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Principal's Efforts in Improving Teacher Performance at the Elementary Education Level

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Abstrak

Kepemimpinan kepala sekolah memiliki peran krusial dan vital dalam menciptakan iklim belajar kondusi di sekolah, termasuk meningkatkan kinerja guru. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk manganalisa upaya kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan kinerja guru pada jenjang pendidikan dasar. Metode penelitian ini termasuk jenis kualitatif, dengan metode studi deskriptif analitis. Pengumpulan data penelitian menggunakan metode wawancara, observasi dan studi dokumentasi. Selanjutnya, data dianalisis menggunakan teknik reduksi data, penyajian data dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa upaya kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan kinerja guru terlaksana dengan baik. Hal ini terlihat dari (1) kemampuan *leadership* kepala sekolah dalam mengelola informasi dan menyelesaikan konflik antar pendidik; (2) pemberian sugesti dari kepala sekolah terhadap guru akan pentingnya mendidik dan meningkatkan kompetensi pendidik; (3) upaya kepala sekolah dalam memenuhi kebutuhan mengajar guru, kesejahteraan ekonomi dan kesejahteraan sosial (karir) guru; dan (4) pemberian kesempatan bagi guru untuk mengikuti pelatihan dan lanjut studi (pendidikan).

Kata Kunci: *Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah, Kinerja Guru, Pendidikan Dasar.*

Abstract

Principal leadership has a crucial and vital role in creating a conducive learning climate in schools, including improving teacher performance. This study aims to analyze the efforts of school principals in improving teacher performance at the basic education level. This research method is a qualitative type, with an analytical descriptive study method. Collecting research data using interviews, observation and documentation studies. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using data reduction techniques, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The results of this study concluded that the principal's efforts to improve teacher performance were carried out well. This can be seen from (1) the principal's leadership ability in managing information and resolving conflicts between educators; (2) giving suggestions from school principals to teachers about the importance of educating and improving the competence of educators; (3) the efforts of the principal in meeting the needs of teachers to teach, the economic welfare and social welfare (career) of teachers; and (4) providing opportunities for teachers to attend training and continue their studies (education).

Keywords: *Principal Leadership, Teacher Performance, Basic Education.*

PRELIMINARY

The quality of education determines the progress of a nation with a wealth of human resources. The creation of superior human resources aims to move and direct Indonesia to accelerate glory and dignified human civilization. In fact, the conditions for the life of an advanced, modern and prosperous nation. This shows the urgency of quality education for the survival and welfare of a nation (Romadhon & Zulela, 2021).

A country's resources are often not potential from the natural aspect, but it can become a developed country by utilizing superior human resources. This potential for progress results from the application of quality education which underlies the opening of horizons for thinking and collaboration spaces for the progress of the country. In the context of educational institutions in Indonesia, important factors that need to be considered in creating quality education include aspects of the competence of teachers, school principals, and professional education staff (Nasution & Ichsan, 2020).

The existence of schools as educational institutions requires collaboration and synergy between human resources that move together in order to achieve organizational goals. In this context, it is necessary to have an equal perception of various programs in achieving the school's vision, mission and goals. The implementation of the program in question can be carried out effectively and efficiently if the principal is able to translate it into planning, implementing, and periodically evaluating the curriculum. This is because human

resources in schools can also be an inhibiting factor for the implementation of all programs, namely demotivating behavior, low performance, and a non-conducive learning climate (Yunus, *et.al.*, 2021).

The school principal with his internal policies is one of the determining factors for the success of achieving programs in schools. For this reason, the principal's leadership is expected to be able to help and facilitate teacher performance improvement. This is because the teacher is the continuation of leadership in the learning process in the classroom for students. The teacher reflects a role model or a figure that students should emulate. The calling of teachers to educate wholeheartedly towards students in the form of high performance is also influenced by the leadership behavior practiced by the principal (Elly & Soraya, 2020).

