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## The Principal's Leadership Role in Creating a Student Literacy Culture

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### ABSTRACT

Literacy is a means for students to increase knowledge, understand learning material, and practice school learning, through basic activities, namely reading. For students, the role of literacy is very important to provide learning experience and the basis for developing their own skills which will later become a provision for facing education at the next level even in the world of work. In order to realize creating and improving the quality of student literacy, the cooperation of all school members is needed. school principals need to carry out their leadership role optimally by inviting school members to work together, so that efforts to create a literacy culture go well, and students' literacy skills are getting better and of better quality. The purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze the leadership role of the principal in creating a culture of student literacy. While the writing uses literature studies, namely reviewing and critically examining knowledge, ideas or findings from several written sources that have previously been made. the stages are: selecting topics of discussion, finding literature sources, classifying materials and review results, and writing process. Meanwhile, the data analysis used was content analysis with a qualitative descriptive model. So the result is that the role of the principal consists of: 1) as a policy maker; 2) as a motivator; 3) as a role model; 4) as the person in charge. namely reviewing and critically examining a knowledge, idea or discovery from several written sources that have previously been made. the stages are: selecting topics of discussion, finding literature sources, classifying materials and review results, and writing process. Meanwhile, the data analysis used was content analysis with a qualitative descriptive model. So the result is that the role of the principal consists of: 1) as a policy maker; 2) as a motivator; 3) as a role model; 4) as the person in charge. analysis of the data used is to use content analysis with a qualitative descriptive model. So the result is that the role of the principal consists of: 1) as a policy maker; 2) as a motivator; 3) as a role model; 4) as the person in charge. analysis of the data used is to use content analysis with a qualitative descriptive model. So the result is that the role of the principal consists of: 1) as a policy maker; 2) as a motivator; 3) as a role model; 4) as the person in charge.

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

Reading activities for the Indonesian people are something that is less desirable and underestimated, even though reading a reading material can provide various benefits to the reader. Based on an article from the Kompas.com site written by Supriyatna (2017), the benefits derived from reading activities include: 1) broadening insight and knowledge; 2) train analytical thinking skills; 3) increase vocabulary; 4) increase concentration; 5) improve memory and 6) improve writing skills; 7) prevent Alzheimer's; 8) entertainment; 9) relaxation; 10) and reduce stress. However, these benefits are not widely recognized by the public, due to a lack of knowledge and awareness of the benefits of reading.

Playing gadgets is a community activity that is often used for things that are less useful and unproductive, compared to reading books. So it cannot be said that they are illiterate or cannot read. The fact is that most people have the ability to read, which is obtained from attending school from an early age. However, they do not make their reading ability a habit for them to do useful things in their daily life. This fact is very different when compared to people in Japan or other countries who have a high level of literacy, who use their spare time to read books. In fact, reading books has become a necessity for them so that they can find these sights everywhere, especially in public places.

Based on the Education Report Card, the national average literacy ability is still less than 50% with a score of 1.71 from the highest point 3. This literacy ability consists of competence in reading informational texts, competence in reading literary texts, competence in accessing text content finding, competence in interpreting and understanding text content, competence evaluate and reflect on the contents of the text.

The existence of this reality makes the education process in Indonesia more aimed at increasing literacy as an effort to realize national education goals to the fullest. In efforts to achieve national education goals, of course, there are stages that must be carried out by schools carrying out the process of educational activities under the current policy of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbudristek RI), which are carried out progressively and continuously to maintain or improve quality in administration of education. In the process of implementing this, it is necessary to have a leader, namely the school principal to carry out his leadership role in managing and coordinating its members in an effort to achieve the vision and mission of the school's goals;

The importance of the leadership role of school principals in efforts to develop a culture of student literacy, especially in elementary schools, greatly influences the success of achieving the goals pursued. Because, in this effort many school resources are involved, both material and non-material, if it is not directed and managed properly by the leader, the performance will certainly be unstructured so that the performance and results are not as effective and efficient as expected. Efforts to develop a well-structured school literacy culture will have an impact on improving the quality of learning; teachers and staff; maximum utilization of school resources; and improved relations with the community

The principal holds control over the success of implementing a literacy culture in schools. According to Kral (2012) the role and attitude of the principal's leadership greatly influence what will be achieved at school, which usually occurs when going to make a change in school which has an impact on changes in school culture. In an effort to make changes, the principal is tasked with leading and supporting these changes. A leader must work closely with his members in order to achieve goals, namely teachers and staff, and also involve parents / guardians of students. so that this collaboration will support the success of educational goals, especially literacy culture programs that will be implemented in educational units.

