Identification of School Principal Social Competence Problems During the Pandemic

Muh. Arafik, Sofiyah Azzahro Pribadi, Maulana Amirul Adha, Ahmad Nurabadi[✉],
Ibrahim Bafadal, Imam Gunawan, and Siti Amalia Thasbikha

Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang 65145, East Java, Indonesia
sofiyah.azzahro.2201316@students.um.ac.id,
ahmad.nurabadi.fip@um.ac.id

Abstract. This study seeks to identify the problems encountered by school principals related to their social competence during the pandemic. Descriptive research design with a quantitative approach is used to achieve these goals. The respondent of this research is the principal, which is analyzed by descriptive analysis technique. The results showed that there were five indicators of the problems faced by school principals during the pandemic related to their social competencies, namely ethics, culture, human relations, feeling save, and differences, where the five problem indicators are in the low category, but there are still principals who are in the fair category, and some are even in the high category.

Keywords: Problem · Principals · Social Competence · Pandemic

1 Introduction

The presence of the Covid 19 pandemic has led to the transformation of educational and learning activities in schools, from what was previously carried out face-to-face, to online distance learning [1, 2], and currently in several regions in Indonesia limited face-to-face learning has been held using the blended learning model [3, 4]. The existence of a transformation that occurs requires a school principal to be able to adapt to the changes that occur. As previous research has stated that the key to the success of the transformation that occurs in schools is a superior principal [5, 6].

The success of realizing a superior school by being able to answer all the challenges that exist during the pandemic, basically lies in the extent to which the effectiveness and efficiency of a school principal [7, 8]. Principals are required to have at least five competencies including managerial, supervisory, entrepreneurial, social, and personality competencies. This study focuses on identifying the problems encountered by the principal in relation to his social competence. The principal's social competence during this pandemic does not only rely on how the principal interacts with his/her social environment, both internal and external to the school, but how the principal can create an effective school culture, provide a sense of security for school residents, attention to ethics, human relations. Conducive environment and respect for differences [9–11].

However, especially under the pressure of the COVID-19 pandemic, school principals should remain committed to improving the quality of educational services in

schools [12, 13]. The increasing complexity of educational problems caused by changing community needs and the pressure of the pandemic has become a problem faced by school principals in carrying out their daily duties. The principal must be able to adapt to the socio-cultural environment in which he is located and explore the values contained therein [14, 15]. This encourages school principals to have adequate social competence, both in the school's internal environment and in the community around the school.

Social competence can be defined as the ability of the principal as part of the community to communicate and interact effectively with teachers, staff, students, parents, and the community around the school [16, 17]. Considering that the principal in school management has a strategic position in realizing school excellence, the principal needs to have the ability to utilize the school environment and the surrounding community [18]. Principals need to pay attention to what happens to students at school and what parents and the community think about the school.

The existence of a pandemic that causes various problems to arise in schools, makes all components of education move and brings up new ideas to overcome various problems caused by this pandemic [2, 19]. This study tries to complement previous studies that discussed how the role of school principals in their social competence can affect teacher performance and school success [10, 16, 17], while this study seeks to identify problems encountered by principals regarding with their social competence during the Covid 19 pandemic.

2 Methods

This study uses a descriptive research design, with a quantitative approach. In order to identify problems related to the social competence of school principals during the pandemic, this study used a research instrument in the form of a closed questionnaire filled out by 41 principals in Malang City. The research instrument was developed based on 5 indicators, namely ethics (11 items), culture (13 items), human relations (10 items), feeling safe (7 items), and differences (9 items). Descriptive analysis technique was carried out with the help of SPSS 24. Data analysis was carried out by calculating the percentage and mean value, which were described based on the indicators studied.

3 Results and Discussion

The description of the data in this study was obtained from instruments that had been filled in by 41 respondents. The results of this study in detail can be seen in Table 1. Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the average value for each indicator is in the interval 3.26–4.00 with a low category. This value shows that school principals do not encounter serious problems related to the principal's social competence, during the pandemic. In more detail, the findings of this study are described as follows.

