

# **Principal's Performance on Implementation** of Online Learning Policy During COVID-19 Pandemic; An Evaluation and Development

Ngabiyanto<sup>1(⊠)</sup>, Ahmad Nurkhin<sup>2</sup>, Kemal Budi Mulyono<sup>2</sup>, Iwan Hardi Saputro<sup>1</sup>, Didi Pramono<sup>2</sup>, and Asep Purwo Yudi Utomo<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Sekaran Campus, Gunungpati, Semarang, Indonesia

ngabiyanto@mail.unnes.ac.id

**Abstract.** This study aims to describe the results of evaluating the performance of school principals in implementing online learning policy during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study also develops a model for evaluating school principals' performance within the framework of online learning. The researchers used the perspective of public-school teachers (primary and secondary schools) to measure the performance of school principals in Central Java. The research respondents were 200 public school teachers. The principal is also a source of data in this study. Data collection methods were questionnaires and interviews. The researchers used descriptive analysis method to evaluate the principal's performance. The interactive analysis method was also used to develop a new model for evaluating principals' performance in the context of online learning. The results of the study indicate that the performance of principals in implementing online learning policy during the COVID-19 pandemic is high. The teacher considers the principal to fulfil 5 dimensions of performance measurement which include managerial dimension, supervision dimension, entrepreneurial dimension, social dimension, and personality dimension. Principals can manage their resources to implement government policy so that the implementation of quality online learning can be realized properly. The dimension of mastery of information technology should be added as an indicator for evaluating the performance of principals in online learning settings. In addition, many parties must be involved in evaluating the performance of the principal, including alumni, alumni users, parents, and other stakeholders. Thus, the principal's performance can be evaluated more comprehensively.

**Keywords:** COVID-19 · evaluation · model development · principal's performance · online learning policy

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Faculty of Economics, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Sekaran Campus, Gunungpati, Semarang, Indonesia

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Sekaran Campus, Gunungpati, Semarang, Indonesia

#### 1 Introduction

Online learning has been running for more than 1.5 years in most schools in Indonesia. Online learning is paramount to ensure that learning continues even though it is still in a state of the COVID-19 pandemic. The application of online learning makes principals and teachers think hard in determining the learning methods to use. This requires principals to have strategies to carry out their roles as managers and supervisors so that learning remains effective during the pandemic [1]. The Circular Letter of the Ministry of Education and Culture Number 15 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for Organizing Learning from Home in an Emergency Period during the Spread of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is the legal basis for implementing online learning policy [2].

The forms of learning are increasingly being applied by schools, from elementary schools to high schools. Online learning is a form of learning that uses an interactive internet-based model and an interactive Learning Management System (LMS) platform such as Zoom or Google Meet [1]. Most of the applications used to carry out online learning activities are Google classroom, Zoom, WhatsApp, and a small number of others use other applications [2, 3]. Many schools are trying to develop online learning platforms to maintain the quality of learning. Teachers and students are required to quickly adapt to the online learning mode.

Principals play an important role in managing online learning in schools. The principal as a school leader is an important factor that has a major influence on the quality of education. The principal is the sole leader in the school who has the responsibility to teach and influence all parties involved in activities at the school to work together in achieving their common goals. The principal must also act as a teaching supervisor as well as an evaluator of school programs [1]. Principals are required to be able to manage emergency situations so that the learning process can still be carried out. The principal is responsible for the comfort and order of the school environment and the school community [3].

The principal's leadership plays an important role in performing the task of leading and managing the situation, controlling the activities of groups, organizations or institutions, and being a spokesperson for the group [4]. School leaders and teachers are expected to have innovation and transformation of learning in order to be able to provide optimal learning to students [5]. In addition, school principals must be able to provide breakthroughs into the teaching system in schools, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, in which the teaching system is packaged in digital or online form [6]. Effective principal leadership is needed to design effective distance learning so that the quality of education is guaranteed [7].