**2. RESEARCH METHODS**

The research was conducted using a literature study approach. Literature study is a method of reviewing and critically examining a knowledge, idea or discovery from several written sources that have previously been made. Literacy results data from several journals that are relevant to the topics raised within the scope of the Principal's Leadership Role in Creating a Student Literacy Culture and digital literacy skills are the source of data in the research conducted. Data collection was carried out by searching several journals digitally and manually. Data analysis was carried out using the content method through the process of selecting several journals that were relevant to the scope of the research, comparisons between several journals obtained from the selection process.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### **First, the role of the principal in determining policy.**

Asmawan (2018) reveals that in supporting the school literacy movement requires cooperation from all school members, so that cooperation can run in accordance with the school's vision and mission, it requires the role of the school principal, namely as a policy maker to plan efforts to be made for successful implementation. literacy movement in schools. furthermore according to Mahendrartha et al. (2020) that the principal's support for the School Literacy Movement program is: 1) planning School Literacy Movement activities, 2) involving teachers, staff, and school committees and issuing task decrees; 3) Integrate literacy culture in the school curriculum.

Dawa & Sunarto (2019) revealed that school principals implement a management function (POAC) in implementing a School Literacy Culture, namely: 1) Planning: formulating a program of activities to support the school literacy program, and all its needs; 2) Organizing: the principal forms a literacy team from school members, and distributes tasks; 3) Actuating: Implementation of the literacy program according to plan, 4) Controlling: process monitoring and program monitoring and evaluation. Mahfudh & Imron (2020) in his research said that to improve reading literacy, school principals implemented strategies from the results of deliberations with school members, namely: 1) Forming a structure and dividing tasks; 2) implementing the 15 minute reading book program, religious literacy program, forming a literacy team, developing a literacy program,

The results of W. Duncan's research (2019) state that in implementing literacy, school principals need to make policies open to members, give trust and opportunities for them to develop professionalism, make initiatives to complete their tasks effectively and efficiently, and school principals help to provide solution if they encounter difficulties. Magnusson (2020) school principals make school policies in supporting student literacy, including: 1) Principals and their members set literacy goals, discuss efforts to increase literacy through learning activities, and plan activities to improve the quality of teaching teachers by assistant principals; 2) Providing quality books for teachers and students for higher quality learning; 3) Conduct teacher supervision,

Joyce Pinkney Kelly (2020) reveals that school principals have an important role to play in creating a positive school climate through improving the quality of literacy learning, namely that school principals become leaders in developing learning strategies based on student achievement data to easily determine solutions, provide support to teachers to developing teaching methods through supervision activities, implementing management functions properly for school progress, as well as monitoring student progress.

Furthermore, Matsumura et al. (2009) revealed that the leadership role of the school principal influences teacher participation in literacy development activities. Likewise with literacy trainers who will assist school principals to provide guidance to teachers. So that what the principal has to do to create effective coaching is to build trust between trainers and teachers that they can work together to foster and be coached to improve teacher professionalism in teaching and carrying out other tasks. Then Merga et al. (2021) revealed that literacy development efforts require the leadership role of school principals as policy makers to create strategies based on the results of identifying student literacy problems, so that it can make it easier to determine what needs to be done.

Then Kral (2012) revealed that before implementing literacy in schools, school principals need to conduct literacy training for teachers so that literacy implementation can run effectively. Teachers need to be explained about the goals and benefits of literacy development, in order to foster enthusiasm. In addition, school principals need to know what teachers need to support school literacy, so that the material and motivation provided in coaching can be relevant and become a teacher's reference in supporting literacy in schools. Collaboration between school principals and teachers and staff helps them to learn many things, thus making literacy development efforts effective, and can improve the quality of their collegial relationships. Merga (2020) said that the role of librarians as literacy experts in schools makes it necessary to work together, collaborate, and support each other to improve student literacy with their colleagues. Promote and develop strategies to increase literacy interest in students, provide literacy training for teachers and staff and provide parents with an understanding of the importance of literacy for children. This will have an impact on increasing students' interest in literacy, increasing student motivation in learning, and will have an impact on the realization of a reading culture in schools. Z. Ahmad (2020) reveals that parents have a very important role in shaping children's reading habits, such as the importance of parents trying to teach behavior and communication to children. Reading is the basis for the formation of children's academic and analytical skills, so that they can form an advanced society starting from the family environment.

Finally, Murphy (2004) reveals that one of the steps in creating good literacy is improving the quality of learning in the classroom, digging for effective reading program information from external parties who spend a lot of time reading, developing reading programs, program follow-up efforts. These efforts require the leadership, willingness and dedication of school principals and members to make literacy a school priority, ensure quality instruction, maximize time and performance, be able to assess performance and ensure accountability, support the professional development of teachers and staff and build relationships with the community.

