



Implementation of Strategic Management by School Principals to Improve the Quality of Islamic Educational Institutions

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji tentang penerapan manajemen strategik oleh kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di SD Islam Bilingual An Nisa Semarang. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, penelitian ini melibatkan wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen untuk mengumpulkan data dari berbagai sumber. Analisis data dilakukan cara reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala sekolah telah berhasil menerapkan manajemen strategik, meliputi perumusan visi, misi, dan strategi yang jelas, implementasi yang efektif, dan evaluasi yang berkelanjutan. Penerapan ini berdampak positif pada peningkatan kualitas pembelajaran, prestasi siswa, dan citra sekolah. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa manajemen strategik merupakan pendekatan yang efektif dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di sekolah Islam Bilingual.

Kata Kunci: Manajemen Strategik, Mutu Pendidikan, Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah, Sekolah Dasar Islam Bilingual

Abstract

This study examines the implementation of strategic management by the principal in improving the quality of education at An Nisa Bilingual Islamic Elementary School, Semarang. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, this study involved in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis to collect data from various sources. Data analysis was carried out by means of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that the principal has successfully implemented strategic management, including the formulation of a clear vision, mission, and strategy, effective implementation, and ongoing evaluation. This implementation has a positive impact on improving the quality of learning, student achievement, and school image. The study concludes that strategic management is an effective approach in improving the quality of education at Bilingual Islamic schools.

Keywords: *Strategic Management, Quality of Education, Principal Leadership, Bilingual Islamic Elementary School*

Introduction

Education is an irreplaceable foundation in building human civilization. In the context of an individual's life, education opens the door to a broader range of knowledge, skills, and understanding. Meanwhile, on a larger scale, education plays a role as a driving force for the progress of a nation. Quality education provides individuals with the necessary provisions to live a meaningful and productive life. Through education, a person not only acquires academic knowledge, but also trains creativity, competence in problem-solving and critical thinking. In the face of the challenges of the ever-evolving times, all these elements are very important. Education has a deeper meaning, namely as an effort to provide noble values to future generations. Through education, humans can improve their quality of life and civilization. Without education, humans will be left behind and unable to develop. Therefore, quality education will determine the progress and retreat of a nation (Fathurrohman, 2005).

The laws and regulations that govern the national education system Number 20 of 2003, affirm that education must be provided with high standards with the aim of developing the potential of every student. In Article 3 of the National Education System Law, it is stated that national education is oriented to the formation of a complete human being, namely individuals who have strong faith, noble character, are physically and mentally healthy, knowledgeable, competent, creative, independent, have a democratic and independent spirit. This goal is in line with the broader function of

national education, which is to build virtuous abilities, characters, and civilizations to realize a smart national life. (National Education System in 2003). High-quality human resources will be produced through good education, which has the ability to encourage development in various fields. In this case, schools as formal educational institutions are required to meet the goal of national education, which is to create a high-quality next generation. It is not surprising that the quality of education is one of the main topics in various discussions, workshops, and educational seminars.

The quality of education in Indonesia shows disparity with the need for competent individuals in their fields in the era of globalization. UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report in 2016 ranked Indonesia's education quality at 10th out of 14 developing countries, with teacher quality ranked lowest (Utami, 2019). Data from worldtop20.org (International Education Database, 2024) also indicates that Indonesia's position is in the 67th position out of 209 countries based on the level of participation and graduation of education. In addition, the results of the 2022 PISA survey reinforce the indication of the low quality of education in Indonesia with 68th place in mathematics, science, and reading literacy (PISA 2022 Results (Volume III), 2024).

These empirical data underscore the urgency of improving the quality of education in Indonesia. The challenges of globalization and increasingly intense competition demand the availability of high-quality human resources. The demographic bonus that Indonesia is experiencing should be a momentum to optimize the potential of human resources

through improving the quality of education. In the context of competition between educational institutions, adaptive and visionary leadership is crucial. Leaders of educational institutions are required to be able to respond to global changes and developments dynamically, as well as formulate effective strategies to improve the quality of education in their respective institutions (Rosnita, 2023).

