



SCHOOL PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

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Abstract:

This research aims to explore and analyze effective leadership strategies of school principals in improving the quality of Islamic education in schools. Quality leadership is the key in facing various challenges and dynamics in the education system. The main focus of this research is to identify leadership practices that are successfully implemented by school principals to improve the quality of Islamic education. The research method used is a qualitative approach by collecting data through in-depth interviews with several school principals who are considered successful in improving the quality of Islamic education in their institutions. Data analysis was carried out using a thematic approach to identify general patterns in the leadership strategies implemented. The research results show that an effective school principal leadership strategy involves active involvement in developing the school's vision and mission, empowering teaching staff, implementing innovative learning models, as well as synergistic efforts with local stakeholders and the community. School principals who are able to build an inclusive work culture and provide ongoing support to staff and students are likely to achieve significant improvements in the quality of Islamic education.

Keywords: *Strategy, Principals, Quality of Education*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education has a very important role in shaping the character and morals of individuals and society. One of the key elements in improving the quality of Islamic education is the role of the school principal as a leader. Effective leadership strategies can be the main driver in improving the quality of Islamic education in an educational institution (Iqbal, 2017). The principal as a leader has a big responsibility to create a conducive learning environment, develop a clear vision and mission, and motivate all school members. Wise and goal-oriented leadership strategies will have a positive impact on the learning process and student character development (Amir, 2021). This introduction aims to review various leadership strategies that can be implemented by school principals in improving the quality of Islamic education. Through a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced, school principals can design strategies that are appropriate to the context of Islamic education, explore the potential of school members, and direct resources effectively.

The importance of an Islamic values-based approach in school leadership will also be the focus of this discussion. Leadership that integrates Islamic values not only ensures academic excellence, but also provides a solid moral and spiritual foundation for students (Basith & Awalya, 2015). Previous research revealed several research results, including; First, Ihsan Maolana, 2023, who in his research stated that through a comprehensive literature review, this research identified a number of leadership strategies that have been proven to contribute to improving teacher quality. First, school principals who implement transformational leadership are able to inspire and motivate teachers to innovate and collaborate in the learning process (Wahid, A.,

Naemuddin, R., Suhermanto, S., & Wafa, 2022).

Second, teacher professional development strategies, including the development of effective training and supervision programs, play an important role in improving teacher competence and performance. Third, open and transparent communication helps build a relationship of mutual trust between school principals and teachers, creating a positive work environment. In addition, it was found that adapting leadership strategies in accordance with the values and principles of Islamic education had a more significant impact in the context of Islamic educational institutions. Second, Muslimah Hikmah Wening, 2020, in her research results explained that developments to deal with things that will happen in the digital era 4.0, the reactions that will be carried out. Quick to change in the 4.0 era, process and results oriented, Mastering the 4C formula, namely: critical thinking, creativity, communication. The novelty of this research is the leadership strategy of the school principal at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin, Probolinggo, which focuses on improving the quality of Islamic education. Changing times and societal dynamics require school principals to have deep insight into new and relevant leadership strategies.

Courage in adopting innovation and improving the quality of Islamic education must be the main basis. By recognizing existing challenges and opportunities, school principals can design strategies that suit the local context of MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo, ensuring sustainability and conformity with the values of Islamic education. Technology is one of the keys to novelty in Islamic education in this digital era. It is hoped that the integration of technology by the school principal at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo can enrich learning methods, facilitate a more interactive understanding of religious concepts, and open access to quality learning resources.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a qualitative descriptive case study type research (Harahap, 2020). This research is research which includes an individual, a group, an organization, an activity program, and so on at a certain time. This type of descriptive research aims to explore and describe social reality, describing a number of variables related to the problem and unit being studied. This research aims to determine the process of teamwork synergy in improving educational services at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin, Probolinggo City. Sources of information were obtained from several informants who were attached to the research location. The sources of informants were the madrasa head (DK), four teachers (S, Y, A, L), three madrasa administrative staff (PJ, AM, SW) and the head of the madrasa community (MA). In interviews, researchers used structured free questions to respondents. In this case, the researcher links the leadership strategy process of the school principal at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin, Probolinggo, which focuses on improving the quality of Islamic education, especially at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin, Probolinggo City.

