Principal's Strategy in Building Effective Schools at SMA Negeri 5 Jambi City

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ABSTRACT

Effective schools demonstrate high standards of achievement in both academic and non-academic terms and have a culture that prioritizes achieving set goals. School principals are faced with a variety of complex and varied problems, including problems related to resource management, availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure, quality of teaching, relevant curriculum, student motivation, and relationships with parents and the community. Overcoming these problems requires sustained efforts and close collaboration between all relevant parties to create an effective learning environment and ensure student success. so this research aims to find out the principal's strategy for building an effective school. This research was carried out at SMA Negeri 5, Jambi City. The design of this research is a qualitative case study. The collection techniques in this research are observation, interviews, and documentation. The result is that an effective school is one that is able to change input (students) into output (graduates) according to the expected criteria through an efficient process (achieving maximum results with minimum costs). In this way, the principal's strategy for building an effective school involves several important aspects.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is an irreplaceable foundation on the road to maturity (Rulandari, 2021; Shanmugam et al., 2019; Wahab,G & Rosnawa ti, 2021). As a learning experience, both directly and indirectly, education plays a crucial role in shaping one's behavior and personality. This is proved in the development of a person's thinking and wisdom as he grows up, who is naturally driven to be wiser in decision-making when supported by a quality education. The government recognizes the importance of education as a key factor in the formation of human character and potential (Nafsaka, Kambali, Sayudin, & Widya Astuti, 2023; Sugiarto & Farid, 2023). Therefore, they are committed to continuously improving the quality of education in order to give birth to a generation of qualified successors, able to face global challenges, and

bring about better changes in the lives of nations and nations. Global challenges, including the impact of globalization, are increasingly complicating the dynamics of the education world. However, it also encourages students to their best achievement. Faced with this situation, educational institutions, including schools, are required to create efficiency, improve quality, and seize opportunities quickly to compete and survive in an increasingly competitive environment (Petersen & Treagust, 2014; Pucciarelli & Kaplan, 2016).

The importance of school strategies in improving the quality of education is something that cannot be overlooked. These strategies are targeted and measurable planning, carried out to specific goals, especially in improving the quality of schools (Wild & Schulze Heuling, 2020). The right strategy will have a significant impact on the school's success in achieving its goals (Hayudiyani, Saputra, Adha, & Ariyanti, 2020; Sriwahyuni, Kristiawan, & Wachidi, 2019). To develop effective strategies, schools need to gather comprehensive information about internal and external factors that influence the achievement of those goals. Effective school strategies are based on in-depth analysis of the needs and potential of schools, involving the identification and evaluation of key factors such as school leadership, resource management, curriculum, student support, parental participation, and relationships with the community (Feska Ajepri, 2016; Rianae, Berliani, & Dagau, 2020; Rifky, Devi, Hasanah, & Safii, 2024). Using data and evidence is key in supporting decision-making, as well as collaboration among all members of the school community is a key factor in implementing successful strategies. Thus, effective school strategies become planned and targeted measures to create an optimal learning environment for students, preparing them for the challenges of the future.

Effective schools demonstrate high standards of achievement in both academic and non-academic terms, as well as have a culture that prioritizes achieving a set goal (Mas & Zulystiawati, 2022; Noman, Awang Hashim, & Shaik Abdullah, 2016; Pathoni Arzadi, Budiartati, & Hudallah, 2021). This is reflected in the existence of a clear vision expressed and supported jointly by all members of the school community, including the head of school, teachers, staff, officials, school committees, students, and other relevant parties. This culture is a solid foundation in achieving academic success in an effective school. In related research, several dimensions and factors have been identified as key to effective school success, such as administrative leadership, clear goals and missions, high expectations, participation in decision-making, good time management, well-planned programs, academic success, effective learning processes, good communication, balanced integration, motivation, innovation, adaptation to change, autonomy, flexibility, a positive school culture, a conducive climate, continuous evaluation, a supportive school environment, and active participation of student families (Hollands & Escueta, 2020; Mestry, 2017).

