The Roles of Principals in Teacher Competency Development for Students' Morale Improvement

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Education and learning in schools that do not pay attention to students' morals have had an unfavorable impact on student development. This research aims to track the role of school principals in teacher development to improve students' morale. It used a qualitative approach that involved the researchers as a research instrument. In collecting data, the principal is the key informant. The other informants were chosen based on the snowball sampling technique. This process continued until the data were saturated. In addition to interviews, research data were collected through observation and written documents. The data collected were analyzed following the steps proposed by Miles and Huberman (1984), such as data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions (illustration/verification). More specifically, data validation was done through triangulation. The results revealed that school principals had fewer roles in developing teacher competencies to improve students' morale.

Keywords: moral improvement, role of principal, teacher competency development

INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning at schools that only prioritize students' academic achievement will harm student development. Currently, schools that range from low to high levels are alleged to be too partial, prioritize intellectual development, have few skills, and seem to ignore moral education (Anam et al., 2019; Mukminin et al., 2019). Abdullah et al. (2019) argued that inequality in moral education gave rise to various complaints, criticisms, questions, and demands from the community which were mostly directed at formal educational institutions such as schools. Iriany and Paciana (2019) also noted that many students are involved in negative actions such as fights between students, drug abuse, pornography, games that do not educate, fights against teachers and parents, speeding on the highway, and so on. With this inequality, people increasingly question the role and effectiveness of schools in the moral education of students.

This research is based on the argument that the students' moral formation is generally done through education. Formal education at schools can be carried out at various levels and types (Azkiyah & Mukminin, 2017). Thambu et al. (2021) suggested that education can develop all dimensions of humanity, like individual, social, moral, and religious. On a broader spectrum, morality in this context includes values, morals, norms, character, and manners (Hadiyanto et al., 2017). The whole colors human behavior individually and in groups (Crockett, 2017). To anticipate this problem, efforts to increase teacher professionalism through professional services development by school principals need to be sought (Suwartini, 2017). Asmendri (2016) suggested that teacher competency development aims to improve learning processes and outcomes through assistance provision, especially professional service to teachers. This professional service is the task of fostering teachers in schools, especially school principals. Although in its implementation, the teacher development tasks can also be carried out by school supervisors. The development and supervision tasks carried out by the principal will determine the development of a harmonious spirit of cooperation, interest in educational development, a pleasant working atmosphere, and professional quality and teacher resources (Kusumawarti & Ahmad, 2018; Muazza et al., 2018; Murtiningsih et al., 2019; Rahmatullah et al., 2019; Suchyadi & Nurjanah, 2018).

LITERATURE REVIEW

School Management

Good school management is an essential point in realizing, developing, and preventing the decentralization of educational values (Alanezi, 2021; Benoliel, 2020; Habibi et al., 2018). Weixler et al. (2019) stated that good school management can be seen through aspects of program governance, organization, budget, and school curriculum that can improve and produce more responsive and adaptive services. Therefore, to establish and realize the vision and mission of a school institution in the long term, the quality of leadership becomes very important in managing the strengths and weaknesses of the school (Christiansen et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2017; Verhelst et al., 2021). Murphy et al. (2017) argued that good school management is not only realized through the application of the curriculum and teaching process

alone, but also involves family and community members in every policy process, communication, and interaction to realize school quality and capacity.

In improving the quality and capacity of schools, the quality of a principal becomes very important, especially in a collaborative culture to realize strategies for managing physical and non-physical development in educational institutions (Cheng, 2020). Collaborative culture in managing educational institutions has been demonstrated by a positive relationship between principals, teachers, students, and parents, so this relationship has increased the effectiveness of school institutions in a more innovative direction (Asbari et al., 2020; Arar & Nasra, 2020; Muazza et al., 2019; Pasaribu, 2017). Sastradiharja (2019) further emphasized that improving the quality of school institutions must be done through professional school management. Therefore, quality management of educational resources, especially human resources, curriculum, educational facilities, and infrastructure, is the most decisive factor in realizing quality school institutions.

Teacher Development

The quality and professionalism of teachers in a school institution can be used as a reference to see the success of an educational program through external and internal interventions that emphasize characteristics and diversity (Abdullah, 2018; Christiansen et al., 2021; Rahayu & Firmansyah, 2018). Fitriyah (2019) emphasized that through primary transformations in social, economic, political, and cultural aspects driven by scientific developments, teacher competency development became a strategic choice to answer complex problems. Teacher competence development can not only answer the complexity of educational problems in the 21st century, but also be able to answer the demands of education in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, especially in an atmosphere of crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic (Siregar et al., 2020; Sudrajat, 2020; Santoso, 2019). Kraft and Christian (2022) mentioned that reform and evaluation of teacher performance must be carried out extensively and consistently to encourage and increase teacher capacity in a better direction to respond to the challenges of the times.

