



## Principal's Strategy in Improving the Quality of Education in Elementary Schools (Case Study at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia)

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu (SDIT) Bunyan Indonesia. Fokus utama penelitian adalah bagaimana kepala sekolah menerapkan berbagai kebijakan dan pendekatan untuk meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran, pengelolaan tenaga pendidik, serta pengembangan lingkungan belajar yang kondusif. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus, di mana data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala sekolah di SDIT Bunyan Indonesia menerapkan kepemimpinan partisipatif, yang melibatkan penguatan visi dan misi sekolah, pemberdayaan guru melalui pelatihan, serta peningkatan sarana prasarana sebagai upaya strategis dalam peningkatan mutu pendidikan. Implikasi dari strategi ini adalah terciptanya lingkungan sekolah yang lebih efektif dalam mendukung perkembangan akademik dan karakter siswa, serta peningkatan kinerja guru dalam proses pembelajaran. Temuan ini diharapkan dapat menjadi acuan bagi sekolah-sekolah lain dalam mengimplementasikan strategi peningkatan mutu pendidikan yang berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: Strategi kepala sekolah, sekolah dasar, mutu pendidikan, SDIT Bunyan Indonesia, kepemimpinan partisipatif.

### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the strategy of school principals in improving the quality of education at Integrated Islamic Elementary School (SDIT) Bunyan Indonesia. The main focus of the research is how school principals implement various policies and approaches to improve the quality of learning, the management of educators, and the development of a conducive learning environment. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach, where data is collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that school principals at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia implement participatory leadership, which involves strengthening the school's vision and mission, empowering teachers through training, and improving infrastructure facilities as a strategic effort to improve the quality of education. The implication of this strategy is the creation of a more effective school environment in supporting the academic and character development of students, as well as improving teacher performance in the learning process. This finding is expected to be a reference for other schools in implementing strategies to improve the quality of sustainable education.

Keywords: principal strategy, elementary school, quality of education, SDIT Bunyan Indonesia, participatory leadership.

## Introduction

Basic education has a very important role in building students' basic character and skills (Diana Hanafiah, 2022). In Indonesia, basic education has received serious attention in the national development agenda, considering the importance of quality education to create a competitive generation at the global level (Nurul Hidayati Mufidah, 2022). In recent years, the government has promoted various policies to improve the quality of education. Efforts to improve the quality of education start from programs implemented for educational units, starting from the basic education level (elementary and junior high school), to secondary education (high school and vocational school) (Supriano, 2018). However, some schools still face challenges in improving the quality of learning and school management (Ulya Amelia, 2023). Therefore, innovative strategies are needed in an effort to improve the quality of education in schools, especially elementary schools.

The role and strategy of school principals in efforts to improve the quality of education has long been the subject of research in the field of education management. Previous research has shown that the quality of school principals' leadership has a direct effect on the quality of learning in schools. Research (Farah Naz and Surryia Rashid, 2021) found that effective school principals are able to motivate teachers and create a positive learning environment. Mia Noprika, Ngadri Yusro, and Sagiman (2020), improving the quality of education by improving the quality of teachers, improving academic and non-academic achievement of students, improving the achievement of National Examination (UN) and School Examination

(US) scores and improving school infrastructure. The activities carried out are to involve teachers in training activities and seminars on education. In the context of School-Based Management, through the implementation of the principal's strategy, it is carried out by managing the organizational structure and school committees, increasing the competence of educators and education staff, improving infrastructure, creating networks, having a virtual school and increasing community ties. Then conduct periodic monitoring and assessment (Wiwit Haryati, Muhammad Kristiawan, and Yenny Puspita, 2021).

Previous research has shown significant academic gaps. This gap lies in the lack of studies that discuss the implementation of strategies to improve the quality of education carried out by school principals in elementary schools. Existing research focuses more on high schools or colleges. Meanwhile, elementary school as the earliest level of education needs more attention in this aspect. The problems that arise from this study are around the central role of school principals in leading the process of improving the quality of education which often faces various obstacles, such as lack of innovation in leadership, limited finances, and challenges in encouraging professional teacher development.

