

The Role of School Management in Improving Educational Quality at SMAT Bandung

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the management of school principals in improving the quality of education at SMAT Bandung. The principal plays a strategic role in managing all educational elements to achieve the expected quality. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, and analyzed descriptively. The results of the study show that the principal manages in three main aspects: planning, implementation, and evaluation. Planning is conducted through the preparation of quality improvement programs involving teachers and the school committee. Implementation focuses on teacher development, improving facilities and infrastructure, and strengthening school culture. Evaluation is conducted periodically with performance reflection, academic supervision, and involvement of the school community. In conclusion, the principals in SMAT Bandung have implemented management collaboratively, although there are still challenges such as budget limitations and low parental participation. This research recommends enhancing the leadership capacity of school principals through ongoing training and stakeholder involvement in improving the quality of education

INTRODUCTION

Education is the main pillar in shaping superior, character-driven, and adaptive human resources to the challenges of the times. In the era of globalization and the 4.0 industrial revolution, the quality of education becomes a key focus in determining a nation's competitiveness. To achieve optimal education quality, a directed education management system and visionary leadership are required. The school principal, in this case, holds a central role as an agent of change as well as the main driver in realizing educational goals at the educational unit level.

The school principal not only functions as an administrator but also as a manager capable of managing all school resources, as an innovator who drives renewal in the learning process, and as a motivator who builds the work spirit of all school members. The strategic role of the principal is evident in how they design, implement, and evaluate various programs for the continuous improvement of education quality. SMAT Bandung is one of the senior high schools located in the Ibun District, Bandung Regency, West Java Province. Based on initial observations, this school has great potential in quality development, especially in terms of the commitment of educators and the enthusiasm of students. However, the school also faces various challenges such as limited facilities and infrastructure, gaps in parental participation, and increasingly complex curriculum demands. In this context, the managerial ability of the principal becomes crucial.

This research aims to deeply examine how school principals in SMAT Bandung carry out their management functions to improve the quality of education. The focus of the research is directed towards three main aspects of management, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation of quality improvement programs. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of educational management science and serve as a practical reference for school principals in enhancing the quality of education in their respective educational units.

LITERATURE REVIEW

School Principal Management

Educational management by school principals includes strategic planning, resource organization, direction, and supervision. According to Terry (2006), management is a process that involves planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. School principals must be able to perform these functions in the context of education to create a conducive and productive learning environment.

Quality of Education

According to Ministerial Regulation No. 63 of 2009, the quality of education is the level of conformity between learning outcomes and national education standards. The quality of education includes three main aspects: input, process, and output. School principals play a role in ensuring the availability of adequate inputs, managing effective learning processes, and achieving optimal outputs.

Educational Leadership

The school principal, as an educational leader, must master the aspects of transformational leadership, which means being able to motivate, inspire, and empower teachers and all school members to work collectively towards a common goal (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Previous Research

Several previous studies have shown that the role of the principal is crucial in efforts to improve the quality of education. Ramadhan (2020), in his research titled "The Leadership of School Principals in Improving Educational Quality" at SDN Jakarta, revealed that the success of a principal is greatly influenced by their ability to nurture teachers and create a conducive working environment. Leadership that can build effective communication and collaboration among teachers has been shown to impact the professionalism of educators.

Meanwhile, Marlina (2020) through her research on "School-Based Management in Improving Quality" at an elementary school in West Sumatra found that the success of quality management is significantly influenced by the level of participation of the school community. A principal who is able to empower teachers, staff, students, and parents can create a participatory and responsive school environment to educational needs. A similar study was also conducted by Fadillah (2020) in the form of a case study at SDN Jambi. He emphasized that the planning and monitoring processes conducted systematically by the principal can improve teacher performance and student learning outcomes. This research highlights the importance of the principal's role in the educational quality management cycle, from planning, implementation, to evaluation.

Although the three studies provided important contributions to enriching the understanding of the role of principals in improving the quality of education, none have specifically examined the managerial practices of school principals in the context of high schools in rural areas such as SMAT Bandung in Ibum District, Bandung Regency. Therefore, this research aims to fill that gap by exploring the dynamics of quality educational management in schools with different geographical and social characteristics.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. This approach was chosen to provide a thorough and in-depth depiction of the managerial practices of school principals in improving the quality of education, according to the real context occurring in the school environment. The researcher aims to understand the dynamics of leadership and managerial strategies in a naturalistic manner, without manipulation of the conditions in the field. The research was conducted at SMAT Bandung, which is located in Ibum District, Bandung Regency, West Java Province. The selection of this location was based on the consideration that the school is currently in a phase of educational quality development and exhibits interesting patterns of leadership and school management to be studied further.

The subjects of the research consist of several important elements in the school environment, namely the principal, vice principal, teachers, and representatives of the school committee. These four elements were selected because they have strategic roles and relevant perspectives in the process of improving education quality. Data collection was carried out through three main techniques. First, in-depth interviews were conducted with the principal and several teachers to obtain information about policies, strategies, and challenges in quality management. Second, participatory observation was conducted by directly observing the learning activities, leadership practices, and the atmosphere of interaction between teachers and students. Third, documentation studies were conducted by reviewing various official school documents such as the School Work Plan (RKS), quality improvement programs, and learning supervision reports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quality Education Planning

The school principal develops a plan for quality improvement through meetings with teachers and the committee. The planning includes the development of literacy programs, infrastructure improvements, and the enhancement of teacher capacity. This plan is based on data from learning evaluations and the actual conditions of the school.

Managerial Implementation

The implementation of the quality improvement program is carried out through teacher training, strengthening academic supervision, and developing a collaborative work culture. The school principal also seeks cooperation with the Education Office for the provision of facilities. Teachers feel more motivated due to regular recognition and feedback.

Evaluation and Monitoring

The school principal conducts regular monitoring through classroom supervision and performance evaluation. The evaluation is not only administrative but also reflective of learning achievements. The results of the evaluation are used as a basis for revising the plans for the next activities. Challenges and Solutions The challenges faced include limited operational funds, low parental participation, and high teacher workload. The principal addresses this by involving the community and strengthening communication among school stakeholders.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The management of school principals in SMAT Bandung in improving the quality of education is carried out through three stages: participatory planning, collaborative implementation, and ongoing evaluation. The principal acts as a transformational leader who is able to build a culture of quality within the school environment. The success of this management still faces challenges, but with a collaborative and reflective approach, the school shows progress in improving the quality of education.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations, so it is necessary to conduct further research related to the topic of The Role of School Management in Improving Educational Quality at SMAT Bandung in order to perfect this research and increase insight for readers.

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