Furthermore, the development and transformation of teachers' professional knowledge must be in line with cultural wisdom. Therefore, in practice, teachers must have skills in preparing learning plans that are oriented to the needs and abilities of students (Babinski et al., 2018; Cappa, 2020; Krzychała, 2020). Syahroni et al. (2020) stated that the skills of teachers in adopting information technology and the internet in a curriculum are essential points in achieving educational goals in the era of globalization. Therefore, the combination of education and information technology is the focus of several programs to improve teacher professionalism today. For example, increasing teacher skills is carried out through operating e-learning applications, creating modules, and even utilizing social media platforms in the learning process (Suhandiah et al., 2019; Kuncahyono & Kumalasani, 2019; Myori et al., 2019). Kusen et al. (2019) stated that improving the quality of teachers from the intellectual and creative aspects is imperative in the era of globalization.

Moral Education

Today schools can help students build morals by using values-based education programs that refer to ideas and ideologies to improve and develop the students' character toward independent individual development (Baumann, 2018; Gao & Wang, 2020; Meindl et al., 2018). Chen et al. (2021) said that moral education must not only refer to the cultivation of ideals, moral qualities, culture, and discipline, but it must also be able to identify shortcomings and psychological and behavioral needs of students by emphasizing an effective dialogue system. Moral education with an emphasis on dialogue has been adopted by the UK, especially in preventing the practice of intolerance and radicalization among students and staff in schools (Winter et al., 2022). Slote (2010) suggested that moral education can show how the rules and principles in strengthening the students' psychological and social attitudes toward their environment.

The condition of moral education in schools today has experienced degradation that impacts the personal quality of students, especially the younger generation (Alia et al., 2020; Syaparuddin & Elihami 2019; Rukiyati, 2019). Alia et al. (2020) further said that moral education for children is crucial to change behavior and shape children's personalities through curriculum implementation in educational institutions. Evaluation and revitalization of moral education must not only be based on religious and cultural values,

but the active role of parents in realizing moral education is crucial in strengthening the morality of students (Ramdani, 2018; Suradarma, 2018; Hudi, 2017). Suradarma (2018) also stated that the revitalization of moral values through educational institutions was able to restore the students' confidence so that students were not carried away by the flow of modern culture in the era of globalization as aspired and expected by the nation and state.

The Role of Principal in Teacher Competency Development

Several studies so far have shown that principals have a paramount role in teacher development. Teachers in teaching are expected not only to develop students' cognitive abilities but also to develop their morals. Efforts to foster school principals aim to improve the morals of students. It is a crucial effort for students' balance and personal stability (Abylkassymova et al., 2018; Asif et al., 2020; Frisancho & Delgado, 2018; Sesmiarni, 2019). Efforts to achieve the goals of Indonesian education carried out in schools do not seem to refer to Law no. 20 of 2003. The aspects of faith and piety to God Almighty and a noble character do not seem to have become a primary priority. It is something that needs to be studied to find out the causes and find solutions.

Principal supervision aims to improve the role of teachers in the teaching and learning process (Behlol et al., 2011). The principal's main task is to manage behavior organizationally (Ubben et al., 2001). To carry out this task, the principal must understand the behavior patterns of individuals and work groups in the school he leads (Ahmad & Saefurrohman, 2020).

In shaping the morals of students in a better direction, school principals need to foster all teachers' development of the subject matter they teach based on moral development. In addition, principals are also expected to influence teachers so that they are aware that in carrying out their duties, they are not only limited to teaching but more essential to shaping the personality of students so that they can behave and have good morals.

This research aims to complement the shortcomings of the existing studies by identifying how the principal's responsibility is in directing and fostering teachers to improve the morals of students. It is focused on "What is the role of the principal in teacher development for efforts to improve the morals of students?" The teacher development studied here is limited in terms of (1) teacher development programs, (2) teacher development constraints, and (3) teacher development efforts.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative approach in which the researchers act as a human instrument and thoroughly adjusts himself in a reasonable situation according to the natural setting based on the environmental conditions entered (Creswell, 2014; Guba, 1981; Sugiyono, 2017). The naturalistic approach is considered suitable for the problems being studied at this time because the data about the symptoms that will be obtained from the field are more related to the actions and words of the informants. It is the reason the researchers use a qualitative approach because the researchers can focus on the problems studied. A qualitative approach is beneficial for the researchers in revealing the extent of the role of the principal of SMA X in fostering teachers to improve the morals of students. The coaching activities directed by the principal for this purpose can be revealed through research with this approach. It is also under the characteristics of qualitative research itself. Bogdan and Biklen (1997) stated that qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct data source.