In addition, the weak collaboration between school principals and teachers, parents, and the community, as well as the lack of effective evaluation, are also obstacles in achieving optimal quality education. School principals are required to be able to overcome these obstacles through innovative and sustainable management strategies.

Based on the above problems, this study will reveal how the principal's strategy is in

improving the quality of education at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia Cikarang Barat Bekasi. The basic assumptions in this study are: first, weak collaboration between school principals and teachers, parents, and communities/foundations; second, these shortcomings result in a decline in the quality of teacher competence; and third, it has an impact on the decline in the quality of education in the school. So the formulation of the problem of this study is: first, what are the strategies implemented by the principal in improving the quality of education at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia?; second, how to implement the strategy in an effort to improve the quality of education in schools; third, what are the implications of the principal's strategy on the quality/quality of education and student development at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia.

### **Research Methods**

The locus of this research is SDIT Bunyan Indonesia, an integrated Islamic elementary school located in Kp. Telajung RT. 001/005 Telajung Village, West Cikarang District, Bekasi Regency, West Java. The object of this study is to see how leadership strategies are applied in the context of improving the quality of elementary school education. The focus of the research lies in the strategies taken by school principals to improve the quality of education. This includes human resource management in the form of teacher competency development, parent and community involvement, and learning environment management in order to support the achievement of the educational vision and mission at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia. This study will also examine the challenges and obstacles of school principals in improving the quality of education at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia and

what the impact of this strategy is on improving the quality of education.

This research is a qualitative research that uses a case study approach. The type of qualitative research was chosen because this research aims to understand the phenomenon in a real context in depth, namely the leadership strategy of school principals in improving the quality of education. Qualitative research allows for in-depth exploration of how strategies are implemented and how they affect the quality of education in schools. Research that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behaviors. (Moleong, 2018).

The case study approach is used because this research focuses on one specific location, namely SDIT Bunyan Indonesia, with the aim of analyzing the strategies used by school principals in detail in a certain context (Yin, 2014). Through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis, data was collected and processed to find patterns and principles that are the basis of the principal's leadership strategy in improving the quality of education.

The data sources in this study consist of two types, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with principals and teachers at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia. The interview aims to gain a direct understanding of the strategies implemented by the principal in improving the quality of education. In addition, participant observation was carried out to understand the dynamics in the field related to the implementation of the principal's leadership strategy in improving the quality of education (Sugiyono, 2017). Secondary data consists of supporting documents such

as school academic reports, principals' work programs, and internal policies related to improving the quality of education. These documents help provide a more comprehensive and in-depth context regarding the implementation of the strategy. The use of secondary data enriches the results of the analysis and provides additional perspectives in understanding the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2016)

Table 1 Primary Data Sources

No .	Name	Position	Age	Long Service
1	WM	Principal	34 year s	6 years
2	SYA	Classroom Teacher	34 year s	5 years
3	TS	Classroom Teacher	33 year s	9 years
4	WDM	Classroom Teacher	28 year s	5 years
5	BN	Classroom Teacher	33 year s	2 years
6	NK	Classroom Teacher	29 year s	1 year
7	SHF	Deputy Head of Education	31 year s	8 years
8	DRS	Classroom Teacher	23 year s	4 years
9	YK	Classroom Teacher	33 year s	1 year
10	SYP	Classroom Teacher	30 year s	7 years

11	ANZ	Classroom Teacher	28 year s	1 year
12	SWP	Classroom Teacher	31 year s	3 years
13	F	Classroom Teacher	32 year s	7 years
14	FGR	Classroom Teacher	28 year s	4 years
15	ICE	Classroom Teacher	33 year s	3 years
16	NRD	Classroom Teacher	35 year s	3 years
17	IP	Classroom Teacher	43 year s	6 years
18	PL	Classroom Teacher	30 year s	4 years
19	SS	Classroom Teacher	34 year s	1 year
20	DNS	Classroom Teacher	38 year s	6 years
21	AXL E	Classroom Teacher	28 year s	4 years

