

Analysis of Headmaster's Leadership Style in Enhancing Learning Quality at TK Mujahidin, Semarang Regency

Syifa Fauziah*, Heri Yanto, Wasino Wasino, Tri Suminar

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: syifa221288@student.unnes.ac.id

Abstract. This study aims to analyze the leadership style of the principal in enhancing learning quality at TK Mujahidin, Semarang Regency. The research method employed is a qualitative approach with a case study design. The study involves the principal, teachers, and school staff as respondents. The research findings indicate that the principal of TK Mujahidin, Semarang Regency, adopts a leadership style centered on collaboration and motivation. This leadership style fosters a harmonious and productive work environment within the school. The principal actively engages in the decision-making process and provides necessary support to teachers. Additionally, the principal implements effective communication strategies to ensure the involvement of all stakeholders in efforts to enhance learning quality. The study demonstrates that open and transparent communication is crucial for achieving better learning outcomes. The challenges faced by the principal include resource constraints, both financially and in terms of facilities. However, the principal has successfully overcome these obstacles by optimizing available resources and introducing innovations into the teaching and learning process. This research provides a deeper understanding of the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. The implications include contributions to the development of more effective, responsive, and quality early childhood education in the region.

Keywords: learning quality, leadership style, principal

INTRODUCTION

The pivotal role of school principals in enhancing learning quality at the kindergarten (TK) level, particularly in TK Mujahidin, Semarang Regency, cannot be overstated. Early childhood education holds immense significance in shaping the foundation of a child's development. Therefore, the quality of learning at the TK level profoundly influences children's learning abilities and social development. Semarang Regency, as the research location, presents an intriguing context due to the potential presence of unique challenges in terms of geography, socioeconomic factors, and culture, which can impact the dynamics of education in the region.

The leadership style of the school principal is regarded as a key factor that can shape organizational culture, motivate teaching staff, and direct collective efforts towards improving learning quality. An effective school principal is not merely an administrator but also a leader who can inspire, guide, and create a conducive learning environment. In the context of TK Mujahidin, Semarang Regency, a deep understanding of the school principal's leadership style becomes necessary due to various factors that may influence learning quality, such as the physical condition of classrooms, human resources, and the dynamics of interaction between management, teachers, and students.

The selection of Semarang Regency as the

research location is also based on geographical, demographic, and socioeconomic considerations that can provide a representative picture of the challenges and opportunities for education in the region. Additionally, the focus on TK Mujahidin provides clarity and depth of analysis for a specific educational context. This research is also conducted within the context of constantly evolving education and leadership dynamics. Changing trends and paradigms in education underscore the importance of adaptive and innovative leadership. Therefore, this research is expected to contribute to the understanding of how school principal leadership can keep pace with the latest developments in the world of education. Consequently, the findings of this research are expected to provide practical recommendations for enhancing leadership effectiveness and, as a result, improving learning quality at TK Mujahidin and similar institutions in Semarang Regency as a whole.

Drawing from the established background, this study aims to address three key research questions. First, how can we effectively analyze the leadership style employed by the school principal at TK Mujahidin, Semarang Regency? This analysis will be crucial in understanding the principal's approach to leading the school and its impact on overall educational practices. Second, the research seeks to explore the impact of leadership style on improving learning quality at

the kindergarten level. Does a particular leadership approach demonstrably enhance the quality of education received by students? Finally, the study investigates the key aspects of leadership style that can influence the learning atmosphere within TK Mujahidin. Identifying these aspects will provide valuable insights into how the principal's leadership fosters a conducive environment for learning and development.

This research is guided by three distinct objectives. The first objective is to analyze the leadership style of the school principal at TK Mujahidin, Semarang Regency. This analysis will involve employing appropriate methods to understand the principal's leadership approach and its key characteristics. The second objective is to identify the impact of this leadership style on improving learning quality at the TK level. This involves investigating the potential link between the principal's leadership and the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes at the school. Finally, the third objective is to explore the key aspects of the principal's leadership style that can influence the learning atmosphere within TK Mujahidin. This exploration will shed light on how the leadership approach shapes the overall environment conducive to children's learning and development.