One concrete step to improve school effectiveness is to conduct a thorough evaluation of the various aspects that affect the quality of education. It includes in-depth analysis of school leadership, resource management, curricula, teaching methods, student support, parent involvement, and relationships with society (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Phuc, Nguyen, Parveen, & Wang, 2020; Sanders, 2016). Based on these analyses, schools can design and implement specific and relevant strategies to improve and improve their quality. Furthermore, the use of data and evidence to support decision-making, as well as collaboration among all

members of the school community, are key to successful implementation of the strategy. Thus, these measures can help schools their goals in creating an optimal learning environment and preparing students for the challenges of the future.

The realities in the field show that many schools, including Jambi City State High School 5, face various challenges in achieving the desired level of efficiency. School leaders are faced with a variety of complex and varied issues, including issues related to resource management, availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure, quality of teaching, relevant curricula, student motivation, and relationships with parents and society. So this study aims to find out the head of school's strategy in building effective schools.

METHODS

This research aims to describe the strategies of female school principals in carrying out their leadership. This research was carried out at SMA Negeri 5, Jambi City. The design of this research is a qualitative case study. Qualitative research is one of the research procedures that produces descriptive data in the form of words, writing, and the behavior of the people being observed (Hancock, Ockleford, Windridge, & Midlands, 2009). Then, according to Magolda (2007), a case study is a method for understanding individuals that is carried out in an integrative and comprehensive manner in order to obtain a deep understanding of the individual and the problems they face. Data collection was carried out by the researcher himself as the main instrument in a natural setting.

The collection techniques in this research are observation, interviews, and documentation. The data collected is related to the strategies carried out by school principals in achieving effective schools and supporting factors in improving school achievement at SMA Negeri 5, Jambi City. The data source in this research is the school principal. The collected data was analyzed descriptively through the flow of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

In this research, the subject being the focus is the head of the school, which is the primary source of data relevant to the research topic. To collect data in the field, researchers use several methods, including observations and interviews. Observations are used to gather data or information related to the focus of the problem being studied. Meanwhile, interviews are conducted with the Head of School and Teachers to gain a deeper insight into effective school building strategies at Jambi State High School 5.

Analysis in this study is done by investigating phenomena or events in depth, as well as its components. The analysis process begins after the relevant data is collected. At this stage, the researchers aim to organize the data that has been collected, both through field records and documentation. The process of qualitative data analysis in this study follows the approach proposed by Miles and his colleagues, which emphasizes the interactivity and continuity of the analysis process until the stated data has been saturated. The aim is to gain an in-depth understanding and obtain sufficient data to meet the purposes of this research (Mataputun, 2020; Sriwahyuni et al., 2019; Wahyuni, 2020).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Effective Schools

Based on diverse research results, Scheerens (1992) outlines the characteristics of effective schools, which include: a) the adoption of goals that lead to the achievement of

superior results; b) the optimization of factual learning time; and c) the application of effective and structured teaching methods (Haq, Sujarwanto, & Hariyati, 2023). Therefore, school success in achieving effectiveness can be achieved through the high commitment of all members of the school community to achieving achievement, increasing the allocation of learning time to achieve the desired goals, and applying the best or most effective teaching techniques.

Furthermore, interviews conducted with the principal of SMA Negeri 5 Jambi City illustrated several characteristics that are in accordance with an effective school. First, there is a strong commitment from school principals to improve the quality of learning, which is reflected in structured management planning and evaluation-based national education standards. This shows that the school has a clear vision and strives to achieve high standards in learning. Furthermore, the strategy developed by the school principal to improve the quality of learning includes providing relevant and interesting learning for students as well as improving school infrastructure. Thus, effective schools do not only focus on academic aspects but also pay attention to students' physical and psychological needs. In addition, awareness of the importance of supervising and monitoring the quality of teaching staff shows that there is attention to fostering teacher professionalism and the overall quality of teaching. Although there are still several areas that need improvement, such as the preparation of a more structured evaluation plan, the overall picture shows a strong commitment from school principals and staff to create an effective and quality learning environment.