Data collection in this study uses qualitative methods with several data collection approaches. In-depth interviews were conducted with school principals and classroom teachers to explore information about the strategies used by school principals in improving the quality of education. These interviews are semi-structured to allow for the development of

questions based on the responses given by the participants (Creswell, 2016). In addition, this study uses participatory observation, where the researcher directly observes activities in schools (Sutrisno, in Julianoro 2017), especially the implementation of programs and policies aimed at improving the quality of education. This observation helps researchers understand the real context that occurs in the field (Netriwati, et al., 2023). Another technique is document analysis, which involves collecting data from school documents such as work plans, academic reports, and relevant school policies. The analysis of this document provides supporting evidence for interviews and observations, as well as enriches the data obtained directly (Sugiyono, 2017).

The data analysis in this study uses qualitative data analysis techniques. An interactive model of Miles and Huberman was used, which included three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn/verification (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). First, data reduction. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents are reduced through a filtering and grouping process. Only data that is relevant to the principal's strategy in improving the quality of education is maintained. Second, data presentation. Once reduced, the data is presented in the form of descriptive narratives, tables, or diagrams for easy interpretation. This presentation provides a clear picture of how the strategies implemented by the principal play a role in improving the quality of education at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia. Third, drawing conclusions and verification. The data that has been presented is further analyzed to find key patterns or themes that indicate an

effective strategy. The conclusions generated are then re-verified with existing data to ensure their validity and reliability.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **A. Concept of Education Quality Management**

The concept of quality management in the world of education has been studied by many experts, including Hairiyah (2016), Achyar (2019), Salang (2019), and Aslami & Faisal (2023). According to Hairiyah, this concept is better known as integrated quality management (MMT) education (Hairiyah, 2016). A concept that seeks to be applied in the world of education as part of efforts to continuously improve to answer future challenges faced by institutions engaged in educational services (Achyar, 2019). This integrated quality management concept is a concept referring to quality that is useful for satisfying its customers (Sri Ayu Lestari Salang, 2019). In the context of education, an educational institution is said to be of high quality if there is satisfaction with the services provided between internal and external customers.

In order to ensure the management of services that are able to produce quality output. Every management in educational institutions is based on MMT which basically emphasizes continuous improvement and customer satisfaction to produce quality education (N Aslami & M Faisal Alfarisyi, 2023).

Sallis (2003) also argues that integrated quality management means ensuring quality and standards in education. Integrated quality views education as a total system, which is formed by a number of internal and external components. Only by improving the entire education system can education professionals make quality improvements as requested by the

community. Quality in education requires a commitment to customer satisfaction and a commitment to creating an environment that allows staff and students to do their best work. This integrated quality management can be referred to as a device, where the management system can direct the achievement of organizational goals effectively and efficiently, to ensure customer satisfaction and maximize stakeholder value.

According to Furqon and Tola (2002), the quality of education in schools (educational institutions) is a function of the quality of student input shown by the potential of students, the quality of learning experience shown by the professional ability of teachers, the quality of the use of learning facilities, and the school culture which is a reflection of the quality of the principal's leadership. Efforts to improve the quality of education in schools need to be continuously pursued. According to Joseph C. Field (in Syafaruddin, 2002), the integrated quality of education is that everyone is responsible or obliged to achieve or pursue customer satisfaction. An integrated quality in education makes everyone promise to serve others based on every demand of educational needs. On the other hand, Pupuh Fathurrohman and AA Suryana (2011) explained that integrated quality management is a comprehensive and integrative approach that is a way for organizations to meet consumer needs consistently achieving continuous renewal development in every aspect of organizational activities. Consumers must be given the best service, because they are the organization that grows and develops.

Furthermore, Pupuh Fathurrohman and AA Suryana explained that the goal of integrated quality management is to provide satisfaction to customer needs as efficiently

as possible, even integrated quality management in education can benefit all parties on the assumption that education managers can manage the educational institution to always be oriented towards continuous quality improvement in line with the internal and external development of the organization and be transparent audited results and processes. And an evaluation will be carried out after the process is implemented. In integrated quality management, quality is determined by customers, both internal and external customers. Therefore, only by understanding the process and customers can educational institutions realize and appreciate the meaning of quality. All efforts in integrated quality management must always be directed to the main goal, namely the achievement of customers (Abdul Hadi, 2023).