Principals have a large responsibility during the pandemic as the implementer of online learning policy. Therefore, the principal's performance should be evaluated and given appreciation. It is a tough task for the principal along with other school members to continue to provide quality learning. This study seeks to evaluate the performance of principals. The analysis was conducted to determine the performance of school principals and attempted to develop a model for evaluating school principals' performance in accordance with the context of online learning.

## 2 Method

### 2.1 Research Design

This study uses a quantitative approach to analyse and evaluate the performance of principals in implementing online learning policy during the pandemic. Researchers used a qualitative approach to get a deeper evaluation so that they could develop a principal's performance evaluation model that was more in line with the online learning context.

### 2.2 Sample and Data Collection

Research respondents were teachers and principals of public schools from primary and secondary education levels. A total of 200 teachers were involved in this study. We used data collection methods in the form of questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires were distributed online to teachers to obtain data on principals' performance from the teacher's perspective. Principal's performance is measured by 5 dimensions, managerial dimension, supervision dimension, entrepreneurial dimension, social dimension, and personality dimension. Interviews were used to seek deeper data regarding the implementation of online learning policy during the pandemic. The focus of the interview was to examine the learning process during the pandemic and the obstacles faced by school principals in implementing online learning policy. Researchers used open interviews with school principals.

#### 2.3 Analysing of Data

The data analysis method used is quantitative descriptive analysis to describe the principal's performance from the teacher's perspective. We also use the interactive analysis of the Miles and Huberman (1992) model to develop a model for evaluating school principals' performance in the implementation of online learning policy.

#### 3 Results

The researchers used the questionnaire method to measure the principal's performance from the teacher's point of view. We obtained as many as 200 teachers from the SD/MI (Elementary) levels to SMA/MA/SMK (Secondary) levels. Respondents were from several cities/districts in Central Java. Descriptions of respondents are presented in Table 1. The principal's performance measurement used the principal's competency indicators which consist of 5 dimensions, managerial, supervision, personality, social, and entrepreneurial dimensions. The questionnaire was developed from the opinions of experts and researchers. Questionnaires were distributed to respondents online (via google form). The research variables were measured with 5 Likert scales.

No.	Description	Frequency	Percentage
1.	School Level		
	SD (Elementary School)	37	18.5
	SMP/MTs (Junior High)	78	39.0
	SMA/MA/SMK (Senior High)	85	42.5
	Total	200	100
2.	Gender		
	Female	140	70
	Male	60	30
	Total	200	100

Table 1. Description of Research Respondents

Table 2. Description of the Principal's Performance

No.	<b>Dimensions of Principal's Performance</b>	Average Score	Criteria
1.	Managerial dimension	4.09	High
2.	Personality dimensions	4.00	High
3.	Social dimension	4.19	High
4.	Entrepreneurial dimension	4.11	High
5.	Supervision dimension	4.12	High
	Average	4.09	High

The overall performance of school principals during the COVID-19 pandemic is shown in the Table 2. The principal's performance is measured by 31 statement items. All dimensions of the principal's performance during the pandemic show high criteria. The teachers consider the principal to have a good performance. The social dimension is the dimension with the highest score. The teacher believes that the principal has a very good social side to aid and guidance to teachers in performing their duties during the pandemic. The principal's personality dimension obtained the lowest average score. The principal is considered to need to improve their personality. A detailed description of the principal's performance is presented in Table 2.

