The Principals’ Strategy in Fostering the Performance of Teachers in the Driving School Program at SMA Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat

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Abstract: In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the research focus is on the description of strategies implemented by principals in an effort to improve teacher performance in the driving school program. This research was conducted in the environment of SMA Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat, Jambi Province. The research methodology applied was a descriptive qualitative approach with a phenomenological orientation. Data were obtained through observation, interview, and document analysis methods. The data analysis process includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The results showed that principals practiced various strategies to improve teacher performance, including discipline development and organizing internal training programs. The success of these strategies relies heavily on the commitment of the principal and teachers. As a leader, the principal is responsible for shifting the paradigm of Human Resources in his school to be willing to accept change, ensuring the successful implementation of the driving school program.

Keywords: Principal's Strategy, Teacher Performance, School Drive

Introduction

Education is a very significant element in assessing the quality of human resources and the progress of a country.
of changing times. One of the core aspects of educational administration in the school environment is the leadership role that is generally assumed by an individual referred to as the school principal. The role of the principal displays a key role in efforts to improve the quality of education and the teaching process. This is reflected in the view that the main purpose of education in the school environment is to create an environment that supports and enables the learning and teaching process to take place efficiently and effectively.

The role of school principals is crucial in the development of educational institutions. They play a central role as educational leaders and have full authority over school operations. In their capacity as lead managers, principals have a significant impact on the progress of the school, the implementation of the learning process and the well-being of all members of the school community. In addition, they are also responsible for providing guidance, direction and quality services to all school staff members, as well as creating a comfortable and harmonious environment.

Within the framework of Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 6/2018, Article 15 Paragraph 1 explains that the main role that must be carried out by a school principal is to wholeheartedly focus on aspects of management, educational business development, and supervision of the qualifications and performance of teachers and educational staff. The fundamental purpose of carrying out this task is to stimulate the development of educational institutions and improve the quality of education in accordance with the 8 (eight) national standards of education that have been set.

In the context of a more formal journal, education is defined as a deliberate planned effort to create a learning environment that supports the active involvement of students as well as the development of individual potential, including religious, spiritual, self-control, ethical intelligence, and various skills that support the formation of noble character in the context of citizenship and the progress of the country (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Ministry of Education 2003).

In an effort to improve the quality of teacher education, many educational institutions face a number of challenges involving work discipline issues. Symptoms of work discipline violations can appear, such as teacher absence at the appointed time, lack of communication about attendance to superiors, negligence in following lesson plans during the teaching process, lack of application of assessment guidelines to assess learning outcomes, and resistance to training and professional development. In this kind of situation, principals are expected to have an optimal level of management expertise to manage educational institutions so that their role as key leaders reflects maximum competence.

Based on Law No. 20/2003 Article 1, education must be based on the values of Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, religious values, Indonesian national culture, and responsive to changing times. Education aims to prepare students to become individuals who have special intelligence or talents, ready to compete in the face of an unpredictable future. This concept is also emphasized in Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 17 of 2010 concerning Management and Implementation of Education Article 46 Paragraph 1 that, the organizer of an education unit established by the community shall facilitate continuous coaching for students who have the potential for intelligence and/or special talents to achieve peak

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Achievements in the fields of science, technology, arts, and/or sports at the education unit, sub-district, district/city, provincial, national, and international levels. (2) To foster a competitive climate conducive to the achievement of peak achievements as referred to in paragraph (1), the organizer of education units established by the community organizes and/or facilitates regularly competitions in education units or programs in the fields of: a. science; b. technology; c. arts; and/or d. sports. (pp. 65 - 66).

According to the theory proposed by Purwanto (2002:112) in the context of education, the role of a principal can be classified into three main functions. First, in his capacity as an educational administrator, the Principal has responsibilities including annual strategic planning, structuring the school's organizational structure, providing direction, coordinating school activities, and managing school personnel. Second, as a manager, the Principal has the responsibility to motivate all members of the educational community to give their best performance for the benefit of the school. Finally, in his role as a supervisor, the Principal has the responsibility to supervise and take corrective action when necessary in the implementation of school activities.

In the context of scientific journals, strong compliance reflects an individual's level of responsibility for the tasks they have been assigned. This has the potential to increase work motivation and enthusiasm for learning, which in turn will support the achievement of educational goals, namely improving the quality of education. Therefore, every educational leader aims to continuously ensure that teaching staff and other education personnel maintain a high level of compliance. As a school principal who also acts as an educational leader, his or her leadership effectiveness can be enhanced by maintaining and improving the compliance of teaching staff and education personnel.