The data collection technique in this research was carried out circularly using three approaches, namely; 1) participant observation; 2) in-depth interviews (in-depth interviews); and 3) documentation. Meanwhile, data analysis in this research uses the Miles and Huberman data analysis model with stages of data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. The data sources obtained are collected, then analyzed in the form of reduction, then the data is displayed and the final step is to draw conclusions (Rukajat, 2018). In the initial stage of data collection, the next step is to reduce the sorted data in the form of notes, then display the data to understand the data and then draw conclusions from the data studied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The principal as a leader has a big responsibility to create a conducive learning environment, develop a clear vision and mission, and motivate all school members. Wise and goal-oriented leadership strategies will have a positive impact on the learning process and student character development, especially at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin, Probolinggo City. As an effort to continue to develop the quality of Islamic education at

MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo, the principal's leadership strategy is the main key in responding to the dynamics of educational development and community demands. Courage and innovation in leadership have a central role in forming a quality learning environment that is relevant to current developments (Wulandari et al., 2018).

According to the results of the interview conveyed by the head of the madrasah (DK), MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo always strives to bring innovation and continues to improve the quality of Islamic education at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin. One of the main steps we take is integrating technology in the learning process. We ensure that our teachers are skilled in utilizing technology to make learning more interesting and effective. In a curriculum development program that ensures that Islamic values are integrated in all aspects of learning (Alnaji, 2022). Apart from that, we encourage teachers to be good role models in carrying out Islamic teachings on a daily basis. We also involve parents in ensuring that education at the madrasah is in line with family and religious values. In line with the results of the interview from the head of curriculum at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo (S), apart from continuous innovation and teacher skills, it is also no less important that the involvement of students and parents is very important. We hold regular meetings with parents to provide updates on their children's educational progress. Apart from that, we also involve students in extracurricular activities and projects based on Islamic values to improve their skills outside the classroom. Likewise, curriculum development programs ensure that Islamic values are integrated in all aspects of learning (Yulianti et al., 2021). Apart from that, we encourage teachers to be good role models in carrying out Islamic teachings on a daily basis. We also involve parents in ensuring that education at the madrasah is in line with family and religious values.

The leadership strategy of the MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo school principal in improving the quality of Islamic education provides a detailed description of the concrete steps taken by the school principal to make the Islamic education institution a superior learning center. The following are several processes implemented by MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo in improving the quality of its education.

Integration of Islamic Values in the Curriculum

The school principal can explain his strategy for ensuring that Islamic values are well integrated into the learning curriculum. This involves preparing a curriculum that not only covers academic aspects, but also moral and spiritual values that are in accordance with Islamic teachings (Sugiono, 2022).

Education has an important role in shaping individual character and morality, especially at the basic education level such as Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI). MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo as an Islamic educational institution has a big responsibility to form the next generation who not only excels academically, but also has noble morals in accordance with Islamic teachings. One of the efforts made to achieve this goal is to thoroughly integrate Islamic values into the MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo curriculum. The integration of Islamic values in education not only provides a moral foundation, but also creates a learning environment that combines spiritual, intellectual and social aspects.

The importance of integrating Islamic values in the curriculum lies in efforts to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and the application of Islamic values in everyday life. Thus, MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo aims not only to produce students who are intellectually intelligent, but also have personalities that are based on Islamic teachings, and include its positive impact on the formation of student character, the role of Islamic educational institutions in forming an Islamic personality, as well as implementation strategies that can be applied in designing a curriculum that is able to integrate Islamic values holistically (Kawuryan, 2021).

Use of Technology in the Learning Process

The use of technology in the learning process at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo is a progressive step that makes a significant contribution to developing the quality of Islamic education. Technology not only provides easy access to information, but also expands the scope of learning and motivates students to be

actively involved in the teaching and learning process (Mukaddamah, 2023). One of the positive aspects of using technology in education at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo is the creation of more interactive and interesting learning methods. The use of educational software, learning applications and multimedia can help convey learning material in a more dynamic way, so that students become more interested and active in the learning process.