The first indicator is ethics, based on Table 1 it can be seen that the mean value is 3.40, which is in the low category, this shows that school principals during the pandemic do not encounter serious problems related to ethical indicators. In more detail from 41 respondents, 29 people or 70.73% of respondents are in the low category, and 12 people or 29.27% of respondents are in the fair category, while no respondents are in

Table 1. Description Of Principals Social Competence Problems

Problem	Interval	Category	Freq	%	Mean	Criteria
Ethics	3.26–4.00	Low	29	70.73%	3.40	Low
	2.51–3.25	Fair	12	29.27%		
	1.76–2.50	High	0	0.00%		
	1.00–1.75	Critical	0	0.00%		
Culture	3.26–4.00	Low	31	75.61%	3.43	Low
	2.51–3.25	Fair	9	21.95%		
	1.76–2.50	High	1	2.44%		
	1.00–1.75	Critical	0	0.00%		
Human relations	3.26–4.00	Low	32	78.05%	3.53	Low
	2.51–3.25	Fair	9	21.95%		
	1.76–2.50	High	0	0.00%		
	1.00–1.75	Critical	0	0.00%		
Feeling safe	3.26–4.00	Low	33	80.49%	3.58	Low
	2.51–3.25	Fair	8	19.51%		
	1.76–2.50	High	0	0.00%		
	1.00–1.75	Critical	0	0.00%		
Differences	3.26–4.00	Low	23	56.10%	3.33	Low
	2.51–3.25	Fair	18	43.90%		
	1.76–2.50	High	0	0.00%		
	1.00–1.75	Critical	0	0.00%		

the high and critical category. Ethical indicators relate to the principal's concern for the ethics of himself, and the school community (teachers, staff and students), maintaining professional secrets, paying attention to ethics in scientific writing activities, monitoring electronic activities of school residents, utilizing school data according to procedures, and utilizing ICT responsibly.

Based on Table 1, related to the second indicator, namely culture, it is known that school principals during the pandemic did not encounter serious problems related to cultural indicators, because the mean value was 3.43 which was in the low category. In more detail from 41 respondents, there are 31 people or 75.61% of respondents are in the low category, 9 people or 21.95% of respondents are in the fair category, and 1 person or 2.44% are in the high category, while no respondents are in the critical category. This is interesting because even though on average they are in the low category, there are still principals who are in the high category, meaning that there are still principals who have serious problems related to cultural indicators. Cultural indicators relate to the commitment not to get involved in practical politics, a culture of mutual trust between

school members, a culture of cooperation and collaboration, a culture of lifelong learning, and upholding a noble culture in everyday life.

The third indicator is human relations, indicators of human relations are related to having social sensitivity to others, participating in social activities, and collaborating with other parties for the benefit of the school. Based on Table 1, it is known that for the indicator of human relations, the mean value is 3.53, meaning that school principals during the pandemic did not experience serious problems related to indicators of humanitarian relations. In more detail, it can be explained that 32 people or 78.05% of respondents are in the low category, and 9 people or 21.95% of respondents are in the fair category, while no respondents are in the high and critical category.

Based on Table 1, related to the fourth indicator, namely a feeling safe, it is known that school principals during the pandemic did not encounter serious problems related to the feeling safe indicator, because the mean value of 3.58 was obtained which was in the low category. In more detail, from 41 respondents, 33 people or 80.49% of respondents were in the low category, and 8 people or 19.51% of respondents were in the fair category, while no respondents were in the high and critical category. Security indicators relate to the safe use, use and protection of personal data, safe use of digital media, and perceptions of government policies in the education sector.

The fifth indicator is differences, based on Table 1 it can be seen that the mean value of 3.33 is obtained, which is in the low category, this shows that school principals during the pandemic did not encounter serious problems related to indicators of difference. In more detail from 41 respondents, 23 people or 56.10% of respondents are in the low category, and 18 people or 43.90% of respondents are in the fair category, while no respondents are in the high and critical category. Indicators of difference relate to not discriminating and not discriminating against differences in gender, race, age, education level, and socio-economic.

