

Principal's Leadership Strategy in Improving Character Education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study to see how the principal's leadership strategy in improving character education see what activities can improve character education, and what are the supporting and inhibiting factors. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach with descriptive methods through data analysis in the form of interviews, observations, and document studies. The data sources of this research are the principal, deputy head of curriculum, deputy head of student affairs, homeroom teacher, teachers, and students. The location of the research was at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang. The results showed that the principal's leadership strategy in improving character education at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang has been running quite well. This can be seen from the many activities that can improve character education at Kosgoro Tangerang Junior High School, including: tadarus al-quran, duha prayer, youth red cross, saman dance, scouts and karate. The principal's leadership strategies in improving character education include: school program planning within one year for the short term and four years for the long term.

Keywords: Principal Leadership Strategy, Character Education

INTRODUCTION

Schools as formal educational institutions that are now still a vital place for students in seeking knowledge are also required to be able to achieve institutional goals which have implications for the achievement of national education goals (Affandi, 2018; Lesmana, 2018; Rukiyati, 2020; Sujana, 2019). Many parties play a role in the success of a school to achieve the school's goals, among the various parties who play a very important role is a principal, a principal has a very important role because it is the principal who sets policies and rules related to the development of educational institutions (Hasan, 2010; Wahyuni, 2018).

School as a formal education institution that implements character education in its teaching and learning activities is an effort to help the development of children's souls both physically and mentally, from their nature towards a human and better civilization (Chaer et al., 2019; Jerome & Starkey, 2022; Mallon & Martinez-Sainz, 2021). Since 2010, the government through the Ministry of National Education launched the "National Culture and Character Education" program as a national movement (Sujana, 2019). This is one of the government's efforts to play a role in improving the character of this nation. The program is formulated into 18 values of cultural education and national character that are applied in subjects, extracurricular activities, and daily activities and are integrated in various educational environments, namely the family, school, community and government. So, it is important for families, schools and communities to implement these values so that children can grow and develop in a good environment.

In today's modern era, many parties demand an increase in the intensity and quality of character education implementation in formal education institutions. This demand is based on a growing social phenomenon, namely the increase in juvenile delinquency in society, such as mass fights, drug use, and other cases. Even in certain big cities, these symptoms have reached a very troubling level. Seeing this case, schools as formal educational institutions and official forums for fostering the younger generation are expected to increase their role in shaping the personality of students through increasing the intensity and quality of character education.

Seeing the cases faced by schools today, school principals are required to be able to make more efforts in integrating all parties involved in character education implementation efforts, such as teachers, school committees, education personnel and the community, but in practice in the field not all teachers are actively involved in the formation of student character education. Some only fulfill their teaching obligations as a teacher, as well as parents, only some of whom care about character building in their children. The reasons include being busy working so that they cannot have quality time, even though children's behavior and character are first formed in the family environment itself.

Schools in improving character education also face many challenges, including at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang. It can be seen that there are still students who are late for school, students who are late before being allowed to enter the class will be given punishment first which is educational, such as asking students to read or memorize verses of the Qur'an, or cleaning the bathroom if the student is often late. Other character issues faced are the lack of motivation to learn and the existence of students who do not have plans about their future, and most of the students of SMP Kosgoro

Tangerang come from underprivileged families and families who often disagree when at home (broken home), so that it affects student behavior at school. The students of SMP Kosgoro Tangerang are also mostly problematic students who were expelled by their original school and then moved to SMP Kosgoro Tangerang. Regarding the activities or services provided by SMP Kosgoro Tangerang, they have been carried out optimally. However, there are still some problems experienced by the school in improving character education, one of which is about the principal's strategy, the lack of the principal's strategy in improving character education, it can be seen from the programs carried out by the school that still look monotonous. Based on the description above, the importance of the performance of a principal in leading the formal education institution, where the principal must be able to create educational activities run well, especially in improving character education in students.

METHOD

In this study the authors used a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The qualitative approach, according to Lincoln and Guba, is referred to as "Naturalistic Inquiry". The use of this approach is because the way of observation and data collection is carried out in a natural setting, meaning without manipulating the subject under study (Keller, 1987; Lincoln et al., 1985; Miles & Jozefowicz-Simbeni, 2019).

The type of data collected is qualitative data consisting of primary data and secondary data about the principal's leadership in developing character education. The data sources in this study are the principal, vice principal for student affairs, vice principal for curriculum, homeroom teacher and students. To obtain the data needed in this study, data collection techniques were used in the form of interviews, observations and document studies.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews with respondents complemented by the results of observations and document studies, the following research results were obtained:

Planning

Character Education Program A principal can make plans that will be carried out in his leadership. This planning is a reference for carrying out activities or activities while at school for a certain period of time. As said by the principal that for every one year, before the new school year, the principal conducts a working meeting to determine the teaching program, curriculum program, student program, staffing,

finance, and infrastructure or procurement of facilities that support the school program.