In the context of global competition, quality is the key to success as well as essential competitiveness. Possession of superior quality opens up significant opportunities to win competitions in various sectors (Nuryakin, 2018). The relationship between the education system and the implementation of the educational process has a significant impact on the overall quality of education. Karwati and Priansa identified ten determinants that affect the quality of education, including: principal leadership, active participation of teachers, effectiveness of the teaching and learning process, continuous professional development of teachers, curriculum that is adaptive to the needs of students and the demands of the times, clear and directed vision and mission of the school, a conducive and supportive school climate, comprehensive and quality-oriented assessments, effective communication between all education stakeholders, as well as the active involvement of parents and the community in the education process (Karwati & Priansa, 2016). There are several factors that can be applied by schools to improve the quality of educational output, so as to produce graduates who not only master science and technology, but also have a solid faith according to the expectations of the

community. The application of strategic management in education management in schools is the key to achieving this goal (Yaakob, 2019). In this case, the leadership of school principals plays a crucial role in improving the quality of education (Isnaini et al., 2023).

Education management must adapt to the times that continue to develop, meaning that all resources that affect the educational process must be managed comprehensively and integrated, paying attention to aspects of planning, implementation, control, and evaluation. In this case, schools are required to have managerial competencies that include the ability to design strategic, realistic, systematic, and logical work patterns. In the face of increasing competitiveness and the demands of change caused by globalization, the implementation of strategic management has become a must for educational institutions. Through strategic management, educational institutions can improve competitiveness, quality of educational services, and the ability to anticipate the dynamics of changes that occur. (Rosnita, 2023).

Strategic management can be an effective solution in overcoming the problem of modern education management. This approach is future-oriented and is based on a comprehensive analysis of the organization's internal and external environment. The larger the scale of an organization, the more complex and diverse the forms of interaction that occur in dealing with this environment. This complexity has implications for increasing difficulties in the decision-making process. The implementation of strategic management allows schools to effectively and efficiently control all operational

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aspects, from planning to implementation at the operational level, so that the goals and objectives that have been set can be achieved. Through the stages in strategic management, schools can consider decisions, follow-ups, and the right choice of strategies in the face of changes and developments in dynamic educational conditions (Siagian, 2012).

Strategic management is an ongoing activity that involves top management and all human resources in the organization. This process produces decisions that are relevant to the internal needs of the organization as well as the demands of the external environment (Murniati and Usman, 2008). Related to the education sector, through strategic management, school principals are expected to be able to formulate and set appropriate strategies. The strategy not only ensures the sustainability of the organization, but also strengthens the necessary adaptive and innovative skills. Thus, educational organizations can optimize performance and results on an ongoing basis. (Walker, 2010). Principals are directly responsible for the success and smooth operation of the school, both formally to a higher authority and informally to the community that entrusts their children's education. In developed countries, many terms are used for school principals, including "head teacher" (principal teacher or master teacher), "principal" (principal), "principal who teaches" (principal), "director" (director), "administrator", and "education leader" (Mantja, 2007). Marno (2008) emphasized that qualified school principals must have administrative abilities to optimize resources. In addition, the principal is also responsible for creating an environment

that encourages the enthusiasm and motivation of teachers and staff, as well as building effective communication with all stakeholders. Visionary leadership of school principals, complemented by quality-oriented strategic planning, is a crucial factor in improving the overall quality of education in schools (Siregar et al., 2022).

The leadership approach pattern applied by the principal in managing educational institutions has a significant impact on the perception and performance of all members he leads. Each approach pattern will create different dynamics in the school environment, affecting the motivation, participation, and work effectiveness of all school residents (Isnaini et al., 2023). Leadership changes in a school often raise expectations of performance changes, which can be a challenge in itself. Strategic management offers solutions in observing, managing, and evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of schools in achieving organizational performance and goals. In the context of strategic management, the principal acts as an effective coordinator, decision-maker, and facilitator in the implementation of the school's strategic program. This role involves coordinating teams over short, medium, and long periods of time to ensure that the plans that have been made can be implemented properly. The relationship between planning, implementation, and strategic evaluation across leadership is interrelated and cannot stand alone. Schools need to implement systematic measures that are coherent with the programs that have been and will be established. This approach aims to minimize the potential for a decline in school performance due to

leadership changes (Dermawan, 2020). As such, strategic management becomes an important framework to ensure the sustainability and improvement of school performance, regardless of leadership changes.

