

Instructional Leadership in Improving the Quality of Elementary School Education in Bandung

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Abstract—In organizing education the principal has an important role. In this research instructional leadership focuses on learning success and achievement for improving school quality. Leaders who are not only oriented on results, but also on improving quality. It starts with oneself, teachers, school staff and all related parties for the achievement of quality and effective education. Furthermore, this research examines the effectiveness of instructional leadership in improving the quality of education, especially at the elementary school level. This research is a qualitative research that examines instructional leadership towards the quality of primary school education in several elementary schools in Kecamatan Coblong, in Bandung. The data sources were obtained from the principals, teachers, and other school staff. Data sources were collected by several techniques, including in-depth interviews with several school principals and teachers, observations related to activities carried out in schools, and documentation to obtain specific information. Source of population data was selected using purposive sampling. The conclusion was obtained using descriptive methods. This research was conducted with the expectation that it can contribute to instructional leadership towards the quality of education in elementary levels. The results of this study indicate that in order to improve the quality of education in elementary schools, instructional leadership needs to make several efforts, such as: 1) analyzing situations and conditions, 2) conducting several comparative studies to schools of good quality, 3) implementing and participating in training programs to increase their potential as well as their members, and 4) establishing learning organization to develop supported potential.

Keywords—*instructional leadership; education quality; elementary school*

I. INTRODUCTION

The current global development demands that a leader can continue to grow and make its members develop in accordance with the demands of the ages. The leader is the position or the person who has the highest position in an organization. The highest position of leadership in schools is the principal. Observing this rapid development of eras, the teachers need to be guided and prepared by increasing the potential that supports the learning of the present century. Teachers and students are not ready to complete teaching and learning activities due to limited competence and infrastructure in the face of the industrial revolution 4.0. Situations and conditions

that require leaders in schools to continue to influence and invite their members to develop continuously.

Chemes in Hoy and Miskel, offers the following typical definitions: “Leadership is a process of social influence when one is able to stimulate aid and the support of others in order to get common tasks” [1]. Leadership is a person’s skill in influencing other people and their environment and making it move in achieving common goals. Leadership has its main tasks and functions in carrying out its leadership in schools to improve the quality of education in schools, especially the achievement of teaching and learning activities in schools to produce good quality. What is happening on the ground of learning activities is still not optimal which results in an ineffectiveness. The leadership role in running an organization is considered very important in schools. Davies said “A school principal occupies a key position in the schooling system” [2]. In this case the principal must be able to work together in a school organization and capable to coordinate and mobilize all human potential to actualize the educational goals.

Wahjosumidjo defines that the principal is a functional teacher who is given a task of leading a school, where the teaching and learning process is held, or the place of interaction between the teacher who gives lessons and students who receive the lessons [3]. Principal leadership greatly determines school success. According to Lipham, Rankin, and Hoeh schools that are effective or successful are almost always determined by the principal’s leadership [4]. The principal is a figure who will be together with their team to achieve the school goals.

For some time, instructional leadership has gained a lot of popularity in the field of educational leadership marked with the increase of expectations from schools in an effort to build a school system that is more responsible in improving the quality of education in schools. The extraordinary demand to improve the achievement and the quality in the term of education requires a leadership role that focuses on achievement, teaching and learning. Suhardan reveals the concept of instructional leadership which focused on improving academic quality, not on busy-handling of school administration such as buildings, facilities or finance, all of his business was intended to influence school academic activities related to learning [5]. From this, it can be understood that leadership learning focuses

on the learning process of student achievement and improving the quality of education.

Based on the description of the implementation of instructional leadership in elementary schools [6]. Sergiovani defines learning leadership as “to extend to which the principal focuses directly on teaching and learning, the importance of increasing student achievement, curriculum and assessment, and the development of improved instructional programs” [7]. However, this definition focuses directly on the teaching and learning process so that it does not cover aspects of the development of learning and climate culture and school management.

Whereas Pustejovsky, Spillane, Heaton & Lewis; Hallinger & Walker in Manaseh says “instructional leadership or IL is one of the most useful tools for creating effective teaching and learning environments” [8]. From the statement it can be considered that instructional leadership is one of the most useful tools to improve the quality of education. It is due to instructional leaders know what is happening in the classroom and develop the capacity of their staff by building their strengths and reducing their weaknesses.

Several notable models of instructional leadership have been developed. Among them, the most influential model was proposed by Hallinger and Murphy [9], who outlined three dimensions of the instructional leadership roles as follows:

- Defining the school’s mission
- Managing the instructional programmed, and
- Promoting a positive school learning climate.

This model deals with the specific behaviors of principals and their relationship with the school performance and effectiveness. In this case the instructional model is undergone in a structured and sequential manner to foster a positive climate in the quality of education in schools. In this case the researcher is more focused on the second point, that is managing the instructional program which is a potential development program for teachers as educators in order to achieve good quality.

The concept of education quality comprehensively refers to the implementation of educational services which meet certain standards to satisfy both internal customers and external customers. Here are some explanations regarding quality, they are:

- Crosby in Nasution states that quality is conformance to requirement [10]. It means that quality is suitable with what is required and standardized. For example, a product has a good quality if it fits the predetermined quality standards.
- Goetsch and Davis in Tjiptono and Diana make a broader definition of quality, they say that quality is a dynamic condition that relates to products, services, people, processes, and environments that meet or exceed expectations [11].
- Suryadi in Sam M. Chan says that the quality of education is the ability of an educational institution and

educational units in managing, administering and utilizing educational resources to improve students’ learning abilities [12].

