The Effectiveness of Vocational High School Management: Role of Principal Leadership Behavior

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Abstract. This study aimed to analyze the role of school principals in implementing effective vocational school management. The object of the research was determined at SMK N 2 and SMK N 3 in Manado City. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Informants came from school principals, vice principals, and teachers of productive subjects. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of School Management can run effectively if the principal plays a maximum role both as a manager and in his leadership behavior. The leadership behavior of the principal can motivate school residents to improve the quality of graduates.

Keywords: Vocational High School Management · Principal · Leadership Behavior · Graduate Quality

1 Introduction

Unqualified Human Resources (HR) and lack of skilled skills to enter the world of business and industry or the world of work are current problems in Indonesia. This includes graduates of Vocational High Schools (SMK) who account for the largest number of open unemployment rates. The Open Unemployment Rate for Vocational High School graduates throughout Indonesia is 11.13 percent [1]. Similar to data in North Sulawesi Province, the largest contributor to the Open Unemployment Rate is 7.37 percent [2]. Moreover, in the last 2 years, many workers have lost their jobs due to being hit by COVID-19. Employment opportunities are decreasing, but SMK graduates as candidates for middle-class workers are increasing.

Strengthening the quality of SMK graduates must be carried out from several aspects, including the quality of teachers who teach, especially teachers in productive subjects, students' learning abilities and interests, facilities/infrastructure. Schools are required to prepare students to master hard skills and soft skills in facing challenges in the industrial era 4.0. Therefore, schools must be able to manage these organizations professionally so that graduates can have competencies following the chosen field of expertise. Graduates who have competencies that match the needs of the Business World Industry and the

World of Work (IDUKA) will find it easier to get a job or become a young entrepreneur. Competencies possessed by graduates, the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia already has a mechanism called the Expertise Competency Test (UKK) as evidenced by a certificate. Various programs have been launched by the government, starting from the revitalization of vocational schools to the eighth Merdeka learning, namely the SMK Center of Excellence, all of which is to strengthen the quality of graduates. Although in reality there are still some vocational schools there are many problems in school management [3].

The principal plays a very important role in implementing school management to achieve effective and efficient results. To carry out its role, competence is needed in managerial tasks, academic supervision, and entrepreneurship [4]. The success of an organization is largely determined by its leaders in influencing members of the organization to provide maximum performance [5] including the impact of principal leadership on student achievement growth mediated by teacher collaboration and collective efficacy [6]. The focus of the research problem is School Management and Principal Leadership Behavior with the following research questions:

1. How is the effectiveness of the implementation of school management in producing quality graduates or human resources
2. How is the principal's leadership behavior to achieve school management effectiveness

This study aims to analyze the role of the principal in achieving the effectiveness of school management.

2 Research Methods

The research method uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. The schools that became the research subjects were SMK N 2 and SMK N 3 Manado. Key informants were taken by the principal and vice principal. Complementary informants for productive subject teachers and program managers for the Center for Excellence. Determination of informants based on mastery or understanding of the focus of the problem in this study. In-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussion techniques were used to collect data on the effectiveness of school management and principals' leadership behavior. Interviews use an open system which means that the subjects know that they are being interviewed and understand the purpose of the interview. The data collected was analyzed by an interactive model from the perspective of Miles Huberman.

3 Result and Discussion

Following the focus of the study on School Management Effectiveness, researchers took the model developed by Arie Wibowo Khurniawan [3] there were 6 elements or indicators, namely (1) Strong leadership; (2) Emphasis on basic skills; (3) Secure environment; (4) The high expectation for achievement; (5) Continuous assessment; (6) Budget management flexibility.

3.1 School Management Effectiveness

The principal as a manager is responsible for implementing school management with to achieve maximum school performance. School performance can be seen, among others, through the quality of graduates each year. The quality of graduates can be demonstrated through the competencies possessed by each individual in accordance with the area of concentration of expertise.

Strong leadership, principals in carrying out their leadership functions, the two schools apply cooperation and collaborate with teachers to unite ideas, and tasks that are their respective responsibilities. The principal in carrying out this element, applies exemplary-based leadership, by setting an example of work discipline. In addition, the principal directly directs and controls the teachers in carrying out their duties. To the students, the principal of the school gives an example of discipline when he comes to school.

Emphasis on basic skills, principals implement this function by upgrading the abilities and skills of teachers according to their respective fields of expertise. Teachers must have basic skills by referring to 4 teacher competencies, namely Pedagogic, Professional, Social, and Personal competencies. Especially teachers who teach productive subjects are required to improve their skills by increasing their knowledge and skills in the industry. There is also training organized by the government in this case the SMK Directorate. Teachers must be linear with the area of expertise. The results of interviews in the two vocational schools have problems for the next three to 5 years, most of the productive teachers will retire, and there will be no replacement. Especially in SMK N 3, there are very few teachers in the field of beauty expertise, because it is universities that produce prospective teachers in that field. Teachers who will be internal examiners in the Expertise Competency Test must have a certificate in accordance with the area of expertise to be tested.