According to Sallis (2002), his proposed theory underscores the significance of the role of leadership at all levels of the institution. Efficient leadership is a prerequisite that cannot be ignored, given that the process of continuous improvement will not take place without it. When discussing the implementation of innovations in the context of educational institutions, this can be seen as the implementation of strategic plans that have been developed by leaders to achieve specific goals. In this view, the concept is in line with the concept of strategy defined by David (2011) as a tool to achieve long-term goals. Strategy has a very significant impact on the continuity of the organization with its ability to help achieve organizational goals, both in the short and long term.

According to Hunger and Wheelen (2009), strategy refers to a comprehensive plan used to achieve the mission and goals of an organization with the aim of optimizing excellence while minimizing potential losses. The role of the principal plays a very vital role in supporting the development of the quality of education in the school environment. The findings of research conducted by Hastuti et al. (2020) are in line with this concept, indicating that principals, in their role as leaders, have successfully carried out their main roles and functions as managers, administrators, supervisors, leaders, innovators and motivators with encouraging results.

Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat is one of the public educational institutions that has successfully achieved B-level accreditation. Located about 70 kilometers from Kuala Tungkal city center and an integral part of Sekolah Penggerak Angkatan 3, the school faces urgent strategic demands in achieving their vision, mission and educational goals. Situated in the middle of an oil palm plantation, the
school continues to experience significant growth, which includes the development of physical infrastructure, growth in the number of students, as well as achievements made by both students and educators. Data shows an increase in the number of students enrolling in Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat every year. The results of research conducted by Lestari (2019) indicate that school selection by students is influenced by factors such as facilities, human resources, and school characteristics.

The Principal of SMA Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat has made proactive efforts to strengthen the discipline of teaching staff in the institution, by implementing the principle of democracy in the implementation of norms that apply in the school environment. In addition, in designing school activity programs, the principal also includes initiatives aimed at improving the level of discipline of teaching staff at the school. However, it needs to be emphasized that these efforts in improving discipline still require continuous improvement and evaluation, given that there are still some teaching staff who have not achieved the expected level of discipline in the school environment.

A number of factors and grounds that have been stated prompted this research to investigate the implementation of the principal's strategy in advancing teacher performance in the Mover School program at State Senior High School 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat. This research is in line with the provisions stated in the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 17 of 2010 on the Management and Implementation of Education Article 46 Paragraph 1, which asserts that educational institutions must have the capacity to provide education that is able to prepare learners to face future competition and uncertainty, while still adhering to the vision and mission of the educational institution.

Through the implementation of this research program, it is hoped that the acquisition of objective data derived from the principal's strategies will be realized. It is anticipated that this data will serve as a foundation for the future development of the school, with the main focus on improving teacher performance. This is due to the understanding that one of the main indicators of the progress of an educational institution is the optimal level of performance of the teaching staff.

This research was chosen as the main topic because there are still problems that need to be addressed at SMA Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat related to teacher performance. These problems include teachers' lack of understanding of the driving school program, indiscipline in terms of attendance and submission of lesson plans, and other obstacles. Therefore, the focus of this research is more on analyzing the strategies applied by the principal in overcoming these obstacles, starting from the identification stage to the implementation of corrective measures.

**Methods**

This research adopts a descriptive qualitative research methodology approach, which focuses on the narrative presentation of the phenomenon under investigation, as outlined by Moleong (2014) in "Qualitative Research Methodology." Furthermore, this research applied a phenomenological approach with a series of methodological steps that included: 1) conducting interviews focused on the principal's strategy in improving teacher performance; 2) collecting relevant data and theories from various sources; and 3) developing a contextual description of the principal's strategy based on the findings of the data collected.

Researchers used data collection techniques that included interview, observation, and documentation methods in this study. The observation method was used to directly observe the forms and conditions of activities carried out by the principal in an effort to improve teacher
performance in the driving school program. Meanwhile, the interview method was used to obtain data with the principal and explore information about the strategies implemented by the principal in his efforts to improve teacher performance at SMA Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat.

In terms of data collection, documentation was used to gather information about the activities carried out by the school as a driving school. The main source of data used was the results of interviews with school principals, both in oral and written form. The results of these interviews were then analyzed, and the researcher sorted out the relevant data to be included in the research, while the less relevant data were excluded from the analysis.

The researcher will endeavor to reveal the data obtained with a high level of validity. Information from the data will be carefully filtered, separating between the relevant and irrelevant. Furthermore, to test its validity, triangulation will be carried out by combining data from various sources obtained through the interview process. Together with the principal, the researcher will also validate the original data findings to ensure the integrity of its validity. The data analysis method used includes all stages, starting from data collection, data reduction, data presentation, to the last stage, namely drawing conclusions.