#### **B. Principal Leadership**

Studies related to the leadership of school principals have been discussed by experts and researchers, including Edward Sallis (2012), Sulthon (2019), Shophia Azhar (2016), Muhaimin (2010), and Kasali (2010) According to Sallis (2012) to stay ahead of the competition, an organization must know the needs of customers, then unite their minds to act to meet their needs. Implementing integrated quality management requires managers who are able to set aside short-term profits and set long-term success goals.

The leadership of the principal has a variety of meanings according to the background of the person who gives the understanding. However, leadership can be understood as an activity that influences others to do a job as directed to achieve organizational goals (Sulthon, 2019). Another definition is that leadership is an ability that a certain person has to move,

influence, motivate, invite, direct, advise, guide, instruct, command, prohibit and even punish and foster with the intention that others will want to do and work to achieve the desired goal (Sophia Azhar, 2016). Actually, the principal is an ordinary human being who is given the task of leading a school in which there is a teaching and learning process. The principal has a difficult but noble task. As a school principal, he is submissive and obedient to the rules. The principal must understand about management. At least he can plan, organize, lead and control members, empower the organization and evaluate in achieving the goals of the school he leads. In fact, sometimes the leadership of the principal is interpreted as the power to move his subordinates who are appointed on the basis of a decision or official appointment to assume the position of principal (Veithzal Rivai and Deddy Mulyadi, 2012).

However, even though the definition of leadership starts from giving influence to others to do what the leader wants to do towards the set goals, it turns out that the process of influencing is carried out in different ways. This process of influencing different then results in a level in leadership. As stated by Muhaimin by quoting Kasali's opinion from Maxwell's opinion, that there are 5 stages of leadership (Muhaimin, at all, 2010), namely level one leader who is legality with the existence of a Decree (SK), level two leaders who lead with love, level three leaders who are more results-oriented, at this level work performance is very important, level four leaders try to grow their members to become leaders and level five is a leader who has extraordinary charisma. At this level, the leader has values or symbols that are inherent in the leader himself.

According to (Kasali, 2005), in order for a school principal to be able to move from level one to level five leaders, 5 elements are needed, namely Vision, (vision), Courage (courage), Reality (reality) and Ethics (Ethics). Based on the opinion above, the principal must be able to grow himself into a leader who has these five elements, so that he can move from a leader who is only because of legality to a leader who is really able to give change to the development of the school. The principal is the driving force for the school's human resources, especially teachers and employees. So great is the role of school principals in the process of achieving educational goals, so it can be said that the success of a school is highly determined by the quality of the principal, especially his ability to empower teachers and employees towards a conducive work atmosphere.

#### C. The Role of School Principals in Improving the Quality of Education

Studies on how the role of school principals in improving the quality of education have been discussed by many experts, including Tanjung & Rahman (2021), Julaiha (2019), Fitrah (2017), Hasan Basri (2015), and Daud (2023). Tanjung & Rahman in their research revealed that school principals have roles and responsibilities as managers in school institutions (Tanjung, Rahman, et al., 2021), which include predicting the future of schools, for example about the quality that the community wants, innovating by taking creative initiatives and activities to advance the school, creating strategies or policies to succeed innovative ideas, Prepare planning, both strategic and operational planning. Julaiha concluded that school principals who are able to act themselves effectively and efficiently can make a considerable

contribution to the realization of school quality (Julaiha, 2019).

Therefore, according to Fitrah, a person who will be appointed as a school principal must meet the Qualification Standards and Competency Standards for School Principals as stated in the attachment to the ministerial regulation. The Ministerial Regulation is a positive progress in efforts to find and determine quality school management figures. As a leader (Fitrah, 2017), the principal is responsible for the achievement of educational goals by moving his subordinates towards the achievement of the educational goals that have been set. In this case, the principal is in charge of carrying out leadership functions, both functions related to the achievement of educational goals and the creation of a school climate and culture that is conducive to the implementation of the teaching and learning process effectively, efficiently and productively.

