



Principal's Instructional Leadership; A Theoretical Review

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Abstract. School principals have an crucial role in increasing the quality of learning. Through Instructional leadership, the Principal can take a variety of actions to support teachers in the success of learning activities. This study aims to examine the Instructional leadership through theoretical studies. The research method used in writing this article uses a literature review. Data collection techniques are carried out by conducting various kinds of studies on texts related to Instructional leadership sourced from reputable books and journal articles. The result of this study is that the role of the principal as a learning leader has a lot of influence in improving the quality and outcomes of learning. The principal in carrying out his role as a learning leader can be seen from the various sets of actions he takes. Instructional leadership practice consists of three domains, namely; (1) Doing, (2) Relating and (2) Saying.

Keywords: instructional leadership, Principal, school

1 Introduction

In school administration, the office of the principal is of the highest significance and importance as it deals with tremendous responsibility in aspects of success and achievement in educational processes. In this effect, the principals should inspire, and guide matched by the duty of creation of an enabling and supportive environment that meets the needs of teachers, students, parents, and the entire community. Their role is so important in building cooperative relations, motivating all concerned, and forwarding the interests of the institution to meet its educational objectives and multifaceted development. With extensive knowledge, principals can support, motivate, and lead well. Knowledgeable educational leaders will be able to choose diverse and appropriate leadership styles to effectively support the success of the school.

One of the model can be applied by the leader is instructional leadership. Through this model, principals can communicate clear visions and goals to all teachers, staff and students, as well as support teachers through workshop or coaching, and increasing professional development [14]. In addition, by implementing instructional leadership, school principals can significantly improve the quality of learning process in schools [18].

The discussion of the topic of instructional leadership has a long and complex history in providing interpretation. At first, instructional leadership was interpreted as the task of the school principal. In the 1960s, school principals tried to improve the quality of learning by conducting observations in classrooms. In the 1970s, in North America, the United Kingdom, and Australia, the role of school principals became very important in inspecting teachers. In the period from the 1970s to the 1980s, the main focus of school principals in increasing the quality of learning was through supervision activities [28].

The study of instructional leadership began to develop in the 1980s in North America, with an emphasis on the role of school principals in this field. During the 1980s, it was revealed that principals in instructionally successful schools implemented strong instructional leadership. Policymakers in the U.S. have also begun to take steps to "encourage" all school principals to adopt the role to improve the effectiveness of their schools [9,4,27]. Instructional leadership is considered the creator of culture. They strive to build an academic environment that encourages high expectations and standards for students and teachers [8].

While a restrictive definition of instructional leadership, according to Sheppard, 1996, involves activities which have direct relationships with the process of teaching and learning, including observable classroom supervision, by a broader perspective, it is one where instructional leadership refers to any leadership act that affects students' total learning processes. On the other hand, the instructional leadership framework assumes that the school administrators have formal authority and specialist knowledge that give them the capacity to influence the teachers according to Leithwood [29]. However, Southworth (2002) argues that "instructional leadership is more effective when understood broadly than narrowly, because it opens up opportunities for other leaders to play roles other than the principal." Southworth also adds that instructional leadership is closely related to teaching and learning, including teacher professional development as well as student progress [26].

In the studies conducted by Southworth, cases involving primary school principals in UK and Wales brought to light three effective methods of inducing improvement in teaching. These were: (1) modeling; (2) monitoring; and (3) professional talk and discussion [25,26]. By modeling, a principal sets an example for the teachers of his school to follow. Observation is defined as monitoring how the teacher performs in the classroom the students are learning. The results inform future coaching. Professional discourse and conversation involve discussing issues that are interactive, hope involving, motivational, beneficial, and equal. These discourses have concentrated on the results of the performances evaluation and strategies to enhance students' approach to learning and their learning outcomes.