Research Instrument and Informant

The instrument in this research was the researchers himself, who was involved directly in data collection so the data obtained was more meaningful. Bogdan and Biklen (1997), and Creswell (2014) suggested that researchers I the key instrument. Informants were determined through the "snowball" sampling technique. The first informant was the principal of the school. The further informant is determined based on information from the first informant, and so on. Informants involved are related to teacher

development for efforts to improve students', morals namely vice principals, teachers, employees, students, and parents/guardians of students.

Data Collection

The data collection tools used in the research were (1) observation, using unstructured observations and repeated until all the required data were obtained; (2) interviews, which can explore not only what is known and experienced by research subjects, but also what is hidden deep within the research subjects, (3) documentation studies, which aim to strengthen or prove some of the results of the interview. The documents used are notes from school meetings, correspondence and regulations issued by school principals, student reports, lists of teacher teaching assignments and teacher writings, as well as school daily/weekly notes related to the policies of the Head of SMA X regarding guidance and direction to teachers.

Data Validity and Analysis

To find the validity of the research data, the researchers triangulated. Triangulation activities were carried out by checking the validity of data using something other than this data for checking purposes or as data comparisons. The data analysis used in this research followed the steps developed by Miles and Huberman (1984), as follows: (1) data reduction, carried out through the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transferring the raw data that appeared in the recording of the role of the principal in fostering teachers in the field, (2) data display, namely the activity of displaying information obtained through reduction activities. Information about teacher development by the principal is collected and organized based on the focus and aspects of the problems studied, so it becomes an organized assembly of information, (3) conclusions, and verification to prove the data validity with new data, so the research results validity is obtained. Conclusion drawing and verification begin since the data collection activities are carried out.

FINDINGS

The results of this research are described under the focus and research questions posed, namely (1) teacher development programs, (2) teacher development efforts, and (3) teacher development constraints.

Teacher Development Program

Researchers dig up information from the principal of SMA X about the development of particular teachers for efforts to improve the morals of their students. The principal said:

> "We are trying to develop teachers so that they can realize that the task they do is not only teaching but the main thing is educating. Through teaching and educating, teachers not only provide knowledge and skills but can also guide and direct the behavior of their students to good morals". (Interview, X1, 2 May 2021).

In connection with this, a religious teacher also gave his response, "The guidance set by the principal is considered very good. However, according to the religious teacher, the purpose of moral education of students in the perception of the principal is only limited to how students can behave well which can be directed by the teacher through advice and assessment only. The principal cannot describe a special program for teacher training". (Interview, X2, 8 May 2021).

Explicitly, another teacher in the interview said:

> "The teacher development program to improve students' morals by school principals is not given much attention because religious education subjects are not included in the National Examination at all. For this reason, the principal is trying very hard to encourage teachers to increase the achievement of high UN results". (Interview, X3, 15 May 2021).

The researchers also asked about the problem of this teacher development program to the vice principal of students affairs who said:

> "The teacher development program to improve students' morals in a good direction has been tried to discuss with the principal but it seems that he has not taken it seriously. The principal only suggested that the teacher should emphasize these activities in religious and extracurricular activities. In this activity, all teachers are expected to participate" (Interview, X4, 22 May 2021).

Based on the results of the interviews above, it can be seen that the principal of SMA X seems to have less attention to teacher development to improve the morals of students in a better direction. It is due to the principal's weak commitment to this moral aspect. The school principal seems to pay more attention to the teacher training program for achieving high National Examination results. The teacher development program to improve students' morals is only emphasized through suggestions and advice so that teachers can realize that their duties are not limited to teaching but also educating. Suggestions and advice given by the principal seem less able to be implemented by teachers in the education and learning process.

Juridically, it has been confirmed in the National Education System Law No. 20/2003 that the purpose of education is to develop students both cognitive aspects (intellectual) and skills that significantly support the development of the character aspects (morals in the context of Islam) (Noor, 2018). To improve the morals of students, as referred to in Law number 20/2003, it takes the creativity and accuracy of a school principal in programming coaching for his teachers. One of the most crucial factors in the teacher development program to improve the morals of students is the principal's commitment (concern) to this aspect.

