



The Role of the Managerial Function of School Principals in Improving the Quality of Education Services

Reni Fadillah, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Bone, Indonesia*

Madinah, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Bone, Indonesia

Liliana, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Bone, Indonesia

Syamsuriadi, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Bone, Indonesia

Abstract

This study aims to: analyze the managerial role of school principals in improving the quality of education in elementary schools. This study uses a qualitative approach. The research subjects are principals and teachers. Methods of data collection using interviews, observation, and documentation. The data analysis technique uses qualitative data analysis from Miles and Huberman. The results of this study explain that the principal as a manager has the role of creating an organizational structure and inviting parents of students to the school committee program and completing the necessary supras; designing programs by outlining the needs of educators and teaching staff who carry out their duties, designing the curriculum that is implemented; supervising the output, teaching and learning process, and students from admission to completion; show a good and calm example at work, provide motivation and appreciation to its personnel both in terms of motile and material, involve educators and educators in training and education and motivate senior teachers to have the spirit of life long education; The obstacles faced are the lack of facilities and infrastructure in the teaching and learning process, there are still undisciplined educators and teaching staff, and the lack of communication between the principal and several educators and teaching staff. A good managerial principal will produce a good quality of education as well which of course will affect learning outcomes and school achievement. The results of this study indicate that a program is still needed to improve the quality of education, whether related to learning or not.

Keywords: Managerial, principals, education

* Corresponding Author:

Reni Fadillah,

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Bone

Jln. Hos. Cokro Aminoto Kecamatan Tanete Riattang Barat, Kabupaten Bone, Sulawesi Selatan

Email: fadillahreni1@gmail.com

Citation: Reni Fadillah., dkk., (2023) The Role of the Managerial Function of School Principals in Improving the Quality of Education Services. *DIDAKTIKA: Jurnal Kependidikan*, 17 (1), 176-184.

<https://doi.org/10.30863/didaktika.v17i1.8999>

The article is published with Open Access at: <https://jurnal.iain-bone.ac.id/index.php/didaktika/>



Published by Fakultas Tarbiyah IAIN Bone. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial- ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

INTRODUCTION

School leadership has emerged as one of the most critical factors influencing the quality of education worldwide. In particular, the role of principals as managerial leaders plays a significant part in determining the success or failure of educational institutions. A principal is not only responsible for administrative duties but also serves as an instructional leader, orchestrating planning, organizing, leading, and controlling educational processes to ensure the achievement of school goals (Bush, 2008; Hallinger, 2011). Effective school management practices contribute directly to enhanced teaching performance, student achievement, and overall school improvement (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008).

In the Indonesian educational context, many principals face challenges in executing their managerial roles effectively due to limited professional development and a lack of strategic frameworks. Often, school management decisions are based on personal experience rather than research-based practice, which can lead to inconsistencies in leadership quality and educational outcomes (Masrukhin, 2018). At SMP Negeri 7 Watampone, for example, the principal encounters ongoing problems such as inadequate infrastructure, communication gaps with teachers, and lack of teacher discipline—factors that collectively hinder the delivery of quality education.

The managerial competencies of a school principal—encompassing conceptual, human, and technical skills—are essential for optimizing school resources and improving educational service delivery. These competencies influence how principals design school programs, coordinate tasks, supervise learning, and motivate staff (Puspitasari, 2015). Furthermore, strong school leadership must be able to respond to the diverse needs of the educational environment while upholding a clear vision and mission. Without such leadership, schools struggle to foster effective teaching-learning environments and meet the expectations of students and stakeholders.

Quality education is not only measured by tangible inputs like infrastructure or funding but is more accurately assessed through the effectiveness of internal school processes. These include curriculum implementation, teacher engagement, classroom supervision, and community involvement (Azhari & Kurniady, 2016). A well-managed

school cultivates an environment in which students are actively engaged, teachers are professionally supported, and educational goals are pursued collaboratively. Thus, evaluating the principal's managerial performance provides valuable insights into the school's capacity to deliver high-quality educational services.

Given the significant influence of school leadership on educational quality, this study aims to analyze the managerial functions of the principal at SMP Negeri 7 Watampone. By examining how the principal plans, organizes, and monitors educational activities, this research seeks to identify best practices as well as barriers in implementing effective school management. The findings are expected to contribute to the broader discourse on educational leadership in developing country settings and support efforts to improve education quality through strengthened school governance.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach aimed at exploring the managerial roles of the school principal in enhancing the quality of educational services at SMP Negeri 7 Watampone. The qualitative design was chosen to capture rich, contextual insights into how school leadership is enacted in practice, especially in addressing institutional challenges and improving teaching and learning processes. The research setting was SMP Negeri 7 Watampone, located in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The primary data sources included the principal and teaching staff, who were selected due to their direct involvement in school management and instructional delivery. Data collection techniques comprised structured and unstructured interviews, direct observations, and documentation review.