The principal holds a central position in the leadership of Islamic educational institutions. Mulyasa identified school principals as a determinant factor in the success of educational institutions, given their role as key leaders. Furthermore, Mulyasa stated that the success or failure of the school is greatly influenced by the principal, who acts as a controller and director in achieving the institutional goal, which is to create an effective, quality, and in-demand school. Therefore, school principals are required to be able to direct their institutions towards the achievement of the goals that have been set, as well as have the ability to adapt to change and have a clear vision in facing global dynamics (Mulyasa, 2004).

Strategic management can be applied in various fields, including Islamic education. Islamic education has a crucial role in shaping the foundation of an individual's life and guiding them towards a better path. Mujamil emphasized that the mission of Islamic education has a wider scope than general education, covering two main mission loads, namely the mission of intellectual development and the mission of shaping Islamic character. These two missions must be realized by each Islamic educational institution to achieve excellence (Qomar, 2013). The implementation of strategic management in Islamic education in various schools aims to integrate Islamic values into the curriculum and learning. These values are expected to form students who are not only

knowledgeable, but also have an open, tolerant, and sensitive character to social problems in community life.

In its development, Islamic educational institutions have reached to remote rural areas. However, this rapid quantitative growth, according to Baharuddin, is not balanced by strong management. The fact that thousands of Islamic educational institutions are developing rapidly raises concerns among observers, including Zuhri, that the progress is only focused on quantitative matters and has not fully reflected a significant improvement in the quality of education (Baharuddin, 2012). Prim Masrokan emphasized the importance of implementing effective management in Islamic educational institutions that have expanded. Without adequate management, these institutions will not be able to develop and compete with other educational institutions, especially at risk of regression, lagging behind, and losing interest from the community or Muslims (Masrokan, 2014).

Islamic educational institutions such as Annisa Semarang Bilingual Islamic Elementary School always try to improve the quality of their education. The school succeeds because of its unique methods that blend a strong religious education with a strong mastery of the English language. Not only do students gain a deep understanding of Islamic principles and Quranic lessons, but they also learn to use English well from an early age. In addition, Annisa Semarang Bilingual Islamic Elementary School continues to develop school culture and culture with the aim of increasing student spirituality. A balanced curriculum ensures adequate quality of general education, and

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the Islamic learning environment plays an important role in shaping the character of students with positive values. This method works, as shown by the increase in achievement every year. The formation of a positive school climate and culture in increasing student spirituality shows that the role of the principal in selecting and implementing strategies to improve the quality of education is going well. Visionary and adaptive leadership is a crucial aspect in shaping a learning environment that supports the holistic development of students.

Given the urgency of effective management in maintaining and improving the quality of Islamic education, the author is interested in researching the role of school principals in improving the quality of Islamic education through a strategic management approach. This study will examine how school principals, as leaders of educational institutions, can design and implement appropriate strategies to achieve the goal of improving the quality of Islamic education.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive approach, with the aim of describing and explaining clearly the conditions in the field and describing the variables or circumstances in a certain case at SD Islam Bilingual Annisa Semarang (Kurniawan, 2018). The case study field research approach allows for the collection of detailed and in-depth information regarding various phenomena related to the formulation of the problem. The main informants in this study are the principal, deputy principal, and teachers. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, in-depth observations, and documentation techniques. Data analysis

was carried out using data reduction methods, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1992). This process involves systematically searching and structuring the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to produce valid and reliable findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Strategic Management of Islamic Education Institutions

Strategic management is the science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable organizations to achieve their goals" (Taufiqurokhman, 2016). Strategic management in the context of Islamic educational institutions can be defined as a series of comprehensive and sustainable managerial decisions and actions. This process includes three main stages, namely formulation, implementation, and evaluation of the strategy, both for the short and long term. In its implementation, strategic management involves all resources owned by Islamic educational institutions, both human and non-human resources. These resources are mobilized and managed strategically to achieve the objectives set by the board. This approach allows Islamic educational institutions to respond to environmental changes adaptively, optimize the use of resources, and achieve competitive advantages in an effort to improve the quality of education (Kurniawati, 2017).

Strategic management in Islamic educational institutions is an integrated and goal-oriented management approach. This approach includes three main stages, namely strategic planning, strategic implementation, and strategic evaluation, which involves all resources in the institution, both human resources and other

resources, to achieve the goals that have been set effectively and efficiently.