The principal of the school must provide guidance and inspiration to ensure that all students and stakeholders have a high level of commitment to goals and successful teaching (Andriani, 2015; Day, Gu, & Sammons, 2016; Komara, Mulyanto, Miladiah, Sugandi, & A. Suganda, 2023). In addition, school principals must provide teachers with the support and development they require in order for them to be able to carry out successful learning. Consequently, it has been demonstrated that a key component of establishing an efficient school is the principal's leadership. According to Brookover and Edmonds in Sergiovanni (2006), high levels of staff dedication to school objectives, clarity about the school's mission, and proactive attempts to fulfill it are characteristics of effective schools. Studies also reveal that principals are the single most important element in determining how productive a school is (Andriani, 2015; Nalbantoğlu & Bümen, 2024; Onyekwelu, 2024).

In addition to strong leadership from principals, comprehensive models of school effectiveness emphasize that effective schools require organization and management focused on creating conditions that support effective teaching in the classroom, providing equitable learning opportunities for all students, and creating an environment that fosters school effectiveness. overall. Effective school management includes aspects of management at the class level, school level, and in the school context at large (Chen, 2024; Hine, Sheldon, & Abel, 2024; Rifky et al., 2024). Dimensions that must be considered in management include: a) at the class level, aspects such as the quality of the curriculum or teaching, learning strategies, and teacher behavior in the classroom; b) at the school level, factors such as the quality of educational policies, the quality of school organization, time management, and opportunities to implement the curriculum; and c) at the level of the

school context, various educational policies supported by the government, demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, unique characteristics of the school itself, steering bodies such as school boards, and other relevant parties (Battistella, Bortolotti, Boscari, Nonino, & Palombi, 2024; Kao, Chiu, Lin, Hung, & Lu, 2024; Muti & Andriani, 2024)

Principal Leadership Approach

Based on an interview with the principal of SMA Negeri 5, Jambi City, it appears that the leadership approach implemented aims to build an effective school. The school principal shows a strong commitment to improving the quality of learning by carrying out structured management planning based on the evaluation of national education standards. This reflects a proactive and results-oriented leadership approach. Apart from that, the school principal also formulated a comprehensive strategy to improve learning quality standards by providing relevant and interesting learning for students, as well as paying attention to school infrastructure needs. This approach shows that the principal does not only focus on administrative aspects but is also actively involved in designing strategies to improve the student learning experience. Furthermore, awareness of the importance of supervision and monitoring of the quality of teaching staff shows an inclusive leadership approach, where the school principal plays a role as a facilitator in coaching and developing staff. Thus, the leadership approach applied by school principals in building effective schools reflects a combination of a strong long-term vision, comprehensive strategy, and attention to the development of staff professionalism, all of which are key elements in creating an effective and quality learning environment.

Historically, there have been various approaches to school principal leadership practices, which can be grouped into four categories: the trait approach, behavioral approach, contingency approach, and transformational approach (Azzuhri, Huang, & Irawanto, 2024; Ibraheem, 2024; Marwiyah, Aisyah, & Septiana, 2022; Nasikhatul Ummatin, Marwiyah, & Mutmainnah, 2022). The trait approach focuses on the good characteristics or qualities possessed by a leader (Giatman & Padang, 2024). The behavioral approach is based on the idea that a leader's success or failure is determined by his or her style of attitudes and actions, which vary from task orientation to people orientation (Farhan, Chaudhry, Razmak, & El Refae, 2024). The contingency approach is the view that different situations require different leadership behaviors (Müller, Konzag, Nielsen, & Sandholt, 2024). Meanwhile, the transformational approach involves building relationships based on high-level values, motivation, and organizational vision (Erman & Winario, 2024; Khoirotunnisa & Pujianto, 2023).

The trait approach in principal leadership practice emphasizes the importance of positive characteristics or traits possessed by a leader to achieve success (Ilma & Hariyati, 2024; T. Kilag et al., 2023; Tuan et al., 2024). In contrast, the behavioral approach highlights that a leader's success or failure is greatly influenced by the style of attitudes and actions demonstrated, which vary from a focus on tasks to a focus on interpersonal relationships (Aroussi, Saeed, Harguem, & Chabani, 2022; Farhan et al., 2024). On the other hand, the contingency approach proposes the view that different situations require different leadership responses according to specific conditions and contexts (Jin, Coombs, Wang, van der Meer, & Shivers, 2024; Thommes, Uitdewilligen, Rico, & Waller, 2024).