A secure environment, a safe environment both physically and socially will provide comfort for school residents to carry out their duties. In creating and maintaining a safe environment, the principal creates a conducive working atmosphere for teachers and employees. The physical environment of the school is in an area far from the crowds of vehicles. A safe social work environment by implementing a transparent interaction relationship with teachers and education personnel. A safe and comfortable school environment will increase a conducive learning atmosphere. Opportunities for students to enter and exit the school complex are small because entrances and exits are limited. This makes it easier for teachers to control students wandering around during school hours. The school also applies a culture of cleanliness for all school residents. The real activity of the students when they go home from school they have to look for / take the garbage around the school to throw it in the trash. This has been entrenched in SMK N 2 Manado. While in SMK N 3, students are given the task of monitoring the classes and whether the learning process is going well.

The high expectation for achievement, every principal in the two schools targeted for research has high expectations to achieve proud achievements. The hope of every principal in carrying out school management is none other than to produce quality graduates. Graduates who can immediately fill the needs in the Business and Work Industry

(IDUKA). The achievements of SMK N 3 in the context of schools have received facilities from the Ministry of Education and Culture, starting from the Teaching Factory, Revitalizing Vocational High Schools, to the Center for Excellence Vocational School. Future plans to promote to the international world, especially the concentration of culinary expertise. The implementation of the independent curriculum at SMK N 2 for grade 10 using an independent curriculum changed to 12 concentrations of expertise. SMK N 3 has implemented an independent, self-sharing curriculum. This is a commitment to achieve proud school achievements by providing skills to students according to industry needs and entrepreneurship. Every student who passes has a certificate of competence. The certificate can be one of the requirements in the industry that will accept these graduates to become employees.

Through Continuous assessment, principals and representatives conduct continuous assessments of teachers and employees. Aspects that are continuously assessed include 4 competencies that must be possessed and implemented. The assessment is also carried out when the teachers are in the industry with the students.

Budget management flexibility. Principals in implementing this indicator feel inflexible because the funds provided by the government in the form of BOS funds and Center of Excellence facility funds already have rules for their use. The budget has given already rules for its management. Schools do not have funds to manage flexibly because there are no sources of income from students or other parties. Areas of expertise that have their production units manage their own budgets with sources of income from the products and services they perform. The budget is managed for the procurement of practical materials and other equipment to support the learning process.

3.2   Principal Leadership Behavior

Leadership behavior is the result of several studies divided into three aspects, namely: task-oriented, relationship-oriented, and change-oriented. Task-oriented leadership behavior is associated with achieving the goals set by the group and following the steps to achieve the principal's leadership behavior goals seen in the three aspects mentioned above.

3.2.1   Task-Oriented

The leadership behavior applied in SMK N 2 and SMK N 3 is task-oriented by involving all teachers to collaborate in improving individual and school performance. The principal plans, directs, coordinates, and communicates work standards in accordance with the duties of each teacher and employee. Principals set an example in carrying out their duties for both teachers and employees as well as students. For teachers and employees who do not carry out their duties in their respective fields, the principal does not hesitate to give a warning. Teachers and employees who carry out their duties to the maximum are given awards.

3.2.2   Relationship Oriented

In this aspect, the principal applies formal and informal interactions with teachers and employees. The principal maintains a harmonious relationship with the vice principal as

well as the teachers and staff. This aspect emphasizes teacher welfare and empowerment. This leadership behavior encourages a supportive work environment and creates an environment in which teachers can thrive. The principal provides the opportunity for teachers to provide opinions on the progress of the school.

3.2.3 Change Oriented

The principal encourages teachers and employees to be able to adapt to the changes. The principal acts as a change leader to encourage his subordinates to be more creative and innovative. Especially in managing schools that implement an independent curriculum that changes for SMK N 2 and independently shares for SMK N 3. As leaders, school principals challenge teachers to be able to anticipate rapid changes in the Business and Work Industry (IDUKA). Not all teachers can carry out these challenges. The independent curriculum is one of the changes that must be quickly accepted and adapted by looking for new ways to provide hard skills and soft skills competencies to students.

3.3 Discussion

The role of the principal as a manager is obliged to carry out school management effectively. Competencies are needed to manage such as competence in the managerial field, academic supervision competence, and entrepreneurial competence [4]. The managerial competence of a principal has the ability and skill to carry out the functions of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling. The principal's academic supervision competence can examine learning activities along with supporting documents. Entrepreneurial competence emphasizes how principals can encourage teachers to be more creative and innovative.

Increasing the effectiveness of school management has a positive effect on integrated quality management, which can improve school governance [3]. School management can be effectively implemented if the principal's leadership behavior is carried out by taking into account 3 dimensions, namely task-oriented, relationship-oriented, and change-oriented. The three types of leadership behavior also play a role in public organizations, but the effect is greater for relationship-oriented leadership, followed by change-oriented leadership [7] Vocational High Schools need leaders who have leadership behaviors that can bring graduates into superior human resources following their respective fields.

4 Conclusion

The principal's leadership role can contribute to the effectiveness of school management. The principal as a manager can improve school performance through the implementation of good school management. The principal has can apply six aspects of the school management effectiveness model.

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