

Analysis of Principal Leadership at Gmim Wiau Lapi Elementary School

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the leadership of the principal at GMIM Wiau Lapi Elementary School, focusing on the forms of leadership applied, inhibiting factors, and supporting factors for leadership success. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. This study was conducted at GMIM Wiau Lapi Elementary School. Data sources in this study consisted of the principal and teachers. Data collection techniques used observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis techniques include data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data validity was tested by data triangulation. The results of the study indicate that the principal applies a democratic and participatory leadership style with an emphasis on improving the quality of education and character building of students. The principal actively involves teachers in decision-making, provides motivation and support for professional development, and builds harmonious communication within the school environment. Factors inhibiting leadership include limited facilities and infrastructure, some students' discipline, low parental involvement, less than optimal performance of some teachers, limited time for the principal, and government policies that are not fully in line with field conditions. Meanwhile, supporting factors for leadership include solid cooperation between teachers, students, and parents, open communication, a positive work culture, and support from the school committee and the community.

Keywords - Leadership, Principal .

I. INTRODUCTION

Education serves to promote learning, instilling knowledge, awareness, morals, and other values in students (Suardi M, 2018; Hodson, 2009). Through education, humans can develop critical thinking and intuition, which distinguishes them as thinking beings (Supit et al., 2023). Education also plays a crucial role in passing on cultural values, norms, traditions, and social rules from one generation to the next (Adoesemowo and Sotonade, 2022). Given the strategic role of education in shaping a nation's character and civilization, the education system needs to continually adapt to changing times.

Along with the development of science, technology, and the needs of the times, the curriculum in Indonesia has undergone various updates, from the 1952 Curriculum to the 2013 Curriculum. In 2020, the Ministry of Education, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbud Ristek RI) introduced the Independent Curriculum as an effort to meet the needs of current and future generations (Juhaela et al., 2021). This change aims to prepare students to be adaptive, creative, and innovative in facing global challenges. For the successful implementation of this curriculum, support from educational institutions, especially schools as the

primary implementers of formal education, is required.

Schools, as formal educational organizations, play a strategic role in implementing the curriculum and achieving national education goals. Within the school organizational structure, the principal serves as a leader responsible for managing and directing all educational activities within the school. As in other organizations, the success of the principal is crucial for the educational process, particularly in improving teacher performance and learning effectiveness (Pujianto, Arafat & Setiawan, 2020). According to Rorimpandey, WHF (2020), principals are expected to act as leaders and innovators within the school. The quality of the principal's leadership significantly impacts the school's success, as the principal is the highest leader who determines the direction of policy and the progress of the educational institution. The leadership style adopted by the principal significantly impacts teacher motivation, the work environment, and the effectiveness of learning. Therefore, principal leadership is a crucial aspect in determining the success of educational implementation at the school level.

Leadership is a crucial factor influencing teacher and employee performance. Effective leadership, tailored to the characteristics of human resources, can create a positive work environment, increase work motivation, and directly impact teacher performance (Sinambela & Lestari, 2022). The effectiveness of teaching and learning activities in schools also depends heavily on the leadership of the principal.

Good principal leadership will create a quality school. To achieve good education, it requires the support of the principal and adequate facilities, such as a curriculum, quality human resources who carry out the educational process, and facilities and infrastructure that support the teaching and learning process. The implementation of education, which is expected to produce the best results, is of course inseparable from the quality of the principal as the main actor in the educational institution. The principal is expected to be able to plan, direct, control, and evaluate all resources in the school to achieve educational goals.

In carrying out their duties, principals serve not only as administrative managers but also as leaders capable of motivating, inspiring, and building a positive school culture. Effective leadership can increase teacher commitment, dedication, and performance, as well as create a conducive learning environment. Therefore, principal leadership is a key factor in determining the success of education at the elementary school level.

Elementary schools play a strategic role in shaping the character and foundation of students' knowledge. Therefore, the quality of the principal's leadership significantly influences the learning environment, teacher performance, and student achievement. A principal who fulfills their role professionally will be able to create a conducive learning environment, enhance teacher work ethic, and foster harmonious communication between the school, parents, and the community.

