as an innovative leader with a dominant character as a friendly, democratic, intelligent person who is good at seeing opportunities and building relationships. The principal creates an attractive vision based on his analysis and sensitivity to the problems and needs of the school. The principal is also able to provide policies that are accepted by all parties, to build a synergistic work culture, and to change the school's image to that of a neat, clean, and healthy school so that the school is recognized by the service as a model school. Innovation is carried out by school principals through three stages, namely initiating innovation programs, structuring innovation programs, and implementing innovations.

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