- James and Phillips states that the difficulty in interpreting the quality of education is due to educational institutions (schools) are not considered as organizations which create products in the form of goods, but are categorized in organizations that provide services [13].

Quality is often referred to the suitability of some indicators toward input, process and output. From this, the quality of education can be interpreted differently depending on the point of view, situations and certain conditions based on which area involved.

The several studies that have in common include research conducted by Grobler which is where instructional leadership suggests that principals as instructional leaders occupy a central position, ensuring coherence between curriculum and academic content in teaching and learning [14].

The next research that has the same relationship regarding instructional leadership in improving quality and effectiveness is according to Southworth in his research found that the importance of leaders being learners, the implications for leadership development and the importance of creating and sustaining certain organisational conditions which facilitate instructional leadership. The research ends with the point that instructional leadership is becoming more significant cant with the growing emphasis on organisational learning [15].

Based on the identification of problems and explanations above, it can be alleged that the problems in improving the quality of education in elementary schools are the lack of maximum leadership in doing their duties and functions as a leader. Linked with the very rapid development in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, the principals’ leadership clearly gives a big influence in improving the quality of education in elementary schools.

This study aimed at answering the question, “How is the role of instructional leadership in improving primary school education?”

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a descriptive design with a qualitative approach and data collection used observation instruments, deep interviews and documentation reviews. The first thing researchers did was to conduct pre-research by gathering information about the situation and conditions of the studied schools. Then the researcher compiled a research design and research instrument to obtain more detailed and specific data to avoid deviating too much from the research problems. The next step was the researchers used data collection techniques.

The data needed from this study is the data related to instructional leadership on the quality of education in primary schools located in several elementary schools in Kecamatan Coblong, in Bandung, West Java. The data was gained from school principals, teachers, and education staff in schools using purposive sampling data collection techniques.

In this study, researchers used interactive data analysis techniques with three stages of activities which included; data presentation, data reduction, and data conclusions. After doing a collection of data from the results in the field obtained by the researcher. Then the researcher reduced the data to be more detailed, focused and related to instructional leadership on the quality of education in elementary schools. And the last stage was the researcher draws conclusions from the data which has been reduced.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Willison argue that almost everyone agrees that the key to improving student achievement is quality instructional leadership. But there is still a question as to what being an instructional leader means. Most definitions of the term have two elements in common: creating a school culture that makes students' learning the main priority, and providing the resources necessary to support teachers' efforts to improve students' learning process. To make it simple, his focus on three things which are district executive must do to become an effective instructional leader [16].

A. Talk

A principal who wants to be an instructional leader must become an expert on teaching and learning, and that means speaking the language. Building an informed vocabulary of pedagogical terms is difficult but manageable. From this, the principal must have a lot of dialogue and discussion to develop the sustainable professionalism of the teacher.

B. Walk

Being able to use the term "transfer of learning" correctly in a sentence is not enough to be an instructional leader. Principals must demonstrate through their actions that teaching and learning are the center of what happens at school. Teachers, parents, and students must see for themselves that the principal is not only an expert in instruction, but is also willing to "walk the walk." An instructional leader should utilize time spent in the classroom to identify outstanding teachers and their methods, and in turn provide opportunities for those superstar teachers to share what they are doing with their colleagues. Instructional leaders should also use their time spent in classrooms to identify teachers in need of support and professional development, and then provide the resources needed to help those teachers improve, resources gained by learning to "talk the talk." From this, the principal always supervises and goes around seeing what is happening to find a solution and providing appropriate assistance or support later.

C. Be the Caddy

Behind every great golfer is an equally great caddy, who not only carries the bag, but also provides advice on shot and club selection. An effective instructional leader must be the "caddy" to teachers, providing the necessary tools and advice on how best to use them. When a teacher is having an instructional problem, the principal must be able to recognize that teacher's necessary behaviors, identify the needed resources, and provide opportunities to acquire both. Because

the principal is able to "talk the talk," and the teacher has seen the principal "walk the walk," they can work together to solve the problem. This shows that the principal must be able to serve teachers and students in using learning facilities and infrastructure.

The findings of this study indicate that the role of instructional leadership in improving the quality of education in elementary schools is still applied even though there are still a lot of limitations in order to achieve a quality of education and to produce graduates who have competencies needed in the current era of globalization and industrial revolution 4.0.

Researchers in this case found that there are at least some things that are undertaken with instructional leadership to rectify the quality of education in elementary schools conducted by leaders in several elementary schools, including the following:

1) *The role of leaders in analyzing situations and conditions within the scope of elementary school education units:* The role of the leader in analyzing and examining the situations and conditions that exist in the particular education unit. This needs to be performed because of the changes which continue to occur quickly.

2) *Make visits to several schools that are of good quality:* The conduct of visits to good quality schools can help to provide an overview and motivation to continue to improve quality.

3) *Following and holding training programs:* Organizing and participating in training programs can explore and enhance the potential for leadership in self, pedagogic and teaching qualities of the teachers.

4) *Establishment of a sustainable learning organization:* The formation of a learning organization needs to be continued, not to stop at one time. The learning organization is carried out either in educational units or between regions to continue to get new information and new knowledge which can be applied in learning process with the expectation to improve the quality of education in elementary schools.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation and description of the research findings and discussion above, the researcher concluded that in improving the quality of education in elementary schools, instructional leadership needs to make several efforts, such as: 1) analyzing the situation and conditions, 2) conducting several comparative studies in schools which possess good quality, 3) implementing and participating in training programs in order to increase the self-potential of leaders and their members, and 4) the establishment of a sustainable learning organization to develop potential continuously. These four efforts can be conducted to maintain and improve the quality of education in order to achieve national education goals in Indonesia.

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