As an administrator, the principal must be able and skilled in planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and supervising all educational activities under his responsibility. Furthermore, school principals need to change and improve the school situation to realize the goals set and determine new approaches, new teaching and learning methods, and new subject matter that is thought to be suitable for forming moral students.

Teacher Development Constraints

Regarding the constraints faced by the head of SMA X in fostering teachers to improve the morals of these students, the researcher sought information from the deputy head of the curriculum, who said:

> "The school principal is less able to influence teachers to increase their commitment as good teachers and educators. Principals always have difficulty in carrying out this guidance so it is also difficult to make improvements and find solutions to the teaching process carried out by teachers."

Another obstacle faced by the principal according to the guidance of the BK teacher is "Regarding his role as a supervisor, the principal in carrying out his supervision does not seem like a teaching supervisor but like an instructor and seems authoritarian so there is a sense of distance from the teacher." The principal's behavior like this makes it difficult for teachers to come up with remedial ideas to improve the morals of the students. The researcher also interviewed an Arabic teacher, who said, "There are still some female teachers who do not dress according to Islamic guidelines, and this is very influential in the moral development of students. To solve this problem, said the teacher, religious teachers and Arabic teachers have suggested to the principal to discuss it, but the principal is not responsive and does not dare to take a policy, because it is related to human rights".

The researcher also interviewed several students about dressing that was not based on shari'a'. The students said that:

> "How do we dress according to shari'a', many teachers don't dress according to shari'a'. The teacher should be able to show a good example in dressing. We know that covering the genitals is obligatory."

The development constraints found above are caused by the behavior of the leadership and supervision of not good and less effective principals. The principal, as a leader and supervisor, seems authoritarian.

The principal, as a teaching leader, should be able to influence his teachers in the context of fostering a democratic attitude and not considering the teacher as his subordinate. With this democratic attitude, a school principal will facilitate his efforts in forming the morals of students because they must require support from various components related to the school. Asmendri (2016); Helvaci and Takmak (2016); Shahadan and Oliver (2016); Ubben et al. (2001) suggested that leadership aims to improve schools by (1) strengthening teacher skills, (2) systematizing curriculum, (3) improving organizational structure, and (4) involving parents/guardians, students and other communities in school activities.

Realizing this, the principal in carrying out teacher supervision activities to improve the students' morals, should see that teaching supervision for this purpose can be carried out by improving the role of teachers in the learning process based on moral formation. It means the principal himself first shows a good model for teachers or can improve his behavior in a better direction. The results of this research are supported by the statements of Neagley and Evans (1980) and Ayubi et al. (2020), that stated that the supervisor is an integral member of the school that allows teachers to improve themselves and can communicate effectively with their students in the teaching and learning process. In carrying out supervision activities, the principal is expected to be a model because his primary role is to relate to other people.

Teacher Development Efforts

Observing the efforts of the principal of SMA X in fostering teachers in preparing teaching materials, the researcher stated the narrative of a biology teacher who said, "The principal pays less attention to the development of teaching materials so that teachers only teach to achieve curriculum targets and are not at all concerned with morals. Student morale". When asked the principal about the importance of developing teaching materials that allow moral education to be taught through all subjects, the principal said, "This is impossible because the subject matter will be piled up and too much. To teach the existing material, there are still some teachers who often cannot achieve it".

Regarding the efforts of the head of SMA X in teacher development to improve the morals of students, a Civic Education teacher stated that:

> "The policy only emphasizes extracurricular activities such as religious lectures, MTQ, religious studies and so on. This activity is not well managed. Principals are more motivated to teach teachers to achieve high National Examination and graduate students at well-known universities".

Then the researcher asked a student about his response to the principal's attention to problematic students. The student stated that:

> "Ever since I studied at this school, I have seen that the principal is like a judge, if we are summoned by the principal, it means that a punishment will be given because it is considered problematic. The principal always told us to achieve a high National Examination score so that it is easy to be accepted at a well-known university".

To see the principal's planning in teacher development efforts to improve the morals of students, the researcher asked one of the religious teachers who stated, "Planning principals in teacher development efforts to improve students' morals is only included in extra-curricular activities". Meanwhile, the responses from the representatives of the curriculum sector were:

"The principal only ordered to make plans in coaching for teachers through advice and suggestions and not in the form of programs that can be guided by teachers. Thus, teachers are less motivated in directing students with moral education through the subjects they teach. Finally, most other teachers consider this moral education to be religious teachers and Civic Education teachers".