Based on the results of observations at GMIM Wiau Lapi Elementary School, there are several problems that indicate the weak role of the principal in the leadership aspect such as the weak managerial ability of the principal, especially in terms of planning and organizing school programs, the lack of firmness of the principal in taking action against teachers who are rarely present or even often leave the class during class hours, the relationship between the principal and some teachers is less harmonious, the principal carries out many outside tasks even the guidance and attention of the principal to teachers is very lacking. This condition can have a negative impact on the quality of education in elementary schools. Therefore, it is important to conduct an analysis of the style and effectiveness of the principal's leadership, in order to know how the principal's role in managing the school as a whole.

II. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research method. Creswell defines a qualitative approach as a process of research and understanding based on a methodology that investigates social phenomena and human problems (Murdiyanto, 2020). According to Sugiyono in Gunawan (2022), there are three main stages in qualitative research: the description or orientation stage, the reduction stage,

and the selection stage. Specifically, Sudjana (2001) describes the three stages above in seven qualitative research steps: problem identification, problem limitation, problem focus determination, research implementation, data processing and interpretation, theory development, and reporting of research results.

This research was conducted at GMIM WIAU LAPI Elementary School, Tareran District, South Minahasa Regency. The data sources in this study were the principal and teachers. Data collection techniques used in this study were observation, interviews, and documentation that can be in the form of books, documents, archives, photographs, and so on (Arum & Irhandyaningsih, 2019). Data validity testing in this study was through data triangulation. Triangulation in this credibility test is defined as checking data from various sources in various ways and at various times (Rositawati, 2022). Data analysis in qualitative research describes the process of systematically tracking and organizing interview transcripts, field notes and other materials so that researchers can present their findings. Data steps Analysis can be carried out using the Miles & Huberman model which goes through 4 (four) stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Sutiyoso, 2022).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews with the principal and several teachers at GMIM Wiau Lapi Elementary School, it can be concluded that the leadership implemented by the principal at this school is democratic and participatory, with a primary focus on improving the quality of education and character building for students. This is evident in the principal's vision and mission, which emphasizes the formation of a young generation of quality, character, and good morals and mental attitudes. To realize this vision, the principal implements strategies to improve teacher competency, implement routine supervision, strengthen religious activities, and establish cooperation with parents and the community. The principal also actively involves teachers in the decision-making process through regular teacher council meetings,

discussions, and provides ample space for teachers to express ideas, criticisms, and suggestions. This leadership style is considered by teachers to be democratic, because it gives teachers the freedom to innovate in the learning process, while remaining within the applicable regulations. In addition, the principal also demonstrates a commitment to providing motivation and support to teachers, both through personal conversations, work appreciation, and encouraging teachers to participate in training, workshops, seminars, and MGMP. This step was taken as a concrete effort to improve teacher competency, which is expected to have an impact on improving the quality of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In facing various challenges, such as limited infrastructure, suboptimal student discipline, and limited parental involvement, the principal strives to take a solution-oriented approach, namely establishing intensive communication with the school committee and parents, encouraging teachers to innovate by utilizing existing facilities, and taking a personal approach to students to instill discipline and responsibility. In terms of work atmosphere, the leadership of the principal at GMIM Wiau Lapi Elementary School also has a positive influence in creating a harmonious and family-like work environment. The principal actively organizes joint activities, such as community service, recreation, or celebrations of major holidays, so that the relationship between teachers and the principal remains strong.

The principal's leadership at GMIM Wiau Lapi Elementary School still faces several obstacles, both internal and external. These obstacles impact the principal's effectiveness in carrying out managerial and academic functions at the school. First, the main obstacle that arises is the limited facilities and infrastructure to support learning. School facilities such as laboratories, libraries, and information technology devices are still inadequate to support the implementation of school programs, especially those related to digital-based learning and literacy strengthening. This limitation impacts the principal's and teachers' freedom to develop learning innovations that are relevant to current developments. Second, obstacles also arise from aspects of student discipline and parental