The important role of the school principal in establishing policies and a conducive learning climate is an implementation of increasing teacher professionalism. Of course, increasing teacher professionalism is intended to improve teacher welfare as well as teacher productivity and performance. This is because professional teachers will try to become human learners, continue to innovate to meet the development needs of students. This is where the principal plays an important role in seeking to improve teacher performance in schools (Iskandar, 2013; Hardiyati, *et.al.,* 2022).

Teachers who carry out work in educational institutions are required to have these qualifications which guarantee their expertise, skills or abilities as professional educators. These mandatory requirements are quality standards that must be met by teachers. Professional teachers who meet these standards are supporters of creating quality teachers in carrying out their work. The quality of education in schools can be seen from teacher performance (Azis & Suwatno, 2019).

Based on observations and preliminary studies at the Darul Azhar Aceh Tenggara Private Madrasa, that the researchers found teachers as educators lacking discipline in carrying out the learning process in class, this can be seen from the teachers in teaching who were late for coming to madrasas and also many who were not present at madrasas . This is what researchers get from observations that researchers see in the field and found teacher absences by reason of illness, family events, parties, meetings outside and other activities. Educators are also unable to create a comfortable and interesting learning atmosphere, this can be seen from the condition of the class room which is noisy when the teacher carries out teaching and learning activities in the classroom, there are still classrooms where students are not in class during teaching and learning activities. and went to have snacks in the canteen and play football outside the classroom, most of the teachers did not make their own lesson plans, the lesson plans were photocopied by fellow teachers, therefore there are still many teachers who have low competence.

In order to carry out Madrasah-based management effectively and efficiently, it is very necessary for Madrasah heads to have leadership, planning, and broad perspectives on Madrasahs and education. The Marwah of the Madrasah head must be carried out by increasing caring attitudes, enthusiasm for learning, work discipline, exemplary and human relations as capital to create a conductive work atmosphere. The success of the organization in achieving the set goals will depend heavily on the role of leadership (Sulistiya, 2013).

In fact, relevant research on school principal leadership and teacher performance has been examined from various perspectives. Among them are discussing the aspects of teacher commitment and school culture which are influenced by the leadership of the school principal (Purwoko, 2018), giving motivation from the madrasa head to teachers (Sya'roni, *et.al.*, 2018), the leadership style of the principal and teacher performance (Gusman, 2018), the urgency of school culture on improving teacher performance (Setiyati, 2014), school quality based on the influence of school principal leadership (Timor, *et.al.*, 2018), teacher perceptions, job satisfaction and improving school quality (Pratiwi, 2013), leadership management of school principals (Jaliah, *et.al.*, 2020), the role of supervisors on school quality (Kaiman, *et.al.*, 2020), the quality of learning in schools (Kosim, 2017), student achievement as a reflection of the principal's leadership and a conducive environmental culture (Lestari, 2016), and school committee participation on teacher performance (Imansyah, *et.al.*, 2020).

Likewise, leadership plays a very important role in organizational dynamics. As a leader, the head of the madrasa is a determining factor that can encourage the madrasa to realize its vision, mission, goals and objectives through various plans that are carried out in a planned manner. Therefore, madrasa heads must have the ability to manage strong leadership so that they are expected to be able to make the right policies, in addition to having a high initiative attitude in improving the quality of education. Furthermore, it was examined under the title, "Efforts of Principals in Improving Teacher Performance at the Elementary Education Level".

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive study research method, because it wants to obtain a description of teacher certification at Darul Azhar Aceh Tenggara Private Madrasah. Descriptive research tries to find appropriate and sufficient descriptions of all activities, objects, processes and people. Descriptive research is research that aims to accurately describe certain characteristics of an individual, condition, symptom or certain group, or to determine the frequency of the relationship between a symptom and other symptoms in society (Purwandari, 2007).

The main subject or informant of this research is the head of the Darul Azhar Aceh Tenggara private madrasah. Furthermore, the object of research is how to apply the systems approach in education at the Darul Azhar Aceh Tenggara Private Madrasah. This research was conducted at Darul Azhar Aceh Tenggara Private Madrasah, located in Lembah Haji Village, Bambel District, Southeast Aceh District. Field research was carried out on 28 November 2022-January 2023. The data collection technique used in this research was through interviews, observation, and documentation review (Gulo, 2002).