Table 3 shows that the principal's personality dimension is included in the high category with a score of 4.00. There are two statement items that score below 4.00, i.e., regarding the principals' words, actions, and examples in speaking, acting, and behaving that are always in line. Respondents thought there was still a need for school principals to improve the harmony between actions and words so that they could be more trusted and would serve as examples for teachers, employees, and other school members. In relation to the pandemic and online learning, school principals should provide concrete examples for implementing online learning policy in schools. The school principal should be an

No.	Statement Items	Score
1.	The principal's words and actions are always in line	3.88
2.	The principal becomes an example for the school community in the way they talk and behave	3.98
3.	The principal always carries out their duties wisely	4.01
4.	The principal is always able to control themselves in dealing with school problems both in the academic and non-academic fields	4.04
5.	The principal always shares knowledge and experience with colleagues related to my daily tasks	4.04
6.	The principal has the experience in directing and mobilizing colleagues to improve the quality of learning in schools	4.08
	Average	4.00

Table 3. Description of Principal Performance - Personality Dimension

example for the school community. If this is not the case, then the level of trust of the school community toward the principal will decrease. Distrust of school principals will disrupt the learning process and institutional development of schools.

The principal's performance in terms of managerial dimensions is included in the high category. However, the principal's ability to design RKJM and RKAS still needs to be improved. Of the 11 statement items, 1 statement regarding the principal's ability received the lowest score from the others. The teacher believes that the principal has not been fully capable of developing the school in the long and short term. The principal is considered to understand how to identify problems related to coaching and developing the capacity of students. Statement items related to this received the highest score. Principals can identify problems regarding the development of their students and are able to take more appropriate decisions to overcome these problems. The principal is considered capable of mobilizing the resources of the school to increase the capacity of students, both in academics and other fields. Especially during the pandemic, most schools have difficulty organizing activities that can increase the capacity of their students. Through innovative and creative activities, it is hoped that students' talents and interests will still be honed, even though they have not fully used offline mode (Table 4).

The entrepreneurial dimension of the principal's performance also indicates good performance. The average score for the entrepreneurial dimension is 4.11. The entrepreneurial dimension of the principal's performance is needed to encourage principals to seize opportunities during the pandemic so that school residents are still able to show their best performance. Principals who have an entrepreneurial spirit and attitude tend to be adaptive and do not give up easily. The principal will continue to look for ways so that schools are able to organize quality learning activities. Teachers assume principals have high entrepreneurial performance. Therefore, schools will not experience stagnation in exploring the resources they have for the progress of their schools (Table 5).

Table 4. Description of Principal Performance - Managerial Dimension

No.	Statement Items	Score
1.	The principal always designs the Medium-Term Work Plan (RKJM) and the School Budget Activity Plan (RKAS) properly	
2.	The principal understands how to identify and solve problems related to the competencies and main tasks of the teacher's function	
3.	The principal understands how to identify problems related to minimum service standards or national education standards regarding school/madrasah facilities and infrastructure	
4.	The principal understands how to identify problems related to planning and new students' admission	4.11
5.	The principal understands how to identify problems related to fostering and developing student capacity	4.14
6.	The principal has experience in solving problems related to managing students well	
7.	The principal is actively involved in the preparation and analysis of curriculum documents	
8.	The principal can analyse the syllabus and lesson plans well	
9.	The principal understands how to identify sources, allocations, and mechanisms for school/madrasah financial accountability	
10.	The principal uses information and communication technology (ICT) media to improve the quality of student learning in the classroom	
11.	The principal understands the monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of school/madrasah programs in accordance with standards	4.13
	Average	4.09

Teachers believe that principals have high performance in the supervision dimension, which is slightly higher than the entrepreneurial dimension (see Table 6). The principal is considered capable of carrying out the role of supervising school activities during the pandemic. The highest score is the principal's ability to understand various techniques in academic supervision. This is very important to ensure the quality of the implementation of online learning during the pandemic. The principal together with other school members monitor each other so that academic and non-academic activities at the school can run well and smoothly. The principal can mobilize other school residents to provide feedback if there are policies implemented. Through good supervision, the principal will be able to ensure the implementation of policies in accordance with applicable directions and regulations.

