

The Principal's Skills in Implementing The Improvement of Learning Excellence:

Multi-Case Study at Three Excellent Senior High Schools in Semarang

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Abstract—The goal of the research is to describe and analyze the principal's skills in implementing the improvement of learning excellence. This study used a qualitative approach with the design of the multi-case study. Data collection methods used are interviews, observation, and study of the document. The validity of the data is done with credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The data collected from the three techniques were organized, interpreted, and analyzed repeatedly, both inside-case analysis and across-case analysis in order to draft concepts and the abstract of research findings. The results show that the principal's skills in implementing the excellent enhancement was proved by the results of principal's performance through the acquisition of academic and non-academic achievement which were accomplished by the students and determined by the prominent principal's skills in terms of: technical skills in the scope of learning, implementing the theory of recent learning, creating the program of staff development, computer skills and adequate foreign language skills.

Keywords—*managerial skills, the principal's skill in implementing, the learning excellence.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The success of a school is highly determined by a principal in coordinating, motivating, and harmonizing all educational resources. The principal's leadership is a motivating factor to realize the vision, mission, goals, and targets. Therefore, the principal is required to have managerial skills and strong leadership. It means that the principal must be able to manage and develop the curriculum, to enhance the learning, to provide good service to students, to manage the finances and facilities, and to build relationships to the society [1].

The fact in the field shows that the managerial skills of a principal in managing the school are truly demanded and need arts in the process of management. The number of private high school that closes down and gets no student cannot be separated from the principal's managerial role as the school administrator. Several studies and surveys that have been done are. The first is a research that has been conducted by Luthans [2], et al, which tests 52 managers in

three organizations. The main focus is to identify skills by comparing between the effective managerial skills and the ineffective managerial skills. The result shows that there are significant differences in the following skills. Those are: (1) building up power and influencing; (2) communicating with insiders and outsiders; (3) setting goals; (4) managing the conflict; (5) deciding decision. The second is, a research which is conducted by Camp, et al [2], and focuses his research on "why do managers fail?". The sample of the research involves 830 managers in several industries in the United States. The research includes 166 focus groups. The findings of his research are the failure of managers due to: (a) the ineffective communication skills; (b) the weakness of human skills/interpersonal; (c) the failure in explaining the expectations; (d) the delegation of weak authority; (e) the inability to develop cooperation group/team work; (f) the inability to motivate others; (g) the lack of giving credence. The third is a survey which is conducted to 428 administrative personnel by asking them about the managerial skills needed to succeed in their organizations. Based on the research, the survey shows that the managerial skills needed to succeed in an organization have: (1) human skills; (2) written communication; (3) the excitement in working; (4) technical skills; (5) the ability in listening and giving advice [2].

The findings and observations in the field are found that career as a very brilliant principal makes the school into a good school [3], and an excellent school [4], because the principal has the ability, knowledge, and good management in improving learning excellence. The low quality of principal's managerial skills will certainly impact the low professional competence of teachers. Therefore, when this happens, then it is necessary to improve the quality of principal's managerial skills that include conceptual skills, human skills, and technical skills of the concerned principal.

From the explanation above, it can be understood that the principal's managerial role to the progress of the school, essentially is a planner, organizer, and school organization controller [5], the principal must be able to work with and through others [6], whose primary task is to improve the quality of teaching and to manage the learning activities

professionally[7]. The success of a principal in improving learning skills is determined by the principal skills in managing human aspects and non-human aspects in a school work organization by applying managerial functions such as planning, implementing, and evaluating all activities in the school, especially in terms of improvement of learning excellence.

Nevertheless, every principal has the skills which are varied, unique and interesting in managing and improving learning excellence. Various differences in characteristics about principal's managerial skills and learning excellence which are designed and implemented in three schools are something that is unique and interesting to be researched and revealed more deeply in terms of research.