The principal's weak commitment to moral education causes his function as a teaching manager to appear to have less role in teacher development. The teacher development efforts carried out by the principal, both in terms of directing his teachers in developing teaching materials, making policies/strategies, making plans, finding educational resources, and providing teaching facilities, do not seem to support the moral improvement of students in a better direction.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this research confirm that the SMA X principal has fewer roles in teacher development efforts to improve the morals of students in a better direction. The principal seems to be more concerned with the students' intellectual/cognitive development in the learning process. The principal does not yet have programs and efforts to develop teachers to improve the morals of students.

Based on the results of this research, the weakness in education today is the excessive emphasis on the students' intellectual/cognitive development only. This tendency can lead to lameness in the formation of students. It is not at all in line with the national education goals formulated in the National Education System Law No.20/2003. Teachers, as those who directly deal with students, need to be equipped with a series of coaching efforts through professional services. These professional services should be carried out properly and effectively by the principal and other supervisors. With good teacher development, teachers are expected to be able to form students who are balanced in their potential, namely humans who have knowledge, skills, and good morals.

Efforts to develop teachers to improve the students' morals are the principal's primary responsibility. The principal, with the function of an educator, can foster and direct teachers so that their character is also fostered when teaching students. The principal, as an educator, can guide teachers so that they also carry out the task of educating and paying attention to the morals of students in teaching.

The results of this research can reaffirm what was stated by Rooney (2013) and Chalikias et al. (2020) that the principal, as a leader, should work as a learning manager who can lead his teachers by way of professional development and be an inspiration for lifelong learning. Other research results focus more on the leadership and management of school principals, which focus more on the effectiveness of achieving school goals. There have not been many results of research on the management and leadership of school principals in improving students' morals/character. Effective principals care deeply about student success and recognize that test scores are not the only measure of quality education. The principal role in teachers' professional development is crucial and often decisive. The principal occupies a strategic position in the school environment and can influence the professional development of teachers.

The principal's efforts in fostering teachers with the aim that they can educate their students with character will be largely determined by the principal's commitment to the moral aspect itself. Therefore, definite requirements and qualifications must be met to appoint someone as a school principal. Marmoah (2016) argued that in general, the requirements for a teacher to be appointed as principal must have a diploma under the provisions/regulations set by the government, have sufficient work experience, especially in schools similar to the school he leads, have good personality traits (natures and personalities needed for educational purposes), have broad expertise and knowledge, and have good ideas and initiatives for the progress and development of their school. These ideas and initiatives can be implemented if the principal has a good commitment to implementing them.

Commitment is the main factor that drives a person to do work. Beekun (1997) suggested that one of the primary sources in influencing organizational members is the extent to which the leader's commitment to the organization he leads. This commitment can be communicated through a code of ethics, policy

statements, lectures, publications, and so on. Thus, commitment is a management concept that places a leader as a central figure in the organization. Without the commitment of a leader/manager, it will be difficult to expect the active participation of his subordinates. To grow this commitment, a principal needs to be aware of his duties and position that his position is as a manager, leader, and teaching supervisor in his school. Kurniati (2020) suggested that the principal is not just a position but also a professional career. A professional career is a position that requires expertise to carry out its duties effectively. Therefore, a person can be appointed as principal if he fulfills the provisions in his career and achievements.

In line with the findings of school principals who have less role in teacher development for improving the morals of students, it is necessary to take action that can answer this deficiency. One solution is that school principals need to have policies and plans for sustainable teacher development programs in an effort to improve the students' morals. It is the mandate of the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 article 3, which states that national education aims to "develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe and are devoted to God Almighty, have a noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become a democratic and responsible citizen". This research has limitations, including the limited number of schools studied, which is only one school. Hopefully, the next researcher can carry out further research with many schools and many respondents so that they can get more research data.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research conclude that the SMA X principal has fewer roles in teacher development efforts to improve the morals of students in a better direction. It is indicated by the principal seems to be more concerned with the student's intellectual/cognitive development in the learning process. The principal does not yet have programs and efforts to develop teachers to improve the morals of students.

Based on this conclusion, the weakness in our education today is the tendency toward intellectual/cognitive development of students and neglecting aspects of moral development. It is not in line with the national education goals formulated in the National Education System Law No.20/2003. Teachers, as those who directly deal with students, need to be equipped with a series of coaching efforts through professional services. These professional services should be carried out properly and effectively by the principal and other supervisors. With good teacher development, it is hoped that teachers can form students who are balanced in their potential, such as humans with knowledge, skills, and good morals.

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