The data collection process involved field visits, during which the researcher observed managerial practices and conducted in-depth interviews to gather insights on leadership strategies and obstacles. Documentation included planning books, photos of school activities, and records of school programs. The data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, consisting of four interconnected steps: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Triangulation was used to ensure data

validity by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documents. This methodological approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of how the principal's managerial competencies influence the overall quality of educational services within the school.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this study reveal that the principal's managerial competence plays a central role in enhancing the quality of education at SMP Negeri 7 Watampone. As the highest leader in the school, the principal is responsible for initiating program planning, organizing resources, supervising instruction, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders. The research indicates that the principal has implemented strategic initiatives in collaboration with teachers and the school committee to improve the overall performance and accreditation level of the school.

In the area of planning, the principal formulates both short-term and long-term development programs aligned with the school's vision and mission. This process involves consultation with teachers and staff to ensure that programs reflect actual needs and promote shared ownership. For example, the school has set specific targets such as improving student performance in academic and non-academic fields, and positioning the school as a local leader in arts, sports, and science education. These planning efforts have helped foster a sense of direction and collective responsibility within the institution.

Organizationally, the principal demonstrates the ability to mobilize and coordinate educational resources effectively. Teaching assignments are distributed according to teachers' areas of competence, and roles are clearly defined to optimize school operations. The principal also encourages active involvement of parents through the school committee, particularly in addressing infrastructural needs and extracurricular programs. These organizational practices have contributed to more structured and efficient school management.

Supervision is carried out consistently through direct classroom observations, regular staff meetings, and academic monitoring programs. The principal monitors teacher performance, student progress, and learning processes, and takes corrective measures when necessary. For instance, teachers are encouraged to participate in lifelong learning activities, such as seminars, academic writing workshops, and peer teaching forums. This form of professional development is designed to enhance teacher competency and instructional quality.

Despite the positive efforts, several challenges still hinder the full realization of effective school management. Among the key obstacles identified are poor communication with older staff, lack of teacher discipline, and the mismatch between school needs and the allocation of government operational funding (BOS). The principal has responded to these issues through dialogue, reinforcement of school rules, and strategic collaboration with parents and school committees to find practical solutions.

Another notable challenge is the pressure from public demands, which sometimes exceed the school's capacity to respond. The principal addresses this by filtering suggestions based on their relevance and feasibility while maintaining transparency and communication with stakeholders. These efforts aim to balance community expectations with the school's goals and available resources.

Overall, the findings highlight that a strong managerial role by the school principal—characterized by participative planning, resourceful organizing, consistent monitoring, and adaptive problem-solving—can significantly contribute to educational quality. The school's ability to navigate constraints and pursue continuous improvement is closely linked to the leadership behavior and strategic management skills of the principal.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that the principal's managerial role significantly influences the quality of educational services at SMP Negeri 7 Watampone. This aligns with previous studies emphasizing that effective school leadership is a key factor in improving educational outcomes (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008). The principal's involvement

in strategic planning, resource management, and instructional supervision reflects core managerial functions that are crucial in building a productive school climate (Hallinger, 2011).

Effective planning, as demonstrated in the case of SMP Negeri 7 Watampone, provides clear direction and measurable objectives for institutional development. The participatory approach adopted by the principal in program design is consistent with Bush's (2008) assertion that inclusive leadership practices foster shared responsibility and organizational commitment. The strategic goal of transforming the school into a leading institution in academics, arts, and sports is a manifestation of visionary leadership embedded in long-term planning frameworks.

In terms of organizing, the principal's role in aligning human and physical resources with the school's objectives proves to be a practical application of administrative leadership. The coordination of teaching assignments, involvement of parents, and task delegation illustrate the importance of structural efficiency in educational institutions. This supports the view that school effectiveness depends not only on leadership competence but also on the capacity to mobilize all stakeholders (Puspitasari, 2015).

Supervision, as implemented through direct classroom observation, teacher mentoring, and evaluation mechanisms, further reinforces the critical role of the principal in monitoring instructional quality. As noted by Santiari (2020), regular supervision helps enhance teacher accountability and encourages continuous professional development. The principal's initiative to support teachers in attending seminars and producing academic work shows a proactive effort in promoting lifelong learning, which is vital for maintaining teaching standards.