involvement. Some students are considered to still have low levels of discipline, which impacts character building efforts. The low level of parental participation in school activities, such as attendance at school committee meetings or involvement in school programs, also presents a challenge for the principal in creating synergy between school and home. Third, from the teaching staff perspective, some teachers still do not perform optimally in carrying out their duties, especially regarding discipline and administrative reporting. This requires the principal to work harder in supervising and coaching so that all teachers can carry out their roles optimally. Fourth, barriers also arise in communication and coordination. Although the principal has implemented open communication, findings indicate that misunderstandings persist due to unclear information or information not being received equally by all teachers. This situation can hinder the implementation of new programs or policies at the school. Fifth, another challenging factor is the principal's limited time and energy. The density of administrative and non-administrative responsibilities makes it difficult for the principal to regularly supervise and monitor classes. As a result, some school programs cannot be implemented optimally. Sixth, there are also external factors in the form of government policies that have not fully adapted to real-world conditions. For example, the school digitalization program requires the availability of adequate technological devices, while schools still lack these facilities. Furthermore, complicated administrative reporting procedures also consume the principal's time, reducing focus on learning supervision. Seventh, support from the surrounding community is also considered less than optimal. Some members of the community still show little interest in the school's development. Moral and material support from the surrounding community is crucial to supporting the various programs planned by the school. Despite these challenges, the principal and teachers continue to seek alternative solutions, such as optimizing communication, adopting a personal approach, maximizing existing facilities through teacher creativity, and building synergy with the school committee and parents. The principal also hopes for concrete support from the government, particularly

in terms of infrastructure and facilities, as well as active support from the school committee and the community in the form of participation, moral support, and material support.

The success of the principal's leadership at this school is inseparable from the support of various mutually supportive internal and external factors. First, the main factor supporting the principal's leadership is the strong cooperation between teachers, students, the school committee, and parents. The principal emphasized that successful leadership is largely determined by the spirit of togetherness and synergy of all parties involved in the school. This demonstrates that leadership success is not the result of individual effort alone, but rather the result of solid teamwork. Second, open, assertive, fair, and transparent communication is a crucial foundation for supporting leadership at GMIM Wiau Lapi Elementary School. The principal consistently builds two-way communication with teachers, students, the school committee, and parents. This openness to ideas, criticism, and suggestions creates a more positive, harmonious, and conducive work environment. Third, teacher loyalty and responsibility are significant supporting factors. Teachers at GMIM Wiau Lapi Elementary School demonstrate a strong commitment by actively contributing to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of school programs. Teacher participation in decision-making fosters a sense of ownership of school policies, enabling program implementation to be more effective and aligned with needs on the ground. Fourth, the positive work culture that has been established in the school also supports the principal's leadership. A culture of mutual respect, discipline, mutual cooperation, and a sense of shared responsibility creates a comfortable, conducive, and productive work environment. This work culture is implemented not only by teachers but also by students, fostering a sense of togetherness in achieving educational goals. Fifth, support from external parties, particularly the school committee and parents, also contributes significantly. Their involvement is evident in various school programs, particularly in supporting the development of infrastructure and extracurricular activities. While there is still room

for increased participation, their involvement provides additional energy for the principal to carry out leadership optimally. Sixth, the availability of relatively adequate infrastructure also supports the implementation of school programs, although additional learning aids and information technology are still needed to make learning more effective and relevant to current developments. These findings also reveal the school's awareness to continue strengthening these supporting factors. The principal hopes that synergy between all parties, from teachers, students, the school committee, parents, and the government, can continue to improve. This expectation is also in line with the opinions of teachers who suggested the need to improve coordination through regular evaluation meetings, internal discussions, and the active involvement of parents and the community in supporting school programs.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that: First, the principal's leadership in this school is directed towards a democratic and participatory leadership style, with a focus on improving the quality of education and character building of students. This leadership style is reflected in the involvement of teachers in decision-making, the implementation of routine supervision, the provision of motivation, and an emphasis on cooperation between the school, parents, and the community. Second, the implementation of the principal's leadership still faces various obstacles, such as limited facilities and infrastructure, low discipline among some students, lack of parental participation, communication constraints, limited supervision time, government policies that are not fully in line with field conditions, and suboptimal community support. Third, there are a number of supporting factors that strengthen the principal's leadership, namely the establishment of good cooperation between teachers, students, the school committee, and parents; open and transparent communication; teacher loyalty; a positive work culture; external support; and the availability of relatively adequate facilities and infrastructure. The synergy of these

supporting factors forms a harmonious and conducive work ecosystem to achieve the school's educational goals.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

With gratitude, the author would like to thank all parties who have provided support, guidance, and contributions in completing this research, entitled "*Analysis of Principal Leadership at GMIM Wiau Lapi Elementary School*." Hopefully, this research will benefit the world of education and serve as a reference for further research.

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