In this study, interviews were conducted directly with the Head of Darul Azhar Aceh Tenggara Private Madrasah. Observations were made in this study to obtain a clear picture of activities, behaviors, and events that occurred at Darul Azhar Aceh Tenggara Private Madrasah Aliyah. Data analysis in qualitative research, namely by interpreting the research results obtained at the research site. The steps taken are: (1) data transcription, (2) data reduction, (3) triangulation, (4) data presentation, and (5) final conclusion (Assingkily, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teacher Performance at Elementary Education Level: Teacher Productivity Behavior

Performance is a form of accumulation of all processes that have been carried out by individuals or groups. Performance is synonymous with results or productivity issued, so that a low or high level of productivity is a reflection of one's performance. In fact, the excellence of human resources will be assessed and measured through high or low levels of productivity. This is the formal role implied on the individual as a member of the organization (Ulum, *et.al*., 2020).

Related to performance can be interpreted in several points, namely work results, actualization of commitments, completion of tasks or work programs, and attitude towards meeting the needs of the world of work. According to Syafaruddin & Anzizhan (2010) performance is a work effort that must be achieved by a person or a group of people in an organizational container, according to their respective authorities and responsibilities, in order to achieve the goals of educational institutions legally or not violating the law and in accordance with morals or ethics.

The performance of teachers as educators and the main milestones in the implementation of education is measured against the optimization of administrative and academic aspects. The teacher's contribution to educational institutions is clearly illustrated through the learning process, partner services for meeting student learning (development) needs, as well as the quality of graduates produced. With regard to the quality of students, it can be seen gradually in student learning outcomes (cognitive, affective and psychomotor), final exams, and student work. Thus, the level of success of all teacher performance will be easily assessed through the quality of students (Elazhari, *et.al*., 2021).

In the interview process that was conducted, some information was obtained from the head of the madrasah:

"...In my opinion sir, leadership is a process of moving, influencing, guiding in order to achieve organizational goals in this research focusing on educational institutions. In the Madrasah organization a leader is a very important factor, because it can provide direction for teachers in carrying out their daily duties".

In connection with the results of the interview above, Sauri, et al. (2018) explained that good leadership will bring a positive attitude to the teacher's personal to carry out their duties, because they feel comfortable and there is no element of compulsion in carrying out their duties. Vice versa, the leadership of the Madrasah head who is not good will foster a teacher's anti-certain attitude towards his leader. This can result in a decrease in teacher enthusiasm, which will ultimately affect the teacher's performance in carrying out their duties.

Furthermore, the foundation said that:

"Following developments in the world of education, Darul Azhar's modern Islamic boarding school provides two formal schools, namely an integrated Islamic private junior high school (IT SMP) and Darul Azhar private madrasah. The educational method applied at the Modern Darul Azhar Islamic Boarding School refers to the modern Islamic boarding school education system. Therefore, the Darul Azhar Islamic Boarding School curriculum will try to formulate an independent curriculum in accordance with the development of existing situations and conditions".

Thus, it is simply concluded that teacher performance intersects with planning mandates, managing learning and assessing student learning outcomes. So in planning the teacher must be able to describe learning in accordance with the material being taught. As an executor, the teacher must be able to make the learning space more conducive so that students are able to follow the learning process well. From this presentation, it is clear that the head of the madrasa has a great influence on teacher performance. The extent to which success is seen from the availability and attainment of subordinates in complying with all the rules made by the leader in a madrasah.

Management and Efforts of Principals in Improving Teacher Performance at Elementary Education Level

As a process of implementing education, the performance of teachers in madrasas must go through a system of approaches, both from an administrative and academic aspect. In the Madrasah organizational approach it can be found as a unified system that is interrelated between input, output, impact, and environmental process factors in carrying out its functions including managing teacher performance. So it can be concluded that performance management is related to the efforts made by organizational leaders to plan, organize and control employee performance. So Madrasas as an educational organization require a systems approach in planning, directing and controlling the performance of madrasas (Astuti & Dacholfany, 2016).