Likewise with the educational component in an educational institution led by a school principal. A school principal must pay attention to the nine important components in education (Nurfaizah, 2014), namely educators, students, educational materials, educational acts, educational methods, educational evaluation, educational goals, educational tools, and educational environment. These nine factors must be managed as well as possible so that the desired goals can be achieved. In article 16 concerning the principal's main duties, it is stated that the principal's workload is fully to carry out the main managerial duties, entrepreneurial development and supervision of teachers and education personnel (Hasan Basri et. all, 2015).

The principal's workload aims to develop schools and improve school quality based on the National Education Standards

(SNP), namely Graduate Competency Standards, Learning Content Standards, Learning Process Standards, Learning Assessment Standards, Research Standards, Infrastructure Standards, Management Standards, and Financing Standards. Furthermore, it was explained in more detail that if there is a shortage of teachers in the education unit, the principal can carry out learning or guidance tasks so that the learning process or guidance continues in the education unit concerned. And the learning or guidance task is an additional task outside the main task. In this regard, (Yusri M. Daud, 2023) the duties and responsibilities of the principal are in the form of planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, supervising, and evaluating all school activities which include the fields of learning process, teaching, administration of both students, employees and equipment administration, financial administration, library administration and public relations administration.

#### **D. Views on the Role of the Principal**

A school principal plays a very important role in improving the quality of education. As the statement (WM) said: A school principal plays a very important role in improving the quality of education in elementary schools. Principals are responsible for creating a positive learning environment, developing the curriculum and ensuring that teachers have the necessary support for effective teaching. School principals must have a clear vision to improve the quality of education and be able to inspire teachers, students and parents. Principals provide training and development opportunities for teachers, create an environment that supports collaboration and innovation, manage budgets and resources wisely to support programs that improve the quality of education, communicate



effectively with parents, communities and other stakeholders to build partnerships. By carrying out these roles effectively, school principals can contribute to improving the quality of education. (WM, 34 years old, as the principal).

The same thing was also conveyed by (SHF) as a teacher who said that "As a teacher, I see that school principals have a central role in directing policies, managing resources, and motivating teachers and students. He is also the main driving force in creating a work culture that supports the improvement of the quality of education in this school" (SHF, 31 years old, as the curriculum WKS). Further (FGR) added that "As a leader, the principal is responsible for creating a clear vision and mission to achieve educational goals" (FGR, 28 years old, as a classroom teacher).

The principal in improving the quality of education at this school is quite good. This was conveyed (DRS) which said that: The principal in improving the quality of education in this school is quite good. With planned school programs, both intra and extra, they have very much fulfilled the reflection of a school with good quality. It is in accordance with the school's vision and mission and utilizes all school lines to move in developing the quality of education such as teacher evaluation, the role of the principal that has been implemented in accordance with its function (DRS, 23 years old, as a classroom teacher). Regarding the vision and mission of the institution that supports the achievement of quality education (WM), it is revealed that:

The mission of SDIT Bunyan Indonesia is:

1. Realizing dynamic educational facilities;

2. Integral implementation of the educational concept with the Bunyan Education System Model;
3. Empowering education and education personnel who have a spirit of learning, exemplary and Islamic morals;
4. Creating a beautiful, clean, safe and comfortable school environment;
5. Creating a creative, honest, and professional school culture; and
6. Empowering all components of the school in synergy (WM, 34 years old, as the principal).

#### **E. Principal's Strategy**

The strategies implemented by the principal to improve the quality of education at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia as disclosed (WM): In an effort to improve the quality of education at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia, the strategies we implement are:

1. Improving the quality of learning by conducting training and professional development for teachers to improve learning methods and understanding of the curriculum
2. Continuous evaluation and assessment to monitor student progress and learning effectiveness
3. Development of a relevant curriculum by ensuring that the curriculum taught is relevant to the needs of students and the development of the times.
4. Collaboration and partnership by building partnerships with parents, the community, and other institutions to support learning.
5. Encourage innovative learning methods, such as project-based learning and collaborative adaptive learning.
6. Integrate technology in the learning process to make learning more interactive;

7. Provide feedback to students to help them understand strengths and areas that need improvement (WM, 34 years old, as principal).