Meanwhile, the transformational approach leads to building relationships based on high values and an organizational vision that motivates and inspires all school members (Yuniarti & Walajro, 2024). Thus, a deep understanding of these various approaches can help school principals develop effective leadership strategies according to the needs and challenges faced by their schools (Sliwka, Klopsch, Beigel, & Tung, 2024; Tamadoni, Hosseingholizadeh, & Bellibaş, 2021).

Among the four principal leadership approaches, the transformational approach is the most dominant and is widely implemented today (Abd El Qader & Benoliel, 2024). The transformational leadership model developed by Leithwood and his colleagues is considered an ideal model for creating change in schools. This approach has dominated the world of education for the last three decades (Li & Karanxha, 2022). Initially, it emerged from the business world through a concept first proposed by Burns in 1978. According to Burns, transformational leadership occurs when a leader mobilizes resources to enhance and satisfy the high, intrinsic, and moral motives of his followers. In contrast to transactional leadership, which focuses on agreements and extrinsic needs, transformational leadership focuses on moral values and high-level motives, such as self-esteem and self-actualization. This approach produces relationships in which leaders and followers elevate each other to higher levels of motivation and morality. Thus, transformational leadership is considered the most effective model for inspiring change and growth in the school environment (Dr. Rolan Tannous & Ahlam Marza Sakhil, 2024; Kılınç, Polatcan, Savaş, & Er, 2022; Sliwka et al., 2024).

Principal Strategies in Building Effective Schools

In an effort to build an effective school, the principal of SMA Negeri 5 Jambi City needs to develop a leadership strategy that can direct and motivate all parties involved, including teachers, staff, students, parents, and the community, to collaborate in achieving the desired school goals. Effective leadership from a school principal requires the implementation of strategies that are appropriate to the existing context, taking into account the characteristics and abilities of his followers. A good personal approach from the school principal towards all school stakeholders is very important. With this approach, school principals can easily guide teachers, education staff, and students in carrying out their respective duties and responsibilities. Through this strategy, the principal can build positive relationships with all parties in the school without reducing his authority as a leader at SMA Negeri 5 Jambi City.

Dachfolfany et al., opinion (2024) states that school principals have a role as educators who are responsible for guiding teachers, education staff and students, as well as following developments in science and technology and providing good examples. Meanwhile, according to Suklani & Imam Sibaweh, (2024), to create a conducive school climate, cooperation and harmonious relationships are needed between all school members, not just the responsibility of the school principal. Therefore, efforts that can be made by school principals to improve their performance as educators, especially in improving the performance of educational staff and student learning achievement, is to involve teachers in further education, by encouraging them to achieve creatively.

Based on the results of an interview with the principal of SMA Negeri 5 Jambi City, it was revealed that efforts to improve the quality of learning in schools had been carried out with fairly structured management planning. However, there are still several aspects that need further attention, especially those related to improving school infrastructure. Although facilities are adequate, there is still a need to improve them. Apart from that, the school principal has also formulated strategies to ensure that learning takes place in accordance with curriculum standards and is interesting for students. However, there are several areas that need further attention, such as preparing an evaluation plan and using performance evaluation results for continuous improvement. However, the overall picture shows the principal's commitment to continuing to improve the quality of learning in the school and ensuring that all aspects related to educational management run well.

There are four strategies for various leadership approaches to leading a school. First, the bartering strategy emphasizes the exchange of needs between school principals and teaching staff. In this context, relationships are built based on fulfilling the desires and needs of each party. This strategy is suitable for use when the goals and interests of the principal and staff are not completely aligned. Second, the building strategy places a focus on creating an interpersonal climate that is conducive to meeting the psychological needs of staff. This approach places less emphasis on exchange and more on creating conditions that allow staff to feel valued and intrinsically fulfilled. Third, the binding strategy involves school principals and staff in developing shared values to create a solid learning community. And finally, the bonding strategy emphasizes close relationships and shared commitment to advancing the school as a sustainable entity in everyday life. This approach emphasizes the importance of caring and interdependent relationships between principals and staff. Overall, these leadership strategies and styles offer diverse views on how to lead a school, with varying emphasis on aspects of exchange, creating conducive conditions, developing shared values, and close relationships between principals and staff (Mardizal et al., 2023).