 Table 5. Description of Principal Performance - Entrepreneurial Dimension

No.	Statement Items	Score
1.	The principal understands innovative programs that can improve school effectiveness	
2.	The principal has experience in increasing the curiosity of school residents in knowledge and skills through hard work and an unyielding spirit	4.15
3.	The principal can make alternative solutions to relevant and appropriate problems, resulting in effective and efficient performance	4.13
	The principal has a sense of optimism, never gives up, and considers the best alternative to achieve success in school	4.15
	The principal has experience in preparing good management plan for production and service activities in schools	4.07
	Average	4.11

Table 6. Description of Principal Performance - Supervision Dimension

No.	Statement Items	Score
1.	The principal understands the planning of an academic supervision program that is tailored to the needs of the teachers under their supervision	
2.	The principal understands the techniques of conducting academic supervision	4.18
3.	The principal has experience in conducting academic supervision of teachers with the appropriate technique	
4.	The principal has experience in reviewing issues related to academic supervision	
5.	The principal understands how to provide constructive feedback on the results of supervision to teachers	
6.	The principal well understands the preparation of follow-up supervision programs in schools	4.13
	Average	4.12

Table 7 describes the principal's performance in the social dimension. The social dimension is a measure of the principal's performance that gets the highest score than the other dimensions. This shows that the principal has a very good attitude and social spirit. Principals can take advantage of their relationships to be involved in school development, especially in online learning. The principal can invite school residents to work hand in hand in facing the challenges of online learning. The principal does not prioritize his own interests at the expense of the performance of other school members. The principal is also considered to have good experience to continue to collaborate with various parties, for the sake of school development.

No.	Statement Items	Score
1.	The principal understands the preparation of collaborative programs with othe parties, either individuals or institutions, to support the implementation of educational activities in schools	
2.	The principal has the experience in collaborating with other individuals and institutions, either government or private institutions, to support the implementation of education at the school where I work	
3.	The school principal has the experience in collecting assistance from all school residents where I work to relieve the suffering of community members who are affected by disasters or experiencing economic difficulties	4.15
	Average	4.19

**Table 7.** Description of Principal Performance - Social Dimension

## 4 Result and Discussion

The analysis above shows that the principal has a good performance during the implementation of online learning policy. However, there are still shortcomings that need to be improved, i.e., regarding the dimension of mastery of information technology. Teachers assume that principals do not have much technological competence, which results in many principals who are not adaptable quickly in implementing online learning policy. The principal is lacking in understanding what technology should be applied in online learning at the beginning of the pandemic. At the elementary school level, there is a very visible gap in the information technology competence of principals. Inappropriate decision making will cause the online learning process not to run well. However, the resources owned by most schools have been able to have a significant impact on the implementation of online learning.

The principal's performance measurement will be more comprehensive if it includes the dimensions of mastery of information technology to obtain more relevant evaluation results in the context of online learning. The obstacles faced by school principals are also related to their understanding of what technology should be used so that online learning can be carried out properly and with quality. There is a lot of knowledge about technology in online learning that must be mastered by school principals. Likewise, policies regarding upgrading teacher expertise in the use of technology for learning must also be implemented. Principals and teachers must quickly master Google Classroom and its built-in features. A learning management system (LMS) must be implemented to accommodate accountable and quality online learning. Principals must swiftly manage the resources they have for the implementation of online learning. Support and guidance to students is also a major concern of the principal. The academic climate is changing because of the unequal existence of teachers and students. This is in line with Sukadana and Mahyuni (2021) who state that the performance of school principals in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 is expected to be information technology oriented. Principals are expected to have competence and are familiar with information technology.

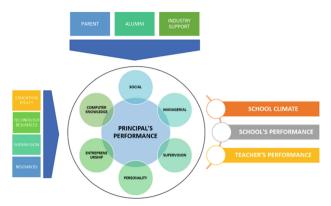


Fig. 1. Principal's performance evaluation model in the implementation of online learning policy

The principal's performance evaluation model developed in this study is shown in Fig. 1. As a system, there are three elements and their environment. Inputs consist of Education policies, available resources, and supervision from direct superiors. This has an impact on the policies that will be taken by school principals in implementing online learning policy. An environment that supports the principal's performance is very much needed, so that the principal can perform their roles and responsibilities better. Support from parents, alumni, and also the business/industrial world is very much needed. Jf et al.'s (2021) study shows that the participation of parents who are very cooperative will support distance learning activities so that learning is carried out well.