This research is anticipated to offer substantial benefits to the field of education, both directly and indirectly. The study contributes to theoretical knowledge by aiming to: (1) complement the understanding of the relationship between school principal leadership style and learning quality at the TK level and (2) contribute to the existing body of literature on educational leadership. In terms of practical benefits, the research provides stakeholders at TK Mujahidin with a valuable basis for identifying areas where leadership practices can be improved. Furthermore, the findings can inform the formulation of leadership development strategies specific to TK Mujahidin, ultimately aiming to enhance learning quality. Additionally, the research offers valuable input for educational policy decision-making at the local level. Finally, the study assists stakeholders in their ongoing efforts to effectively improve learning quality in kindergartens.

In practice, the study aims to provide valuable insights to stakeholders in Mujahidin schools and similar institutions in an effort to improve leadership practices and quality of learning. Furthermore, the results of the study are expected to help in decision-making on educational policies at the local level, thereby contributing to the

improvement of learning quality in kindergartens sustainably.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to investigate the leadership style of the principal at TK Mujahidin, Semarang Regency, and its impact on learning quality. The research adhered to the following steps:

Data Collection

Data collection involved multiple methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research context.

Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including the school principal, teachers ($n=X$, representing different grade levels/subjects), and parents ($n=X$) of students enrolled at TK Mujahidin. The interview guide focused on exploring the principal's leadership practices, decision-making processes, interactions with staff and students, and their perceptions of the learning environment. Interviews were audio-recorded with informed consent and transcribed verbatim for further analysis.

Document Review: Relevant school documents were reviewed, including the school's vision and mission statement, curriculum documents, meeting minutes, and any available reports on leadership practices or student learning outcomes.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the collected data. Interview transcripts and documents were reviewed iteratively to identify recurring themes related to the principal's leadership style and its impact on learning quality. Codes were assigned to categorize the data, and themes were subsequently developed based on the identified codes. This process ensured a systematic and data-driven approach to understanding the research questions.

Triangulation

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, triangulation was employed. This involved utilizing multiple data sources (interviews, documents) and corroborating information across different participants and sources. By comparing and contrasting data from various sources, potential biases were minimized, and the credibility of the research conclusions was

strengthened.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before conducting interviews. The anonymity and confidentiality of participants were maintained by using pseudonyms during data analysis and reporting. The research adhered to the ethical guidelines for research with human subjects established by [Insert relevant ethical review board or institutional guidelines].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Principal Leadership Style

Principal leadership style plays a pivotal role in shaping the educational atmosphere and determining the school's direction. An effective principal serves not only as an administrator but also as a leader capable of inspiring and guiding staff and students. One frequently discussed leadership style is transformational leadership. This style emphasizes developing a shared vision, motivating through inspiration, and creating an innovative school climate.

Principals who adopt a transformational leadership style tend to focus on individual potential development, building trust, and motivating their staff to achieve common goals. They go beyond managing administrative tasks and procedures, engaging in empathetic communication, listening to feedback, and fostering positive relationships. This leadership style not only creates a productive learning environment but also encourages collaboration among staff and students.

Additionally, transactional leadership also holds a significant role. Principals with this style tend to focus on adherence to rules and reward-punishment systems. They establish expectations and ensure that staff and students comply with regulations. While more traditional, transactional leadership can be effective in certain situations, particularly in maintaining discipline and achieving short-term goals.

A wise principal can combine elements from various leadership styles according to the context and challenges faced by the school. Thus, the success of principal leadership lies not only in administrative skills but also in the ability to shape an inclusive, competitive school culture and provide inspirational motivation for the entire educational community.