The planning process

The results of interviews with the principal of character education planning at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang always held a meeting every time before the new school year around June to July. Rojali added that this meeting was attended by all teachers and school staff, this meeting discussed short-term programs for the next year. While the long-term program work meeting is held every four years, the annual planning includes:

Academic Program

Based on the results of the researcher's observation with the principal, he said that the teaching program is made based on work deliberations at the beginning of the year to determine the teaching program based on the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the school that will be carried out in the following year. The teaching program is carried out in stages and planned to create a quality school. Observation of the documentation shows that the teaching program at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang has been detailed in the curriculum structure. The curriculum structure is an application of the concept of organizing content in the learning system and organizing the learning load in the learning system. The organization of content in the learning system used in the upcoming curriculum is a semester system, while the organization of the learning load in the learning system is based on semester hours. The results of this observation can conclude that the curriculum content used at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang is the 2013 curriculum which includes a number of subjects whose depth is a learning load for students in educational units. Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards states that the depth of curriculum content in each educational unit is benefited in competencies at each level and semester in accordance with the National Education Standards. The competencies in question consist of basic competencies and core competencies.

Non-academic programs

According to the results of interviews with Suwaibatul Aslamiyah, she explained that at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang there are also non-academic programs, there are activities that are carried out every day such as tadarus al-quran and duha prayers, as well as activities that are carried out once a week, such as scouts, PMR, karate and also saman dance art.⁶⁰ In planning according to Ovi Octavia, the first step of the planning process is a rational process. Planning is basically a process of leveling goals

and actions. The planning process is also a means and infrastructure used with the aim of helping the implementation of the school program. Planning must be flexible and able to adjust the time and place. For example, KBM must be carried out in accordance with a pre-planned and scheduled schedule, as well as extracurricular activities carried out according to their respective schedules. Luh Chairun Amalia also added, in the non-academic program planning meeting we also make lesson plans, so that everything can run in a directed and structured manner. The researcher can conclude that at Kosgoro Tangerang Junior High School that once a year, before the new school year, they routinely hold work meetings to determine the teaching program, curriculum program, student program, staffing, finance, and infrastructure or procurement of facilities that support the school program for the next year.

Principals as leaders have the responsibility for the smooth implementation of education, and teaching at school. Therefore, principals should be able to carry out their duties well, this can be seen if the principal understands, masters and is able to carry out its functions as a school leader which includes all activities in the school, such as; teaching and learning process, students, personnel, facilities and infrastructure, administration and finance as well as managing school relations with the community. In addition, the principal is also responsible for the state of the school environment. Thus the principal should be able to carry out his duties which include planning, preparing the school organization, coordinating and directing and managing staffing. Likewise, the principal at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang has tried to implement programs that can improve character education. The following are the programs:

1. Tadarus Al-qur'an

Tadarus Al-quran is held every day before teaching and learning activities begin, tadarus al-qur'an aims to get closer to God and make Korgoro Junior High School students who have religious values and love to read. This activity aims to increase students' reading power.

2. Duha Prayer

This duha prayer activity is carried out every day in the school mosque during recess, this duha prayer aims to increase the religious values of Kosgoro Junior High School students so that the growth of attitudes and behaviors that are obedient in carrying out the teachings of the religion they adhere to.

3. Youth Red Cross

Youth Red Cross is an activity that aims to foster the value of friendship, environmental care, social care, in Kosgoro Junior High School students. This activity is carried out every Wednesday after teaching and learning activities at

13.00 - 15.00. the results of this activity show the attitude of students to care for each other.

4. Saman Dance

Saman dance is one of the traditional Indonesian dances originating from Aceh. This activity aims to foster creative values, curiosity, love for the country, responsibility, in students. With this activity students preserve the culture of the archipelago. This saman dance is held every Wednesday at 13.00 - 15.00 after the teaching and learning activities are over.

5. Scout

This scout activity is held every Wednesday at 13.00-15.00. This scout activity is attended by all Kosgoro Junior High School students. For class IX, it is included only until semester 1 only, because semester 2 is focused on exams both school exams and state exams.

6. Karate

This activity is carried out every Saturday at 08.00 - 10.00, this karate is very beneficial for students, because it can make students have the value of discipline, hard work, creativity and independence.

CONCLUSION

From the description of the research results, it can be concluded that the principal as an administrator has a very important role in an institution or school. Because school administration will not run well without the encouragement of the principal. Broadly speaking, the principal in carrying out his function as an educational administrator at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang has been running quite well. This can be seen from activities related to administrative functions, including:

1. Planning at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang school program planning within one year for the short term and once every four years for the long term.
2. Organizing; carried out by giving decree to teachers, staff and employees. And assign tasks according to their abilities and educational background.
3. Coordinating; done by holding work meetings so that there are no misunderstandings and disputes.
4. Directing; giving assignments to teachers, staff and employees to attend trainings both organized by the government and the public, including upgrading, seminars, training and so on.

5. Communication; at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang has been running smoothly, this can be seen from the two-way communication in deliberations, as well as face to face communication.
6. Supervision and evaluation; carried out at SMP Kosgoro Tangerang is directly based on the principal's observation and indirectly based on the draft quisoner.

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