### **Second, the role of the principal as a motivator.**

Ramdani et al. (2018) revealed that realizing the school literacy movement properly requires the role and leadership of the school principal to empower school resources. One of them is to mobilize the school community by providing motivation to improve the performance of members so that the implementation of the literacy program goes well and achieves maximum results. Magnusson (2020) revealed that for the sake of the smooth process of increasing learning literacy, school principals need to create a positive school climate to spur positive feelings for teachers while working, and have an impact on students' enthusiasm for learning, for example by providing motivation, and having positive conversations. In the next effort, school principals need to develop literacy programs such as literacy competitions and giving rewards to students.

### **Third, the role of the principal as a role model.**

Sharrat & Sharrat (2006) that in realizing learning practices to improve student literacy achievement, there are things that school principals do, one of which is being a role model. This allows the principal to demonstrate it in carrying out its role in the school. The behavior of the principal as a leader must have exemplary values that can be emulated by teachers and staff which might increase teacher confidence in expressing their abilities, such as enthusiasm for work, advising each other, helping each other, giving examples, and giving feedback, so that the ability of teachers and staff will be awakened, and increased confidence in their colleagues.

### **Finally, the role of the principal as the person in charge.**

W. Duncan (2019) that in implementing literacy, school principals need to ensure the availability of needs and support for the smooth running of the teaching and learning process in all classrooms. Its implementation involves the literacy team developing literacy programs, conducting monitoring, monitoring literacy programs, evaluating strategies, and seeking external support for program success. Kartini & Yuhana (2019) state that school principals have an important role in the success of the literacy culture program, namely: 1) dissemination of the School Literacy Movement policy to implementers in meeting activities, 2) always reminding the literacy program in the mandate of the Monday ceremony, 3) and from throughout the literacy program, the principal acts as the person in charge

Based on the statement above, the leadership role of the principal in developing a school literacy culture is: 1) the role of the principal as a school policy maker, 2) the role of the principal as a motivator, 3) the role of the principal as a role model, and 4) the role of the principal as the person in charge. The first point is the principal as a policy maker. The school principal makes a policy that includes plans to be carried out to create a culture of student literacy in schools and is integrated with the management functions namely planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC), including strategies to be implemented, stakeholders who will be involved in realizing and supporting literacy programs, school budget allocations for literacy programs, provision of infrastructure that supports literacy culture. When policy making requires the involvement of the school community to express their opinions, deliberation to reach a consensus so that later implementation can be carried out with enthusiasm and can achieve goals effectively.

Furthermore, the role of the principal as a motivator. Principals need to have the ability to arouse their enthusiasm to complete tasks well. Establishing a harmonious relationship, relaxed and positive chat, giving praise, or appreciation, will make teachers and staff feel very valued and trusted for their involvement in the realization of a school literacy culture. Giving the same motivation also needs to be given to students, for example giving additional value, prizes and so on, which can make students more enthusiastic about actively participating in school literacy programs. So that efforts to implement a school literacy culture need to get along with enthusiasm to obtain the expected and achieved results.

Then, the role of the principal as a role model. The principal as a leader has characteristics and attitudes that have the potential to be imitated by school members, especially members, which can have an effect on the

quality of service in schools. Members must have the notion that what the leader does must be good in terms of morale or performance so that they become role models. The principal needs to realize that he is in the spotlight of his members, and the principal should be able to control his character and attitude in front of members or the entire school community, and continue to share good things so that they are also affected by goodness, and can also have a good impact on efforts to realize school literacy culture.

Finally, the role of the principal as the person in charge. The principal has a role as the person in charge, including in the realization of students' literacy culture at school. The principal is responsible for everything that is done either by himself or by members and members of the school community, whether it is good or not good in terms of morale and performance, so the principal needs to continue to monitor, introspect, evaluate, and ensure that all members and school members carry out their roles properly, the process of implementing a literacy culture goes according to plan, there are no things or individuals that deviate from the rules or plans, which can harm the school or hinder the achievement of school goals. The most important point is that the school principal is able to account for the policies that have been set, and when encountering obstacles, the principal can handle it well. Basically the key to the quality and success of a school literacy program or school goals is how the principal can carry out his leadership role properly.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the previous discussion, the authors can conclude that efforts to develop a school literacy culture through school programs require the leadership role of the school principal. The leadership role is none other than to manage all components of the school through the practice of management functions, so that the principal can deploy these components to maximize the implementation of new or developed programs to realize a better school literacy culture. In addition, the leadership role of the school principal is also to move members to work together in achieving school goals and efforts to transfer positive values to improve the quality of member performance. The leadership role of the school principal, 1) as a school policy maker; 2) as a motivator; 3) as a role model; 4) as the person in charge. The implementation of these roles will be maximized if the principal maintains good relations with stakeholders and the community, including parents/guardians of students. This is done in addition to creating harmonious relationships inside and outside the school, as well as to make it easier for school principals to collaborate with them in efforts to achieve school goals including the development of a school literacy culture.

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