2 Method

This research uses a literature review research method. The method with a literature review approach is one of the research methods that aims to collect, analyze, and synthesize information that has existed in various literary sources, such as books, journal

articles and journal proceeding, and other academic sources. In this study, data collection was carried out by examining various documents from books and journal articles and journal proceedings are related with this topic.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Instructional Leadership Concept

Definitions of instructional leadership lead to the understanding that instructional leadership is an effort by school principals to improve the quality of the learning process in schools. In the context of instructional leadership, school principals emphasize various aspects, including curriculum, teaching and learning process, learning evaluation, teacher professional development, provision of quality services, and the formation of learning communities in schools. In the curriculum aspect, the principal as a learning leader seeks to compile and develop the curriculum for the educational unit level, as well as set the vision, mission, and goals of the school. In terms of teaching and learning activities, the principal focuses on encouraging teachers to compile and develop syllabi, learning implementation plans, teaching materials, and choose the right textbooks and teaching and learning methods. In addition, the principal also regulates the use of learning media, classroom arrangements, and provides motivation to students.

Another important aspect is the assessment of teachers' performance and their professional development. Through these activities, school principals can not only evaluate teachers' performance but also assist them in professional improvement through training and education. Principals must also provide high-quality services to students and stakeholders to ensure their satisfaction. In addition, the principal can build a learning community in the school that involves all school residents and the surrounding community.

According to Robinson [21], the effect size of instructional leadership is three to four times larger than that of transformational leadership. Instructions within instructional leadership include planning, monitoring, evaluating, coordinating, and improving teaching and learning processes. The meta-analytic research of instructional leadership have already calculated the proportional impact of five key elements of leadership. These include strategically managing resources, establishing goals and expectations, planning, coordinating, and evaluating curriculum and instruction, encouraging and engaging in teacher development, and ensuring a supportive and orderly environment are indeed accordance with Robinson's suggestions [21].

Hallinger then developed these ideas [5]. They analyzed research from the period 1980 to 1995 that studied the relationship between principal leadership and student achievement, and identified three types of effects of principal leadership: 1. Direct effects, in which principals directly influence school outcomes; 2. Mediation effect, where the principal's actions affect the outcome through other variables; 3. Reciprocal effects, where the principal influences the teacher and vice versa, with this process affecting the learning outcomes. instructional leadership practices do contribute to achieving desired outcomes, but these contributions are often mediated by other factors such as

teacher commitment, instructional practices, or school culture. This concept is in line with the view that the results achieved by leaders mainly depend on others [25,10,11].

In addition, instructional leadership also needs to be supported by the behavior of the principal as a leader to be able to behave in certain behaviors such as being able to provide suggestions, feedback, effective learning models, support collaboration and provide feedback on the achievements achieved by teachers [15,23]. Effective educational leaders are those who, through explicit ways, guarantee that everything works toward fostering student success through the alignment of institutional strategy and operations to the school's academic mission [8]. The above perspective emphasizes the need to balance leading with vision as well as profound techniques of management among learning leaders. The dual roles of leadership involve setting a direction and inspiring stakeholders while establishing a strategy for promoting academic achievement.

Managerial roles of learning leaders, on the other hand, are equally complex and decisive in view of meeting the abovementioned goals, namely, aligning resources for effective teaching-learning processes, exercising control to make sure of consistency and quality in educational practices, monitoring instructional practice implementation with the purpose of making sure such practices conform to the curriculum, and continuous development of the curriculum as well as instructional methods for evolving educational needs [5-8].

Beyond these core areas, the good learning leaders guarantee collaboration among teachers themselves, professional growth, and systems that cause innovation and adaptability. They should be good at decision-making based on data, applying metrics on performance to determine areas of improvement and to implement strategies based on evidence. They also act significantly in putting up a positive school culture wherein both the students and teachers are valued, supported, and motivated toward excellence.

Educational leaders elicit change and improvement in educational institutions through the shared practice of leadership and managerial roles. Thus, linking strategic aims with the practice of implementation means efforts within the school are focused on its mission: providing an enabling environment that fosters both academic success and the development of the whole child. It is such a holistic approach that places learning leaders as fundamental partners in the shaping of education. Instructional leadership consists of three broad dimensions which are [8]:

- Clarifying the mission of the school. This is the first dimension relating to the principal's role in the identification of the main purposes of the school. In this dimension, the principal and staff are supposed to ensure that the school possesses clear, measurable, and time-bound goals that are focused on the kids' academic achievement.