Regarding the strategy carried out by the principal (NRD) said that "the principal: first, conduct periodic supervision of teachers; second, providing internal and external trainings to teachers; and third, improving school facilities and infrastructure" (NRD, 35 years old, as a classroom teacher). School principals involve teachers in decision-making related to the quality of education. This was conveyed by (SHF) that "Teachers in this school are involved in meetings related to curriculum development and other quality improvement programs. Our participation in planning is appreciated, and this makes us feel like we are contributing to the progress of the school" (SHF, 31 years old, as a curriculum WKS). Another involvement was conveyed by (DRS) who said that "In this case, teachers are involved in a meeting agenda at the beginning of every year. Teachers are invited to discuss related to the planning and implementation of school programs that will be worked on to improve the quality of school education" (DRS, 23 years old, as a classroom teacher). Special development policies or programs for teachers facilitated by the principal at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia according to (WM) are:

In this case the school does:

1. Provide regular training to improve teaching skills;
2. Regular mentoring in 1 week;
3. Implement a performance evaluation system that focuses on skill improvement;
4. Encourage collaboration between teachers in the teaching team and activity committees to share good practices;

5. Providing awards for teachers who show improvement in performance or learning innovation (Exemplary Teacher Program); and
6. Involvement in decision-making related to education policy to increase a sense of belonging and motivation (WM, 34 years old, as a principal).

The principal manages the relationship between the school and parents and the community in order to improve the quality of education. Based on an interview with (IP) said that: So far the Principal has been able to facilitate effective communication by holding regular meetings with KBI (School Committee) to discuss the development and needs of students. Even in our school, an interventional education seminar has been held both online and offline, where this educational seminar can be a good means of synergy between parents and schools in the student education process (IP, 43 years old, as a classroom teacher). In addition, the efforts made according to (WM) are

First, partnerships with institutions such as companies, hospitals for outing class programs; Second, working with non-profit organizations that focus on education to support specific programs such as literacy or health; and Third, involving parents and the community in school program planning (WM, 34 years old, as the principal).

#### **F. Teacher Competency Development**

The principal supports the development of competencies as teachers of SDIT Bunyan Indonesia. This is based on an interview with (ES) who said that "The principal strongly supports developing teacher competencies by: 1) Facilitating teachers to participate in seminars/training; 2) Holding official meetings, supervision, and evaluation; and 3) Involving teachers in various educational activities, such as the

Teacher Working Group (KKG)" (ES, 33 years old, as a classroom teacher). In addition, according to (DRS) "The principal also provides facilities for teachers who want to be resource persons or share good practices for other fellow teachers, making this a suggestion for teachers' skills in developing their competencies" (DRS, 23 years old, as a classroom teacher).

#### **G. Learning Environment Management**

The principal made efforts to improve facilities and infrastructure at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia. Regarding learning infrastructure based on an interview with (SHF) said that "The principal is trying to improve the facilities, even though there are still budget constraints. Facilities such as libraries and play areas are also being upgraded to support more effective learning" (SHF, 31 years old as a curriculum WKS). In addition, according to (ANZ) said that "The development of infrastructure facilities in improving the quality of effective learning is quite good in terms of providing media that can be used as material for learning" (ANZ, 28 years old as a classroom teacher).

As a form of managing an effective learning environment, schools create strategies to create a conducive learning environment. According to (FGR) it is said that: There are several strategies carried out:

1. Creating a comfortable learning environment, such as providing chairs and tables that are suitable for learning so that children are not sultry while studying;
2. Building several playground facilities for children so that they are comfortable at school such as the field;
3. Building a school UKS that until now has been a first aid for sick children (there

are some schools whose UKS does not run and only runs at the beginning); and

4. Creating a beautiful environment by participating in the Adiwiyata program etc. (FGR, 28 years old, as a classroom teacher).

In addition, according to (ES) it is said that: The strategies carried out are: 1) Ensuring a safe, inclusive, and supportive school environment; 2) Provide adequate facilities; 3) Build good interpersonal relationships among all members of the school community; 4) Completing facilities and infrastructure for the working environment and learning environment; and 5) Involve teachers in trainings and training to improve teacher competence (ES, 33 years old, as a classroom teacher).