**Results and Discussion**

Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat Muaro, located on Jalan Ir. H Sumantoro, Teluk Pengkah Village, Tebing Tinggi Sub-district, Tanjung Jabung Barat Regency, has been established since 2013 on a land grant from the local community. SMA Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat is an upper secondary education institution owned by the Jambi Provincial Government and is under the auspices of the Jambi Provincial Education Office. In 2023, this school became the only high school in Tanjung Jabung Barat Regency that managed to obtain the status of a driving school. In an effort to achieve progress every year, the principal, as the leader of this institution, continues to make various efforts and strategies to ensure the sustainable development of the school he leads. One indicator of the school's progress is its ability to make the school a driving school.

**Principal's Perspective in Fostering Teacher Performance**

The principal, as a manager, has the main responsibility in ensuring the achievement of effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of the education system in the school environment. This responsibility is realized through the various important roles carried out by the principal. These roles involve principals in their capacity as leaders, administrators, managers, supervisors and liaisons between schools and communities (Atmodiwi, 2002).

The principal, as the leader of this institution, has succeeded in understanding the phenomena and climate of the school environment. This reflects an increase in the work discipline of the teachers, so that the principal has a deep understanding of the situation and conditions of the teachers. This means that the principal has successfully carried out his main duties and responsibilities. As explained by Bahri (2010), principals have a very important role, authority and responsibility in all aspects of school activities, including ensuring teacher discipline. All of this aims to achieve the comprehensive achievement of school activities in accordance with what is
implemented in the school environment\(^2\). In the school context, the role of the Principal is very important, taking the main responsibility in ensuring the smooth running of the entire educational process and activities based on the values of Pancasila. The main purpose of this responsibility is to increase faith and piety in God Almighty, increase the level of intelligence of students, form better characters, and encourage the spirit of unity and integrity, as well as love for the country.

In order to achieve various activities at school successfully, teachers also have an important role in maintaining discipline. This discipline is vital, because with discipline, all activities at school can run smoothly and in accordance with the targets that have been set together. Teachers' discipline can be seen from the extent to which they comply with the rules that have been set, which are in line with the goals that the school wants to achieve. As a concrete example, teachers are expected to maintain discipline in terms of collecting teaching materials such as syllabus or learning process plans. When teachers are obedient and disciplined in collecting the syllabus on time, the learning process can run according to a well-defined schedule\(^3\).

The second strategy is to carry out In House Training (IHT). In House Training is an internal school training to improve the competence of Educators and Teaching Staff. The first IHT materials are ATP Development, Teaching Module Preparation, Differentiated Learning, Assessment of Counseling Guidance Services, Strategy and Implementation of Guidance and Counseling Services, and Preparation of Counseling Guidance Programs. In house training activities are very necessary to be given to educators and education personnel as part of continuing education. This is also very much needed to maintain the quality of the Teaching and Learning Process (PBM) in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum and to maximize the competencies they have with what they face in their work.

In House Training was held on Monday - Tuesday, September 18-19, 2023. Located in the Chemistry Laboratory Room of SMA Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat, with the theme IHT Implementation of the Independent Curriculum and preparation of learning tools. This IHT activity was carried out with the aim of increasing the Human Resources of Educators in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at SMA Negeri 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat, Implementing the School Mover Program Batch 3 Year 2023. This activity was attended by all educators and education personnel.

The IHT activity began with the official opening by the Principal, in his briefing the Principal appealed to the teachers to take the IHT seriously in order to get provisions to implement the independent curriculum. The tutor in the In House Training (IHT) activity for the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum on Monday, September 18, 2023 was Mr. Rahmat Hidayat, M.Si (Jambi Ministry of Education and Culture Technology Ambassador in 2022) who delivered material on ATP Development, Teaching

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Module Preparation, and Differentiated Learning.

The purpose of this In-House Training (IHT) activity is for participants to apply the philosophy of liberating learning and its implications in learning.

After the opening by the Head of SMAN 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat, Mr. Mohsin, S.Pd., M.Si., continued the presentation of Differentiated Learning materials including the development of ATP and the Preparation of Teaching Modules, by Mr. Rahmat, Hidayat, M.Si., Ambassador of Technology Kemendikbudristek Jambi 2022.

Differentiated learning is a solution to the question, "how can we implement a flexible curriculum in schools in order to provide diverse learning services to students (teaching at the right level) within a school or even within a classroom, given the variations in student characteristics such as learning readiness levels, interests, talents, and learning styles that differ from one another. Therefore, a variety of teaching approaches are needed to achieve learning objectives.