- Monitor educational processes: This latter dimension refers to curriculum and learning coordination and control. In this dimension, three managerial roles are distinguished, namely curriculum coordination, monitoring student learning outcomes, and supervision and evaluation of the learning process. School principals are expected to play an active role in stimulating, monitoring, and overseeing classroom teaching and learning processes. The principal, in playing the said roles, has to be conversant with learning.

- Promotes a good learning climate. This aspect includes a variety of functions, such as managing learning time, supporting professional development, maintaining, providing inspiration and motivation to teachers, and students. This dimension has a broader scope and purpose than the other two dimensions, in line with the idea that an effective school creates a positive academic climate by setting high standards and expectations for students and teachers.

3.2 Characteristics of a Principal as a Instructional Leader

The model of the principal as a learning leader has a significant impact on increasing the quality and outcomes of learning. The actions taken by school principals in carrying out this role reflect the various ways they positively influence the learning process. According to Ahmad [1] At least to know the characteristics of learning leaders (instructional leaders), it can be seen from the following aspects [1]:

- Learning leaders make the most of their time, energy, and skills to improve the quality of learning.
- Learning leaders provide direction and guidance in the learning process, including methods that focus on the construction of students' knowledge.
- Learning leaders have a strong character to motivating students to continue to grow.
- Learning leaders have the ability to evaluate teacher performance and provide constructive feedback.
- Learning leaders are constantly in dialogue to address problems and provide guidance on learning issues.

Meanwhile, from the results of the leadership study conducted by May Jo (2007), school principals as learning leaders must be able to carry out their duties and functions as follows:

Allocating time to observe classroom activities, make observations, and encourage teachers and students to achieve optimal learning outcomes.

- Paying attention to students and teachers to address any problems or difficulties they face.
- Focus on increasing the quality of teachers and making the most of their potential in the learning process.
- Provide teachers to conduct self-reflection or self-evaluation to identify weaknesses, as well as determine whether they fall into the category of modern or traditional teachers.
- Encourage teachers to collaborate and provide space for them to convey ideas or ideas in order to develop the curriculum and learning process.

According to the results of a study by [26] on school principals, there are standards that determine the effectiveness of school principals as learning leaders. His research identified that Instructional leadership standards include: (1) hard work, (2) strong determination, (3) positive behavior, (4) approachability, (5) teamwork, and (6) school improvement. In addition, learning leaders must also have in-depth knowledge and skills in leadership practices and problem-solving abilities. Empirical evidence from

research shows that problem-solving skills are directly related to leadership effectiveness [20,12,21,22,16,17].

Instructional leadership practices according to [24] consist of three main domains: (1) Doing, (2) Relating, and (3) Saying. Salo explains that in Instructional leadership practices, principals start with “doing”, which includes preparation, organizing, and structuring. In this aspect, the principal directly tries to improve the professionalism of teachers through concrete actions. The second aspect is “relating”, where principals build relationships with teachers through support, confirmation, and affirmation. In this realm, school principals and teachers exchange experiences to strengthen cooperation. Finally, “saying” includes the ability of the principal to communicate the school's goals to the teacher, establish effective communication, and provide feedback and follow-up. This aspect also aims to develop language, knowledge, content, motivation, democratic values, and equality. Overall, Instructional leadership practices are illustrated in Figure 1.



Fig.1 Instructional leadership Practices according to (Salo et al., 2014)

The characteristics of school principals as learning leaders are not only limited to the points that have been mentioned. The principal as a learning leader is expected to have certain standards as a reference in carrying out his duties. They must continue to strive to make good the quality of learning in schools by managing various learning components, including the material of curriculum, activities of teaching and learning, assessment, teacher professional development, provision of quality learning services, and the formation of learning communities in schools [19]. To achieve this goal, school principals need to have various competencies that support success in increasing the quality or standards of learning in schools.

4 Conclusion

Instructional leadership is an model that emphasizes improving the quality of learning and student learning outcomes through the active role of education leaders. This approach prioritizes learning at the core of all decisions and actions taken by leaders. In instructional leadership, teacher professional development is a crucial aspect. Leaders seek to provide ongoing training, reinforcement, and support to teachers, so that they

can adopt effective and innovative teaching strategies. In addition, learning leaders also creating a good school environment so that students will be comfortable and motivated in participating in learning

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