Stages of Strategic Management of Islamic Education Institutions

In practice, strategic management involves three main stages that are interrelated, namely strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation (Amin, 2004).

1. Strategy Formulation

This stage is the first step in strategic management, where the organization formulates the vision, mission, and values that are the foundation for all its activities. Prim Masrokan emphasized that the formulation of a strategy must reflect the real goals and desires of the organization. In addition, organizations also need to conduct internal and external environmental analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that can affect the achievement of goals. The results of this analysis are then used as a basis in formulating the right strategy (Masrokan, 2014).

2. Implementation

Once the strategy is formulated, the next step is implementation. Hunger and Wheelen define strategy implementation as the process of translating strategies and policies into concrete actions. This process involves developing the programs, budgets, and procedures necessary to execute the strategy. Strategy implementation can also include changes in organizational culture, organizational structure, and overall management systems. The success of strategy implementation is highly dependent on the commitment and support of all members of the organization (Hunger and Wheelen, 2003).

3. Evaluation

The final stage in strategic management is evaluation. Strategy evaluation aims to monitor and evaluate the results of the formulation and implementation of strategies, including comprehensively measuring organizational performance. Evaluations are carried out periodically to ensure that the strategies carried out are still relevant and effective in achieving goals. If deviations or discrepancies are found, it is necessary to take corrective steps to ensure that the strategy continues to run according to the plan (Winardi Karshi, 1997).

Implementation of Strategic Management of Islamic Educational Institutions in Improving the Quality of Education.

1. Strategic Formulation in Improving the Quality of Education

The formulation of the school's vision and mission begins with an environmental assessment, both external and internal, to identify educational needs that have not been met. External assessment includes an analysis of social, cultural, political, economic, technological, and trends that can affect the school. The result is in the form of opportunities that must be taken advantage of and threats that need to be avoided. Internal assessments focus on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of schools (Jerome S, 2005). SD Islam Bilingual An Nisa Semarang makes student achievement and morals, competent human resources and an integrated curriculum that combines Islamic religious education with intensive English learning, as a strength to achieve the vision and mission. The great public demand for bilingual Islamic education, and the development of educational

technology are considered opportunities to continue to grow.

The next step taken by SD Islam Bilingual An Nisa Semarang is the formulation of vision and mission. This process involves in-depth discussion and evaluation in annual work meetings. The existing vision and mission are evaluated for their relevance to the current conditions. If it is still relevant, it will be maintained, but if not, then changes will be made to ensure conformity with the goals and direction of school development. After the vision and mission are formulated, the next step is to determine specific and measurable goals and targets to support the success of strategic planning. It is known that the vision of SD Islam Bilingual An Nisa is "Producing a young generation who are able to speak international languages and master science and technology and IMTAQ." This vision reflects the school's long-term goal, which is to produce graduates who not only have foreign language skills, but also competencies in the field of science and technology (IPTEK) and have noble morals (IMTAQ). In the framework of strategic management, this vision serves as a guide for all school activities.

SD Islam Bilingual An Nisa Semarang formulates strategies through a working meeting forum. Curriculum development, and bilingual program development, are the two main priorities to improve the quality of learning. In addition, the school also invests in improving the quality of human resources, both teachers and staff, through professional development, empowerment, and improved welfare. Other strategies include improving student academic achievement and school image, creating a

harmonious school environment, and procuring and standardizing infrastructure. Improving the quality of facilities and infrastructure is considered an important factor in achieving the educational goals that have been set.

SD Islam Bilingual An Nisa Semarang in improving student achievement implements various strategies, such as maximizing the addition of English lesson hours to improve language skills, as well as Al-Qur'an literacy programs, Juz Amma memorization, daily prayers and various extracurricular activities with the guidance of professional teachers to develop students' non-academic potential. Furthermore, building the image of the institution through close social relations with other educational institutions and the community. This relationship is built through two-way communication that aims to improve the quality of education collaboratively. This approach is in line with Prim Masrokan's theory of strategy formulation, which emphasizes the importance of vision, mission, values, and a deep understanding of the organization's internal and external environment in achieving desired goals (Maskoran, 2008).

2. Implementation of Strategic Management in Improving the Quality of Education

Strategy implementation in the context of strategic management is the process of turning strategy into action and supervising those actions so that the strategy is achieved. Principals have an important role to play in this process by utilizing all available resources, both human and non-human. The placement of human resources according to their abilities and the maximum use of non-

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human resources will be the key to the successful implementation of the strategy. On the other hand, if resource management is not done properly, the strategy that has been created will not be realized.