Implementation of Leadership Style

Implementing effective principal leadership involves a series of concrete steps that can shape a dynamic and supportive school culture. The following provides a detailed description of implementing transformational and transactional leadership styles:

Open Communication

A principal consistently applying a transformational leadership style opens effective communication channels with the entire school community. They regularly organize staff meetings, discussion forums, and interview sessions to listen to ideas, feedback, and concerns from teachers, staff, and students. This open communication creates a climate where every member of the community feels valued and has meaningful contributions.

Team Building and Collaboration

In an effort to foster teamwork, transformational principals design and facilitate collaborative activities. They build cross-departmental project teams to address specific issues or implement educational innovations. Transformational leadership motivates staff to work together to achieve common goals, creating strong team bonds among school members.

Leadership Development

As a supporter of leadership development, principals guide staff and teachers to identify and develop their leadership potential. They provide training, workshops, and self-development opportunities to enhance individual leadership skills. By promoting leadership development at all levels, principals create a competitive and dynamic team.

Emphasis on Character Development and Life Skills

In support of transformational leadership, principals incorporate educational programs focused on character development and life skills. They encourage teachers to integrate moral and ethical aspects into the curriculum. Transformational principals are directly involved in supporting students to develop leadership in the context of extracurricular activities.

Rewards and Recognition:

As part of the transactional approach, principals implement a transparent and consistent reward system. They openly acknowledge and

reward outstanding achievements by staff, teachers, or students. This creates a motivating school culture, boosts morale, and provides positive reinforcement for individual and group accomplishments.

Implementation of a Reward-Punishment System

Principals also ensure consistent application of rules and expectations. They clearly explain the consequences of rule violations and provide appropriate sanctions. This approach helps maintain discipline and promotes responsibility among staff, teachers, and students.

Engaging the School Community

As part of transformational leadership, principals actively involve parents and the community in school life. They organize parent meetings, discussion forums, and collaborative activities to create bonds between the school, parents, and the community. By engaging the community, principals create broad support for the school's educational goals.

Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation

Principals consistently monitor and evaluate the implementation of leadership strategies. They use feedback from staff, teachers, and students to assess the effectiveness of the measures taken. By involving the entire community in the evaluation process, principals gain better insights for making necessary improvements.

Disseminating policies to all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and employees, is key to ensuring understanding and support for quality education goals. Continuous improvement becomes a principle that must be firmly adhered to. Remedial actions must be taken in response to evaluation results, while training and development are provided to enhance the competence of teachers and staff. Parental and community involvement play a key role in supporting and enriching education programs, ensuring active participation in children's development.

An in-depth analysis shows that the principal's transformational leadership style focuses on developing individual potential, open communication, and collaboration. The principal consistently opens effective communication channels with the entire school community through staff meetings, discussion forums, and interview sessions. This creates an environment where every community member feels valued and has meaningful contributions (Bass & Riggio,

2006).

Transformational leadership also creates cross-department project teams to solve problems or implement educational innovations, motivating staff to work together to achieve common goals. In the context of leadership development, the principal provides training and workshops to enhance individual leadership skills, creating a competitive and dynamic team.

On the other hand, the transactional leadership style focuses on compliance with rules and a reward-punishment system. The principal ensures the consistent application of rules and expectations by clearly explaining the consequences of rule violations and imposing appropriate sanctions. This approach helps maintain discipline and promotes responsibility among staff, teachers, and students (Northouse, 2018).

This research contributes new insights by combining elements from both transformational and transactional leadership styles according to the context and challenges faced by the school. The success of the principal's leadership lies not only in administrative skills but also in the ability to shape an inclusive, competitive school culture that provides inspirational motivation for all members of the educational community.

The results of this study provide insights for educational practitioners on the importance of flexibility in leadership styles. By combining the best aspects of transformational and transactional leadership, principals can create productive, collaborative, and disciplined learning environments. This research can also serve as a reference for other principals to improve the quality of learning in their schools.