#### **H. Challenges and Obstacles**

The challenges faced by SDIT Bunyan Indonesia in implementing strategies to improve the quality of education in schools vary. As conveyed (WM) in the interview said: The challenges faced are: 1) Resistance to change; Some teachers may be reluctant to adopt new learning methods or curricula; 2) Differences in skills and experience between teachers make it difficult to apply the same strategy for all; 3) Difficulties in measuring the effectiveness of teachers in teaching because the number of teachers is almost 60 people; 4) Mental or emotional health problems of students that cannot be handled can interfere with the learning process; 5) Limited learning media and infrastructure; and 6) teacher discipline (WM, 34 years old, as a school principal).

Meanwhile, according to (BN) it is said that: The challenges faced by school principals can vary greatly. There are classic problems such as budget constraints, resistance to change from staff or students,

and infrastructure constraints. In addition, it must also be recognized that each school has a unique culture and dynamics, which can add complexity in implementing new strategies. There is also the challenge of ensuring that all parties, including parents, are actively involved in the educational process (BN, 33 years old, as a classroom teacher). To overcome these challenges, school principals strive to minimize the impact caused. Among the efforts made according to (WM) are:

The efforts we make are: 1) Building good communication with teachers, staff, parents to reduce resistance to change and increase synergy and collaboration; 2) Implement an effective evaluation system to monitor progress and identify areas that need improvement; 3) Provide counseling services and social support programs to help students who are facing problems; and 4) Creating a school environment that encourages continuous innovation and learning, both for teachers and students (WM, 34 years old, as principal).

Meanwhile, according to (F) it is said that: The principal can make several efforts, such as: 1) Establishing effective communication with teachers; 2) Providing guidance and input to teachers in completing tasks; 3) Building the spirit and morale of teachers' work; 4) Invite teachers to participate in activities, seminars, workshops, or KKG; 5) Creating a harmonious and comfortable working atmosphere by improving communication between teachers; 6) The principal sets a good example for teachers; 7) The principal can give recognition for the teacher's achievements; and 8) The principal can encourage collaboration and exchange of ideas (F, 32 years old, as a classroom teacher).

#### I. Strategic Impact

The strategy carried out by the principal has an impact on teachers in improving the quality of education at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia. As conveyed by (WM) who said that: Since the implementation of this effort to improve the quality of education, there have been several impacts on teachers, namely: 1) Teachers are more active in professional development and collaboration between colleagues; 2) Increased parental participation in school activities and support for school programs; 3) The use of more diverse learning methods; and 4) a more comprehensive assessment system to monitor student progress and teaching effectiveness (WM, 34 years old, as principal). Another impact is felt by (IP) who said that "The impact I feel in this school is that there has been a change in the quality of learning where there are already several teachers who have used innovative technology for learning" (IP, 43 years old, as a classroom teacher). Likewise, it was conveyed by (WDM) who said that "I am more motivated and more confident in teaching, which then improves the quality of my learning in the classroom" (WDM, 28 years old, as a classroom teacher).

The strategy carried out by the principal also has an impact on students in improving student achievement. As stated (BN) who said that "A positive impact on student achievement is usually seen in the improvement of grades, increased participation in class, or even more involvement in extracurricular activities. The right strategy can help students feel more confident and motivated to learn" (BN, 33 years old, as a classroom teacher). The same thing was conveyed (FGR) who said that "Yes. The principal always gives appreciation and positive feedback to outstanding students. Appreciation can be in the form of giving certificates and

announcing the winners of the competition at the ceremony and marching on Friday" (FGR, 28 years old, as a class teacher).

#### J. Principal's Strategy in Efforts to Improve the Quality of Education

The findings of this study show that school principals have a strategic role in efforts to improve the quality of education (Hayudiyani, Meila, et al., 2020). The findings of the strategies carried out by the principal include: first, the principal implements participatory leadership. school principals involve teachers in decision-making related to the quality of education in Tamiang, Y. (2022); second, school principals implement strategies to improve teacher competence through continuous training (Gunawan I, 2015); third, school principals develop a conducive learning environment (Setiawan, H., & Mudjiran, M. (2022); fourth, school principals also play an active role in establishing partnerships with external parties (Ismiatun, S. R. et. al. 2024); and fifth, school principals seek to increase parental involvement in the educational process (Aniza, A. N., et.al. (2021).