Then, the principal's strategy for SMA Negeri 5 Jambi City's building an effective school emphasizes creating a good interpersonal climate to support staff development. By creating a conducive environment, school principals try to increase opportunities for staff to meet various needs such as achievement, responsibility, competence, and self-esteem. This approach pays more attention to the psychological and social aspects of staff, which is expected to motivate them to contribute optimally to the learning and school development process. In this way, the principal seeks to build good and mutually supportive relationships between all members of the school, thereby creating an atmosphere that allows the school's goals to be achieved effectively. Thus, achieving achievement and improving the quality of learning at SMA Negeri 5 Jambi City can be realized through leadership strategies that focus on building positive interpersonal relationships and providing adequate support to staff. As stated by Geleta, (2015), the principal as a manager has the functions of: preparing plans, coordinating activities, carrying out supervision, evaluating activities, holding meetings, making decisions, organizing the learning process, managing administration, and managing administration, students, manpower, facilities and infrastructure, and finance.

Then, the principal's strategy for SMA Negeri 5 Jambi City in building an effective school involves various aspects, including efforts to improve the quality of learning relevant to the availability of infrastructure, creating an atmosphere of togetherness, and the development

of innovative learning services. One of the steps taken is to carry out regular evaluations of the developments carried out. By carrying out regular evaluations, school principals can determine the effectiveness of the strategies implemented to improve the quality of learning. Apart from that, in the teaching and learning process, it is important to ensure that the development of renewable teaching resources is in accordance with the current curriculum. In this way, teaching can run in accordance with established standards and meet student needs and the demands of curriculum development. Through this approach, it is hoped that schools can continue to innovate in an effort to improve the quality of learning and create a conducive learning environment for all students. I agree with Ocetkiewicz et al., (2017) that in the teaching and learning process, it is important to ensure that the development of renewable teaching resources is in accordance with the current curriculum. In this way, teaching can run in accordance with established standards and meet student needs and the demands of curriculum development. Through this approach, it is hoped that schools can continue to innovate in an effort to improve the quality of learning and create a conducive learning environment for all students.

Thus, the principal of SMA Negeri 5 Jambi City has high hopes that through management that has been implemented well and involving all school stakeholders in building an effective school collaboratively, the school can quickly face and respond to new challenges that may arise in the future. Active involvement from all parties, including teachers, staff, students, parents, and the community, is considered the key to success in overcoming problems and taking advantage of existing opportunities. Therefore, the principal of SMA Negeri 5 Jambi City is very aware that it is necessary to have broad mastery and insight to be able to read every change that will be a challenge in the future for efforts to build effective schools. Awareness of the importance of a deep understanding of the dynamics of education, technological developments, and global demands is the basis for continuing to improve the quality of education provided in schools. Thus, the principal is committed to developing himself and moving the entire school community towards the school's vision and mission, which are oriented towards excellence and relevance in facing the future.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is that an effective school is a school that is able to change input (students) into output (graduates) according to the expected criteria through an efficient process (achieving maximum results with minimum costs). In this way, the principal's strategy in building an effective school involves several important aspects. First, school principals need to have a strong commitment to improving the quality of learning by carrying out structured management planning based on evaluation of national education standards. This reflects a proactive and results-oriented leadership approach. Second, the strategy prepared by the school principal must be comprehensive, including providing relevant and interesting learning for students as well as improving school infrastructure. Third, school principals need to pay attention to the development of staff professionalism through supervision and monitoring of the quality of teaching staff. Fourth, in building effective schools, school principals must pay attention to various leadership approaches,

with the transformational approach being the most dominant and effective in inspiring change and growth in the school environment. Fifth, the leadership strategy implemented must create an interpersonal climate that is conducive to staff development and ensure the quality of learning is relevant to applicable curriculum standards. Thus, through a strong and comprehensive leadership strategy, as well as active involvement from all school stakeholders, it is hoped that schools can face and respond quickly to new challenges, improve the quality of education, and create an effective and high-quality learning environment.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper

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