To understand the basic concepts of principal's managerial skills, based on studies and expert opinion, it can be explained as follows. According to Katz [8], in his book entitled: "Skills of an Effective Administrator", he identifies three managerial skills that are essential to the success of the manager namely: technical, human, and conceptual. The three managerial skills can be explained as follows. Technical skill involves process or technique knowledge and proficiency. Managers use the processes, techniques, and tools of a specific area. Human skill involves the ability to interact effectively with people. Managers interact and cooperate with employees. Conceptual skill involves the formulation of ideas. Managers understand abstract relationships, develop ideas, and solve problems creatively. Thus, technical skill deals with things, human skill concerns people, and conceptual skill has to do with ideas [8]; [9]; [10]; [11]; [12].

The analysis of each skill reveals that at any level the leader must emphasize the attention more on human skills. Why is it like that? Because the job of a leader is always faced with the human element in an organization that has specific dynamics and also becomes a decisive factor for the success of the organization's mission [13]. The advantage of learning lies in the design and implementation of learning that emphasizes the giving of adequate treatment and opportunity to those required by each student who have individual differences in terms of certain psychic [14]. Bafadal [5], the excellent learning can be interpreted as follows. The excellent learning is a teaching-learning process that is developed in order to make all students study based on the differences in the level of excellence (individual differences), to make the students have faith and piety to God Almighty, master science and technology independently but still in togetherness, and produce the best work in facing free competition of the world.

Meanwhile, Ardhana [15], the excellent learning is the condition of teaching learning process that allows all children to be able to develop themselves to the maximum limit of their ability. The excellent learning can be stated excellent, at least it must comply three requirements, namely, (a) can serve all students (not just part of students),

(b) in the excellent learning all children get learning experiences as much as possible, and (c) although all students get the maximum learning experience, the process varies depending on their skill level and characteristics [5]. The same thing, according to Mangieri in Ardhana [15], suggests eight conditions that allow an institution to achieve excellence, namely: (1) a rigorous curriculum, (2) competent teachers, (3) the characteristics of effectiveness, (4) testing to prove that the students have achieved something, (5) the society support and parents involvement, (6) an adequate financing, (7) strong discipline, (8) the linkage on traditional values. These eight conditions are certainly arbitrary because they can still be increased or reduced.

The purpose of this research, in general, is to describe and analyze the principal's skills in implementing the improvement of learning excellence.

II. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with the design of the multi-case study. The data collecting technique are interviews, participant observation, and documentation study. Checking the data credibility was done by using triangulation technique, member checking, and peer discussion. While the data auditability checking conducted by the supervisor, and someone which asked as independent auditor. The data which collected through those three techniques were organized, interpreted, and analyzed repeatedly through the case analysis and cross-case analysis in order to draft concepts and abstractions of research findings.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the cross-case analysis and matrices the research findings can be compiled as follows. First, the characteristics of learning excellence found in the excellent schools were: the implementation of discipline in teaching learning process; approach in teaching learning process which is begun by respecting the child and supported by learning motivation and high students learning readiness; more educational provision; learning materials which were delivered deeper; more fun teaching-learning process; demanding on creative and innovative teachers; more students activities at school; the implementation of competence based on the activities; oriented on students achievement which is supported by the ability on scientific experiments activities; and seriousness in the development of curriculum and teaching-learning process.

Second, the principal's skills in implementing the enhancement of learning excellence was evidenced by the results of the principal's performance through the academic achievement and non-academic achievement which were accomplished by the student and also determined by the

principal's skills which were stand in: technical skills in the scope of learning, implementing the theory of recent study, creating the program of staff development, computer skills and an adequate foreign language skills

Based on the research findings above, there are two things described in this discussion, they are:

The learning excellence

Teaching learning needs to be managed properly in order to achieve the optimal results and has good academic also non-academic achievement. To achieve those, the school needed to have competitiveness, learning excellence, quality assurance of each student and to have a commitment to be excellent. The existence of schools now days much demanding by new students and the parents trust more on the implementation of the school program. One of the motivating factors was because schools had learning excellence. Characteristics of learning excellence were found in this research basically same as Bafadal's opinion [5], in the excellent learning all students get same learning experience as much as possible. The teaching learning process which is developed in the three schools as the subject of this research were ICT-based learning/the utilization of modern technologies in learning process basically support the idea in Isjoni [16] about the benefits of ICT in learning process that helps to convey information and the routine tasks can be solved quickly and automatically by using computer; and also able to obtain and to send information easily and quickly. The research findings are in line with the opinion of Rosjidan [17], the excellence learning process can be seen in the teacher's behavior which can combine various elements of education on the improvement of student's achievement in the cognitive (intellectual), affective and psychomotor based on each students' potential. The findings of this research were also in accordance with the opinion of Mangieri in Ardhana [15], stated that for achieving an excellence the educational institution must observe seven things, namely: strict discipline, rigorous curriculum, competent teachers, their characteristics of effectiveness, testing to prove that the students have achieved something, the society support, and parents' involvement, and an adequate financing.

According to the researcher, the steps taken in learning development for the future learning process are (a) teachers must be skilled in teaching and learning process; (b) the use and availability of learning infrastructure to facilitate the learning process; (c) the use of technology information; (d) the attention to the learning equipment used in teaching learning process; (e) teaching learning process by using competence based project method; (f) the provision of information from skilled and professional teacher to the novice teacher; (g) the implementation of innovative learning by the MGMP's teacher (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran), workshops, and do the MGMP meeting in level of district/city, provincial and national; (h) having communication with the vice principal in curriculum

department and other vice principals of other departments ; (i) the use of team teaching; and (j) best service from teacher to the society

The Principal's Skills In Implementing The Improvement of Learning Excellence.

The findings show that the principal skills in implementing the learning excellence are: principal have the technical skills in the field of adequate learning; principal has adequate teaching ability; principal is able to understand teaching-learning method, be a teacher and familiar with various curriculum; principal is skilled in applying and implementing the latest learning theories, principal has good ability to supervise and able to monitor the implementation of teaching learning process well.

The findings are in line with the opinion of Robert [18], technical skills namely: (1) the supervision abilities. Supervision of teaching, development, and improvement of curriculum and evaluation program are one of the most important responsibilities of the principal. Given the importance of it, the principals need to upgrade the quality of education through creativity, cooperative and constructive supervision; and (2) the teaching ability. And an opinion expressed by Katz [8]; [14], that the technical skills associated with special knowledge.

The principal's skills in implementing the learning excellence which was found in this research are in line with the opinion of Hersey and Blanchard [13], stated that technical skill is the ability to use knowledge, methods, techniques, and equipment needed to carry out specific tasks. These skills gained from experience, education, and training. Technical skills include the ability to communicate; supply, use, and report on the use of equipment and funds; arrange a time schedule required to perform certain tasks, which include budgeting skills; financial/financing; computer skills; Internet skills; and competence in technical fields [19], ability in finance field, management techniques and a computer skill [2]; skills for accomplishing specific tasks through the use of knowledge, methods, techniques and so on [20], have good language skills; understand on teaching technique and able to be a teacher; implement the recent learning theory; familiar with various curriculum; maintaining good relationships with the teachers and the staff [21]; arrange and delegate a time schedule scheduling and delegating [22].

Things which are needed to be developed by the principal according to the researcher related to the principal skill in implementing the learning excellence is to coordinate the activity of learning in a professional, make decisions which in line with the human resource and school's priority, provide the opportunity for teachers to work and learn together, develop and implements professional learning and create a conducive school environment.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings above it can be concluded. First, the existence of schools in the excellent schools level is determined by a number of excellent learning which had by the school and the principal involvement in enhancing and maintaining progress to make innovations and changes, so that school remains stable and lasts until nowadays. Second, the principal's skills in implementing learning excellence is proved by the results of principal performance through the acquisition of academic and non-academic achievement and the achievement which are accomplished by the students and determined by the prominent principal's skills in term of: technical skills in the scope of learning, implementing the theory of recent learning, creating the program of staff development, computer skills and an adequate foreign language skills. The success of principals in enhancing the excellence learning is also determined by the principal's skills in managing human and non-human aspects and also able to work with and through others.

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