According to Rifai (2019), in improving teacher performance, motivation is also needed that encourages an individual to make something he wants. Something that is hoped for may be for the good of the individual or for the person giving the encouragement. Therefore teacher performance management in Madrasah organizations is a systematic effort to manage the performance of teachers with the aim of improving their performance both individually and in groups and improving the performance of the Madrasah organization as a whole as a unified system. In addition, teacher performance management in Madrasas is also a process that promotes open communication and in partnership relations between the head of the Madrasa as a leader and teachers as professional teaching staff. This communication is carried out through leadership in setting the direction and goals of education, work plans, providing feedback, evaluating performance and developing madrasahs.

Teacher performance was originally the performance or performance carried out by the teacher in carrying out his duties as an educator. The quality of teacher performance will greatly determine the quality of educational outcomes, because the teacher is the party that has the most direct contact with students in the

educational or learning process in educational institutions. The realization of performance satisfaction in teachers is closely related to how to lead a leadership carried out by a leader fairly (Darmawan, 2019).

Furthermore, Ginting (2011) argues that teacher performance is influenced by many factors, including (1) effectiveness and efficiency, (2) authority and responsibility, (3) work discipline, and (4) initiative and creative power. Organizational success can be seen from the leader's ability to influence subordinates to improve performance by seeking the disciplinary values applied in these educational institutions. Supporting these factors, Dekawati (2011) adds factors that affect teacher performance including (1) teacher education level, (2) teaching supervision, (3) upgrading programs, (4) conducive climate, (5) facilities and infrastructure , (6) the physical and mental condition of the teacher, (7) the leadership style of the madrasa head, (8) guarantee of welfare, and (9) the managerial ability of the madrasa head.

Efforts to find out the existing leadership styles and types are expected for education managers, especially madrasah heads to be able to apply leadership behavior that is considered good based on the behavior of organizational members and the situation of the selected educational institution (Zuldesiah, *et.al.*, 2021). The principal's efforts to improve teacher performance have been carried out well. This can be seen from (1) the principal's leadership ability in managing information and resolving conflicts between educators; (2) giving suggestions from school principals to teachers about the importance of educating and improving the competence of educators; (3) the efforts of the principal in meeting the needs of teachers to teach, the economic welfare and social welfare (career) of teachers; and (4) providing opportunities for teachers to attend training and continue their studies (education).

In essence, the findings above are in line with previous research with the direction of developing the principal's efforts as a form of distinction or novelty research findings, namely the study of the meaning of leadership as a process of influencing others to achieve goals in a situation. Leadership can be done anywhere. Meanwhile, on the other hand, emphasizing the focus of leadership on one's ability to obtain action from others (Rifai, 2013). This shows that leadership is a process of influencing the activities of a person or group to achieve goals in certain situations (Syafaruddin, 2017). Thus, the meaning of the principal as a leader is manifested in the form of the ability to influence subordinates or other people, the ability to direct the behavior of subordinates in a positive direction, and is visionary in achieving school goals.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description of the findings and discussion above, it can be concluded that the principal's efforts to improve teacher performance are well implemented. This can be seen from (1) the principal's leadership ability in managing information and resolving conflicts between educators; (2) giving suggestions from school principals to teachers about the importance of educating and improving the competence of educators; (3) the efforts of the principal in meeting the needs of teachers to teach, the economic welfare and social welfare (career) of teachers; and (4) providing opportunities for teachers to attend training and continue their studies (education).

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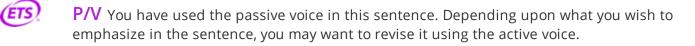
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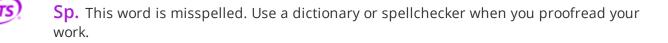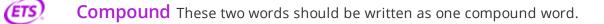
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