In addition, technology allows access to a wider range of learning resources. MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo can use the internet to access references, literature and other educational resources. This opens up opportunities to develop a curriculum that is more diverse and relevant to developments in knowledge and student needs (Ballenger, 2021).

The use of technology can also increase administrative efficiency and school management. The use of school information systems, online report card applications, and virtual learning platforms can help facilitate administrative processes, communication between schools and parents, and monitor students' academic progress more effectively.

However, it is important to consider the challenges and risks that may arise in the use of technology at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo. Some aspects that need to be considered involve training teachers in the use of technology, protecting student privacy, and ensuring that technology is used as an assistive tool, not a substitute for direct social and educational interaction. Overall, the use of technology in the learning process at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo can make a positive contribution to the quality of Islamic education, as long as it is implemented wisely and integrated in a balanced way with conventional learning approaches that have been proven to be effective.

Teacher Development Program

The teacher development program at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo is the main key in improving the quality of Islamic education at the institution. Quality teachers have a strategic role in shaping student character, conveying lesson material well, and providing positive motivational encouragement. Therefore, teacher development programs are a must to ensure educational success at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo. One of the main focuses in the teacher development program is increasing academic and Islamic competence. Teachers at MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo need to be given regular training to understand the latest curriculum, innovative teaching methods, and learning approaches that are in line with Islamic values. This training may include an in-depth understanding of active learning methods, the use of technology in teaching, and the application of character-based approaches.

Apart from that, teacher development programs must also pay special attention to strengthening Islamic aspects. Teachers need to be equipped with in-depth knowledge of Islamic teachings, teaching ethics based on Islamic values, and the ability to educate students in the Islamic spirit. In this way, teachers can be good role models for students in living lives based on Islamic principles. It is also important to create a teacher performance evaluation mechanism as part of the development program. Evaluations can help identify individual development needs, create customized learning plans, and provide constructive feedback to improve the quality of teaching. With a continuous evaluation and development cycle, teachers can continue to update their knowledge and skills in accordance with educational developments and student needs.

Teacher involvement in research activities and collaboration between teachers can also be an integral part of development programs (Asmuki, 2018). This can increase teachers' knowledge and understanding of the latest educational trends, strengthen their professional networks, and encourage a culture of sustainable learning within the MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo environment. By designing a holistic and sustainable teacher development program, MI Tashilul Muhtadiin Probolinggo can ensure that its teachers remain relevant, competitive and effective in guiding and educating students according to Islamic values.

CONCLUSION

MI Tashilul Muftadiin Probolinggo, school principal leadership strategies have a crucial role in improving the quality of Islamic education. The principal not only acts as an administrator, but also as a leader who is able to inspire, guide and create a school environment that is conducive to quality learning.

One effective strategy is to create a clear vision and mission related to the goals of Islamic education at MI. By having a strong vision, the principal can direct all staff and students towards achieving a common goal, namely forming a generation of qualified Muslims who have a deep understanding of Islamic teachings. Furthermore, inclusive leadership is also key. School principals need to involve all stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents and the surrounding community, in decision making and the school development planning process. This involvement not only creates a sense of shared ownership, but also ensures that each party has an active role in achieving the desired goals of Islamic education.

Implementing a regular monitoring and evaluation system is another important strategy in improving the quality of education at MI Tashilul Muftadiin Probolinggo. By monitoring the performance of teachers, students, and the entire learning process, school principals can identify potential improvements, measure progress in achieving goals, and make data-based decisions for continuous improvement. Apart from that, increasing teacher competence and welfare is also a strategic focus of leadership. Principals can implement professional development programs, support teacher participation in training activities, and create positive working conditions. Competent and motivated teachers will have a positive impact on the quality of learning and student achievement. By combining these strategies, the school principal at MI Tashilul Muftadiin Probolinggo can create a superior educational environment based on Islamic values. Leaders who are visionary, inclusive, and oriented towards improving overall quality will have a positive impact on the development of Islamic education at MI. In this way, MI Tashilul Muftadiin Probolinggo can continue to develop as an educational institution that makes a major contribution to the formation of a generation of Muslims with high quality and noble character.

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