It is undeniable that the teacher is the key to the success of the learning process, where the principal is the driving factor so that the teacher can perform well [20, 21], so that learning is carried out effectively and efficiently. Social competence is important for a principal because it is needed by the principal in interacting with teachers, staff, students, parents, and the surrounding community [16, 17]. Especially during the pandemic, the principal's social competence is one of the competencies that school principals must have properly [22].

The significant role of a school principal to continue to carry out his leadership well during the pandemic is highly expected [23, 24]. To make school community want to follow the principal as a leader, of course the right approach and methods are needed [25]. A principals cannot arbitrarily give orders to his subordinates. The principal as a direct leader is a real example in the work activities of his subordinates [26, 27]. The results showed that the principals did not encounter serious problems related to ethical indicators in their social competence. Principals who make ethics the basis for their behavior will be able to encourage teacher performance to move towards realizing school excellence [15, 28]. Ethics in the principal's social competence is related to the principal's concern for the ethics of himself, and the school community (teachers, staff and students), maintaining professional secrets, paying attention to ethics in scientific

writing activities, monitoring electronic activities of school residents, utilizing school data in accordance with procedures, and responsible use of ICT.

The second indicator in this study is culture, based on the data analysis that has been carried out, although on average the principals do not encounter serious problems with this indicator, but there is one principal who is in the high category, this shows that there are still principals who encounter problems with cultural indicators. This certainly needs to be a concern in order to find a solution as soon as possible. The principal as a leader needs to take appropriate steps, by building a conducive culture in order to create superior educational services [29, 30]. Principals need to encourage teacher involvement and form a collaborative culture as the digital era demands [31, 32], besides that principals need to encourage a lifelong learning culture [2, 33]. The principal must also be able to adapt to the socio-cultural environment in which he is located and explore the values contained therein [34, 35].

Environmental changes that occur require schools to be able to adapt, not only to survive with the situation but by carrying out school development innovations [36, 37]. Leaders always play a key role in every transformation process [1, 8]. Educational leadership is related to the problem of principals in improving human relations both with school residents and the community around the school. In this case the principal needs to have social sensitivity towards others and is willing to be involved in the initiation of others, and is able to cooperate with other parties for the benefit of the school [18, 38]. The results of the study showed that during the pandemic, school principals did not encounter serious problems related to indicators of human relations.

The next indicator is a feeling safe and differences, an indicator of a feeling safe marked by the safe use, use and protection of personal data, safe use of digital media, and perceptions of government policies in the education sector. Meanwhile, indicators of difference are marked by not discriminating against differences in gender, race, age, education level, and socio-economic. Based on the results of the research, school principals did not encounter serious problems related to indicators of feeling safe and differences during the pandemic. The principal in carrying out his leadership role in the school must be able to appreciate the differences that exist [39, 40], for example the principal and teachers need to discuss to find solutions to problem solving in learning for students who do not have mobile devices to study from home, so that there is no difference in service for all students. Principals also need to have a sense of security with the disclosure of existing information as we know as a characteristic of the digital era [41, 42], as well as a feeling safe from government policies that should assist school principals in realizing superior schools under the pressure of the pandemic [43, 44].

4 Conclusion

The increasing complexity of educational problems caused by changing community needs and pandemic pressures has become a problem faced by school principals in carrying out their daily duties. Based on the results of the study, there are five indicators of problems faced by school principals during the pandemic related to their social competencies, namely ethics, culture, human relations, feeling safe, and differences, where the five problem indicators are in the low category, meaning that the principal does not

face serious problems related to with these five indicators. However, there are still principals who are in the fair category, and some are even in the high category, this shows that principals still encounter problems related to these indicators, which need to find solutions. Based on the results of the study, it can be suggested for further researchers to be able to identify other problems faced by school principals, especially in the learning process which is currently being implemented using the blended learning model.

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