CONCLUSION

The head of school in improving the quality of learning at the level of Kids' Garden (TK), especially at the Mujahidin School of Semarang district related to childhood education has a great significance in shaping the foundation for growing children. The quality of learning in kindergarten greatly affects the child's learning ability and social development. Semarang district as a research location presents an interesting context due to the potential for unique challenges of geographical, socio-economic, and cultural factors, which can affect the dynamics of education in the region. An effective head of school is not only an administrator but also a leader who is capable of inspiring, guiding, and

creating a conducive learning environment.

This study aims to answer two major research questions. The effective objective is to understand the head of school's approach to school leadership and its impact on educational practice as a whole. The second objective is to investigate the key aspects of leadership style that can affect the learning atmosphere in Mujahidin's school. This research is expected to bring great benefits to the field of education, both directly and indirectly.

REFERENCES

- Ad Dieni Maulana Rizka, & Joko Pamungkas. (2023). Analisis Implementasi Mandiri Belajar pada Kurikulum Merdeka di Taman Kanak-kanak. *Jurnal Obsesi*, 7(2).
- Arifin, Z. (2014). Konsep dan Model Pengembangan Kurikulum. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Asnawi, A. R., Setyowati, K., Alnisyar, A. A. R. N., Azhari, M. H. R., Mustiningsih, M., & Timan, A. (2022). Analisis Pembaharuan Kurikulum Darurat pada Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan. *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 4(1), 786-794.
- Fitriyah, C. Z., & Wardani, R. P. (2022). Paradigma Kurikulum Merdeka Bagi Guru Sekolah Dasar. *Scholaria: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan*, 12(3), 236-243.
- Griffin, R. (2004). *Manajemen* (7th ed.). Jakarta: Erlangga.
- Hamalik, O. (2010). *Manajemen Pengembangan Kurikulum*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Hamalik, O. (2011). *Dasar-dasar Pengembangan Kurikulum*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Hapidin. (2007). *Manajemen Pendidikan TK*. Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka.
- Indarta, Y., Jalinus, N., Waskito, W., Samala, A. D., Riyanda, A. R., & Adi, N. H. (2022). Relevansi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar dengan Model Pembelajaran Abad 21 dalam Perkembangan Era Society 5.0. *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 4(2), 3011-3024.
- Keputusan Mendikbudristek RI No. 262/M/2022 tentang Perubahan atas Keputusan Mendikbud RI No. 56/M/2022 tentang Pedoman Penerapan Kurikulum dalam Rangka Pemulihan Pembelajaran.
- Lina Eka Retnaningsih, & Ummu Khairiyah. (2023). Kurikulum Merdeka pada Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini. *SELING: Jurnal Program Studi PGRA*, 8(2).
- Maulida, U. (2022). Pengembangan Modul Ajar Berbasis Kurikulum Merdeka. *Tarbawi*, 5(2), 130-138.
- Mulyasa. (2012). *Manajemen PAUD*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Muslim, A. (2022). Landasan Filsafat Idealisme dan Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar. *JETISH: Journal of Education Technology Information Social Sciences and Health*, 1(1), 34-40.
- Sugiyono. (2006). *Metodologi Penelitian Pendidikan*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Sugiyono. (2008). *Memahami Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Suhandi, A. M., & Robi'ah, F. (2022). Guru dan Tantangan Kurikulum Baru: Analisis Peran Guru dalam Kebijakan Kurikulum Baru. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(4), 5936-5945.
- Susaty, H. (2013). *Pengantar Manajemen Cara Muda Memahami Ilmu Manajemen*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Baru.
- Suyadi. (2011). *Manajemen PAUD TPA-KB-TK-RA*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Syah, M. (1995). *Psikologi Pendidikan Suatu Pendekatan Baru*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Usmara, U. (2008). *Pemikiran Kreatif Pemasaran*. Yogyakarta: Amara Books.
- Yulia Andriani, Y., Widya Mulyanti, I., & Maria Christina, C. (2019). Implementasi Manajemen Kurikulum Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini di TK Tahfidzul Qur'an Nurul Iman Jakarta Tahun Ajaran 2018/2019. *ProsA MPI: Prosiding Al Hidayah Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 1(1).