Nevertheless, the challenges identified in this study, such as communication gaps, undisciplined staff, and funding constraints, highlight the complex realities of school leadership in developing contexts. These obstacles reflect what Masrukhin (2018) described as structural and cultural limitations that often inhibit school reform. The principal's response through dialogic leadership, sanctions, and negotiation with stakeholders indicates a pragmatic and adaptive leadership style that prioritizes collaborative problem-solving.

Moreover, the issue of public pressure—especially demands that exceed the school's capabilities—calls for strategic decision-making and community engagement. The principal's approach in filtering and responding to community input illustrates the necessity of balancing external expectations with internal readiness. This is consistent with the findings of Azhari and Kurniady (2016), who emphasized the role of school leaders in managing stakeholder relations while safeguarding institutional integrity.

In conclusion, the study reinforces the argument that principal managerial competence is a determining factor in the pursuit of educational quality. The evidence from SMP Negeri 7 Watampone demonstrates how planning, organizing, and supervising—when executed effectively—can overcome systemic barriers and promote a culture of continuous improvement. Therefore, ongoing professional development and policy support for school principals remain essential to sustain educational reforms and meet evolving educational demands.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the managerial role of the principal at SMP Negeri 7 Watampone significantly contributes to the enhancement of educational service quality. The principal's ability to plan strategically, organize resources effectively, and supervise instructional processes demonstrates a strong foundation in educational leadership. These managerial practices foster a collaborative school environment, promote teacher professionalism, and support the achievement of institutional goals.

Despite facing challenges such as limited infrastructure, staff discipline issues, and public expectations, the principal has shown adaptive leadership by engaging stakeholders, utilizing participative decision-making, and implementing performance monitoring. These strategies not only help mitigate existing obstacles but also sustain the momentum of school improvement efforts.

Overall, the study reaffirms that effective school leadership is essential for improving the quality of education. Strengthening the managerial competencies of school principals—through continuous professional development and institutional support—is crucial in

ensuring that schools are well-equipped to respond to internal challenges and external demands. As such, empowering school leaders remains a key strategy for achieving sustainable and high-quality education in Indonesia.

REFERENCE

- Azhari, U. L., & Kurniady, D. A. (2016). Manajemen pembiayaan pendidikan, fasilitas pembelajaran, dan mutu sekolah. *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan*, 23(2).
<https://doi.org/10.17509/jap.v23i2.5631>
- Bush, T. (2008). *Leadership and management development in education*. SAGE Publications.
- Fauzi, M. S., & Falah, M. S. (2020). Peran kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan: Studi kasus di SMAU 1 Gresik. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 1(1), 54–76. <http://ejournal.unhasy.ac.id/index.php/jm-tbi/article/view/1440>
- Hallinger, P. (2011). Leadership for learning: Lessons from 40 years of empirical research. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 49(2), 125–142.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231111116699>
- Hastowo, A., & Abduh, M. (2021). Analisis kemampuan manajerial kepala sekolah dalam implementasi pembelajaran daring. *Scholaria*, 3(1), 252–263.
<https://ejournal.uksw.edu/scholaria/article/view/4444>
- Kastawi, N. S. (2021). Kontribusi motivasi kerja dan peran kepala sekolah terhadap profesionalisme guru SMA. *Kelola: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 8(1), 77–93.
<https://ejournal.uksw.edu/kelola/article/view/4312>
- Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2008). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. *School Leadership and Management*, 28(1), 27–42.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13632430701800060>
- Masrukhin. (2018). Pengaruh kemampuan manajerial kepala sekolah dan komite sekolah terhadap budaya organisasi dan efektivitas penyelenggaraan sekolah. *Edukasia*, 13(1), 105–126. <https://doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v13i1.3226>

- Puspitasari, N. (2015). Kemampuan manajerial kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan kinerja guru. *Jurnal Anterior*, 1(1), 29–36.
<http://journal.umpalangkaraya.ac.id/index.php/anterior>
- Rismawan, E. (2015). Pengaruh supervisi kepala sekolah dan motivasi berprestasi guru terhadap kinerja mengajar guru. *Open Science Framework*.
<https://doi.org/10.31227/osf.io/7azuy>
- Santiari. (2020). Kontribusi kepemimpinan kepala sekolah, iklim kerja, dan motivasi kerja terhadap kinerja guru. *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan*, 2(1), 54–63.
<https://doi.org/10.17977/um027v1i2.2016.p063>