#### K. Implementation of the Strategy in an Effort to Improve the Quality of Education

The implementation of school strategies in an effort to improve the quality of education includes several key steps that focus on several aspects of school management. The Head of SDIT Bunyan Indonesia plays a central role by implementing participatory leadership oriented to improving the quality of education through the empowerment of school elements, ranging from educators to the learning environment. First, in terms of leadership, the head of SDIT Bunyan Indonesia succeeded in aligning the school's vision and mission with the needs of

contemporary education, as well as communicating the vision and mission to all school residents. Second, the empowerment of educators is one of the main pillars of this strategy (Nasir, M., et.al. 2023). The Head of SDIT Bunyan Indonesia focuses on improving teacher competence through regular training programs, workshops, and supervision. Third, the management of school facilities and infrastructure is also a priority.

The Head of SDIT Bunyan Indonesia ensures that adequate and conducive learning facilities are available to support the teaching and learning process. Fourth, the principal encourages regular evaluation of the learning process through the assessment of student learning outcomes and feedback from teachers. In this way, school principals are able to make adjustments to learning strategies based on the results of these evaluations, so that the quality of education can continue to be improved (Dongoran, et.al., 2023). The implementation of these strategies has brought positive changes in the quality of education at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia, as seen from the increase in student academic achievement, teacher involvement in the educational process, and recognition from the surrounding community. This strategy shows that proactive and innovative principal leadership is the key to creating effective and high-quality schools (Mulyasa, H. E. (2022)).

#### L. The Impact of the Principal's Strategy on the Quality of Education and Student Development

The results of the study show that the strategies implemented by the principal at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia have a significant impact on the quality of education and student development. The

Head of SDIT Bunyan Indonesia prioritizes a transformational approach and quality-based management has created an educational environment that is conducive to improving the quality of learning and developing students' character. First, the impact on the quality of education can be seen from the improvement of students' academic outcomes, which is measured through the results of regular exams and assessments. School principals who focus on developing teacher competencies through periodic training and supervision, directly affect the effectiveness of the learning process in the classroom. Teachers are better able to design and implement innovative learning methods, thereby increasing students' understanding of the subject matter. Second, the principal's strategy also has an impact on the character and mental development of students. Schools based on Islamic values place character education as an inseparable part of the curriculum. The principal encourages teachers and staff to instill Islamic moral values and ethics in their daily activities, both inside and outside the classroom. This is reflected in the change in student behavior that is more disciplined, polite, and has a high enthusiasm for learning. The formation of this strong character has a long-term impact on students' personal development, making them better prepared to face future challenges. Third, the positive impact can also be seen from the involvement of parents and the community in the educational process. The principal initiates various activities that involve parents and the surrounding community, such as parenting programs and social activities. This involvement not only increases parents' trust in the quality of the school, but also creates synergy in supporting the development of students holistically.

Overall, the strategies implemented by the principal at SDIT Bunyan Indonesia have made a real contribution in creating an improvement in the quality of education and student development, both in terms of academics and character. This strategy shows that the role of a visionary and innovative school principal is crucial in creating an effective and quality school.

### **Conclusion**

This study identifies several key strategies implemented by school principals in an effort to improve the quality of education in elementary schools, including participatory management, teacher competency development, and the development of a conducive learning environment. Although these strategies have proven to be effective in improving the quality of learning, there are obstacles that need to be overcome, such as budget constraints and low parental participation. The results of this study make an important contribution to the understanding of the role of school principals in improving the quality of education and provide recommendations for school principals and education policymakers to better support efforts to improve the quality of primary schools. Thus, the strategies that have been identified can be a reference for other schools that want to improve the quality of their education. Further research is suggested to explore strategies to improve the quality of education in various different school contexts, as well as to further research efforts to overcome the obstacles faced by school principals in the implementation of these strategies.

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