Carol A. Tomlinson, an educator since 1995 has written her idea in a book entitled How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability Classrooms about a teaching that takes into account the individual differences of learners. Later, his idea became known as differentiated instruction or differentiated learning. In differentiated learning, teachers teach the material by taking into account the learners' readiness levels, interests and learning styles. Teachers can also modify the content, the learning process, the product or outcome of the learning, and the learning environment. The differentiated learning process is implemented by schools in order to liberate students in learning because students are not required to be the same in everything with others.

According to Purba (2021:27), differentiated learning is different from individualized learning as used to teach children with special needs. In differentiated learning, the teacher does not specifically interact with each learner directly (one-on-one) to ensure that they understand the material being taught. Learners can learn in large groups, small groups, or independently.

**Principles of Differentiated Learning**

Differentiated learning is a teaching and learning process where learners can learn subject matter according to their own abilities, preferences and needs so that they are not frustrated and feel like failures in their learning experience. (Magee and Breaux, 2010).

In differentiated learning, teachers must understand and realize that there is not only one way, method, or strategy to learn a subject matter. Teachers need to arrange learning materials, activities, daily assignments both in class and at home, and final assessments according to the learners' readiness to learn the materials, what interests or things their learners like to learn, and how to deliver lessons that suit their learners' learning profiles.

Differentiated learning must be shaped through the way teachers think that every child can grow and develop optimally according to their own capacity. Tomlinson and Moon (2013) as the leaders of
differentiated learning state that there are five basic principles that help teachers in implementing differentiated learning.

1. **Learning Environment**

The learning environment includes the physical aspects of the school and classroom where learners spend their time while learning at school. Learning climate refers to the situations and conditions that learners feel when they are learning, interacting with fellow learners, and relating to their teachers. In the context of learning, teachers should provide appropriate responses to learners' readiness, interests and learning profiles to ensure that their needs in the learning process can be met. According to Hattie in Tomlinson (2013), teachers build learners' trust by three steps: a) genuinely respecting learners' values, abilities and responsibilities; b) giving learners confidence that they have great potential to understand the subject matter being taught; and c) actively supporting learners to succeed in the learning process.

2. **Quality curriculum**

A quality curriculum must have clear objectives so that teachers know what to aim for at the end of the lesson. In addition, the focus of the teacher in teaching is on the understanding of students, not on what material they memorize. The most important thing is the understanding of the subject matter in the minds of students so that it can be applied in their lives. Another thing that teachers need to consider is how the curriculum can challenge all learners, whether they have above-average, average or below-average abilities. For learners who are above average, teachers need to challenge them with other thoughts that are more in-depth about the material discussed so that they will not be bored and bored in learning it.

3. **Continuous assessment**

Continuous assessment means that teachers continuously conduct formative assessment in learning in order to improve their teaching and also find out whether students have understood the subject matter discussed. So this formative assessment is not given a value (number), but only as a diagnostic test or knowing what problems students face so that it is difficult to understand, what has not been understood, and what can be done by the teacher to help students improve their understanding. Then during the learning process, the teacher pays attention to how the learners are learning, whether there are those who need help in doing the assigned tasks or need to re-explain the instructions in the assigned tasks.

After the lesson ends, the teacher conducts another assessment, the final assessment. The teacher can do it in various ways, for example, the teacher gives a piece of paper and asks learners to write down what new things they learned that day, what important things they learned that day, what is still unclear, and what needs to be repeated in the next lesson. The teacher can also give learners a short post test on the day’s lesson so that he/she knows whether the learners really grasped what was explained or not. This final assessment will really help the teacher know what needs to be repeated or re-explained, what can be done to help learners who are having difficulty, and what does not need to be repeated or re-explained. Of course, this kind of assessment is not graded by the teacher because its function is to improve learners' performance and understanding of the material learned.

4. **Responsive teaching**

Through the final assessment in each lesson, the teacher can find out what his/her short comings are in guiding the learners to understand the content of the lesson. Therefore, the teacher can modify the lesson plan that has been made with the current field conditions and situations according to the results of the final assessment conducted earlier. Since teaching is more important than the school curriculum itself, the teacher must respond to the results of the learning that has been
done. The teacher's response is to adjust the next lesson according to the learners' readiness, interest, and also the learning profile that the teacher gets through the assessment at the end of the lesson.

5. Leadership and Classroom Routines

A good teacher is a teacher who can manage his class well. Leadership here means how the teacher can lead the learners so that they can follow the learning well and obey the rules that have been set. Meanwhile, classroom routines refer to the teacher's skills in managing or organizing the class well through classroom procedures and routines that students carry out every day so that learning can run effectively and efficiently.