The principal's performance measurement consists of 6 dimensions, with the addition of the dimension of mastery of information technology. Online learning relies heavily on technology management for learning. Teachers, students, and principals must have adequate mastery of information technology. Principals must at least understand in general which technology should be applied in online learning. Principals will be able to determine the right technical policies to implement online learning policy that have been issued by the government (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, Technology, and Higher Education).

The output in the principal's performance evaluation model is an improvement in school climate, teacher performance, and school performance during online learning. The school climate during online learning is very dynamic. Most schools implement a policy for teachers to implement learning in schools. Meanwhile, students take lessons from their respective homes. The diverse abilities of teachers in the application of online learning must be considered by school principals. Principals must be able to create a conducive climate so that teachers can work hand in hand to create and run quality online learning. Teachers who master the use of technology for learning are expected to aid other teachers. Principals can also provide technical personnel to assist teachers in conducting online teaching and learning activities. Experts can be brought in if needed. A good school climate will also have an impact on school performance and teacher performance.

Principals must provide all their abilities in implementing and implementing their ideas so that the school they lead continues to carry out the learning process in accordance with the expected goals and the good quality of the school and learning can be maintained [9]. School performance and teacher performance must also be indicators of measuring the success of school principals in implementing online learning policy. Measurement of school performance during online learning is needed to determine the quality of online learning and school achievement, especially student achievement in participating in championships or competitions. School performance can also be measured through other indicators such as the achievement of assessments carried out by the government, the absorption of alumni in the industrial world, or acceptance at universities or other indicators. Sukadana and Mahyuni's (2021) research results show that principals who have high skills as managerial leaders, supported by IT facilities and infrastructure, and followed by innovation will be able to increase job satisfaction.

Furthermore, teacher performance is very important to measure during the implementation of online learning because teachers are the main pillar of implementing online learning. The ability of the teacher greatly determines the quality of the created online learning. The principal can provide support in the form of physical facilities or in the form of education and training to support the use of information technology for learning. Cipta and Hariyati (2021) believe that the determination of the principal's strategy in improving teacher performance, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, must know the condition of the teacher when carrying out learning under normal conditions and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hasanah et al.'s (2021) study recommends that principals should be able to improve teacher performance during the pandemic by optimizing their managerial competencies. The teacher's performance that needs to be improved the most is the ability to develop learning media. The results of the study have also proven that the principal's leadership has a positive and significant influence on teacher performance during the COVID-19 pandemic [12]. The principal must also supervise the activities carried out by teachers during online learning [13]. The evaluation of the principal's academic supervision aims to improve teacher performance and identify the shortcomings and advantages of academic supervision activities.

#### 5 Conclusion

The government has issued a policy for implementing online learning in schools during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. This study seeks to evaluate the principal's performance in implementing the policy. The principal's performance is measured in 5 dimensions (managerial, supervisory, entrepreneurial, social, and personality) in the perspective of public-school teachers in Central Java. The results of the study indicate that the principal has a high or satisfactory performance. The principal can manage the resources they have to support the implementation of quality online learning. However, it is necessary to add one dimension of the principal's performance, i.e., the dimension of mastery of information technology.

Researchers succeeded in developing a new model to evaluate the performance of school principals in the context of implementing online learning. As a system, the principal's performance must be evaluated starting from the input and output as well as the supporting environment. Inputs consist of government policies, supervisor's monitoring, and available resources (technology, teachers, and others). The output of the principal's

performance measurement is an increase in school climate, teacher performance, and school performance. The supporting environment referred to in this model is the support from parents/guardians, alumni, alumni users, and the business world/industrial world. The enabling environment can contribute in various ways such as equipment grants as well as support for teacher training and other supports.

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