Learner Diversity

Every individual is created with uniqueness and specificity that no one is alike, even if they are twins, there must be differences between them. It is the same with learners in the classroom. When they enter school, they are not like a blank sheet of white paper. Within each child there are different characteristics and potentials, which need to be considered by the teacher. Tomlinson (2013) explains that learner diversity is viewed from 3 different aspects, namely:

1. Readiness

The definition of readiness here includes the extent of knowledge and skills that learners have in achieving learning objectives. In this case, teachers need to ask what their learners need in order for them to be successful in the learning process. Learner readiness should be intertwined with the teacher's understanding that every learner has the potential to grow, physically, mentally and intellectually. Therefore, teachers can ask learners about interests.

2. Interests

Interest plays an important role as a driver in the learning process. Teachers can ask students about what they are interested in, hobbies, or subjects that they like. Of course, students will learn seriously when they are interested in things that match their interests.

3. Learning Profile

Learners' learning profiles refer to their approach or preference in understanding the subject matter. Some learners like learning in large groups, while others prefer working with friends or in small groups. There are also those who prefer to learn alone. In addition, the role of the five senses also has a significant influence on learners' learning. Some are better at learning through hearing (auditory), while others need to see pictures or just written text. There are learners who are better at understanding material if they move, whether it's part of their body or their whole body (kinesthetic). There are also learners who can only understand material if they can feel or touch objects related to the lesson being learned.

Meanwhile, the tutor on Tuesday, September 19, 2023 was Mrs. Dwi Oktadinata, S.Pd (Counseling Guidance Teacher of SMAN 4 Jambi City PSP Batch 1 Year 2021) who delivered material on Assessment of Counseling Guidance Services, Strategy and Implementation of Guidance and Counseling Services, and Preparation of Counseling Guidance Programs.

After participating in the IHT, the Principal urged the participants to reflect on learning the independent curriculum and deliver it to students optimally.

1. Identify the components of the curriculum framework and the role of stakeholders from central to unit level in creating learner-centered learning;
2. Identify the rationale, objectives and elements of learning outcomes in the various subjects taught, linking the role of learning outcomes according to the level of student achievement (needs, pace, and learning style according to the phase of child development);

3. Apply the principles of preparing the flow of learning objectives (ATP) and teaching modules in developing ATP and teaching modules and learning resources needed to support their application;

4. Apply Differentiated Learning Principles in the implementation of learning in the classroom;

5. Identifying the Direction of Guidance and Counseling Services and Areas of Guidance and Counseling Services in Education Units;

6. Identifying Guidance and Counseling Assessments: Position, Principles, Objectives and Types in Education Units

7. Implementing Guidelines for the Selection of Elective Subjects at the Senior High School Education Level.

With the Merdeka Curriculum, it is hoped that students will be more active and interested in teaching and learning activities because the learning material will be more in line with their needs. In addition, it is hoped that the Merdeka Curriculum can give birth to a generation that has high creativity and innovation, and is able to adapt quickly to social changes that occur.

**Conclusion**

The conclusion of this study is about how principals foster teachers' performance in the driving school program at SMAN 15 Tanjung Jabung Barat. Principals have successfully implemented their leadership strategies effectively and optimally, as evidenced by their understanding of the situation and conditions of teachers in improving teacher discipline. The level of teacher discipline is reflected in their compliance with existing regulations and in line with the goals to be achieved.

The obstacles faced by the principal are that there are still teachers who have not obeyed the rules and have not fully understood the school program that encourages change. The solution implemented by the principal is to provide disciplinary guidance to teachers and organize In House Training activities so that teachers understand how to implement an independent curriculum as part of a school program that encourages change. Internal Training (In House Training) is a training program held within the school environment to improve the competence of educators and teaching staff. The materials taught in this training include ATP Development (Flow of Learning Objectives), Preparation of Teaching Modules, Differentiated Learning, Assessment in Guidance and Counseling Services, Strategy and Implementation of Guidance and Counseling Services, and Preparation of Guidance and Counseling Programs. In House Training activities are very important to be given to educators and education personnel as part of teacher performance coaching.

**REFERENCES**


Author Profile

The author's full name is Retno Martanti, S.Pd. She was born in Madiun on March 27, 1976, and is the eldest of two siblings. She is an alumnus of IKIP Malang, majoring in Curriculum and Educational Technology, graduating in 1999. Currently, she serves as a civil servant at SPNF SKB Tanjung Jabung Barat.

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