In the implementation of the strategy that has been formulated, SD Islam Bilingual An Nisa Semarang designs a series of programs that are executed by a team or appointed coordinator. In an effort to improve the quality of learning, the curriculum team conducts an in-depth analysis of student needs and the latest developments in the world of education, which are then integrated into a curriculum enriched with Islamic values, character education, and 21st century skills. The bilingual program is also strengthened by the recruitment of qualified teachers, gradual implementation from elementary to advanced levels, and the provision of engaging and interactive learning resources. Improving the quality of human resources is another main focus. Schools regularly organize training for teachers and staff, encourage participation in external seminars and workshops, and provide adequate incentives and facilities to improve their well-being. Improving students' academic achievement is also a major concern, with English strengthening through activities such as English Day, various extracurricular activities, and personalized tutoring services. Furthermore, carry out religious programs such as morning prayers and asmaul husna recitation every morning, memorization of short letters, religious lectures, and religious competitions. Students are also invited to participate in socio-religious activities, such as sharing with orphans.

The school is also actively building a positive image through strategic

partnerships with various educational institutions and related agencies, targeted publications through various social media platforms, and involving active community participation in school activities. A harmonious and conducive school environment is created through the strengthening of Islamic values, an active learning approach that encourages student participation, and open communication between all stakeholders. In addition, the school also continues to strive to improve the quality of educational facilities and infrastructure to meet the set standards.

The principal carries out the control function through intensive communication with the coordinator, direct observation, and periodic monitoring of the progress of the program. The supervision strategy implemented is adaptive, including the direct involvement of school principals in the field, the use of morning apple forums, and regular meetings with coordinators and deputy principals. This flexible approach allows school principals to comprehensively evaluate the effectiveness of strategy implementation, ensure alignment of actions with predetermined goals, and take corrective steps if necessary. Although delegating implementation techniques to activity coordinators is a common practice, a deep understanding of implementation techniques by a leader, in this case the principal, can improve the effectiveness of supervision and monitoring. By understanding the technical details, principals can identify potential problems early, provide more precise direction, and ensure the implementation of strategies goes according to plan.

3. Strategic Evaluation in Improving the Quality of Education

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The final stage in the strategic management process is the assessment and evaluation of the progress of the educational institution towards its strategic goals. Educational institutions that consider the process to be completed after the planning is implemented tend to face failure. It is important for educational institutions to continuously monitor and evaluate their development. Periodic evaluation and assessment in strategic management is important to ensure the relevance of the strategy, identify obstacles, and encourage continuous learning in an educational institution to achieve its strategic objectives. At SD Islam Bilingual An Nisa, Semarang adopts a comprehensive strategy evaluation approach through forums, regular internal meetings, and comprehensive meetings. These forums serve as a forum to analyze the effectiveness of strategy implementation and formulate improvement efforts necessary for future strategy optimization.

The evaluation carried out includes two models identified by Akdon, namely formative evaluation, which is carried out at various stages of program implementation to measure the results and impact, and summative evaluation, which is carried out periodically in a predetermined time interval to observe developments and trends through the collection of time series data. The application of these two evaluation models reflects the school's commitment to improving the quality of education in a sustainable manner. The results of the strategy evaluation are not only used as a basis for school improvement and development, but also as a reference in improving the performance of school

residents, achieving the school's vision and mission, as well as benchmarks in the competition for education quality at various levels, both nationally and internationally.

Conclusion

This study underlines the significance of strategic management in optimizing the quality of education in Islamic educational institutions. Strategic management, which includes the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of strategies comprehensively, enables schools to achieve their educational goals optimally. The role of the principal as a strategic leader is crucial in directing and managing this process. SD Islam Bilingual An Nisa Semarang is a relevant case study in the implementation of strategic management. By formulating a targeted vision, mission, and strategy, as well as involving all stakeholders in the implementation and evaluation process, this school has succeeded in significantly improving the quality of learning, student achievement, and the image of the institution. Strengthening bilingual programs, developing an integrative curriculum, improving the quality of human resources, and developing a conducive school environment are the main focuses in the strategy to improve the quality of education implemented.

This study provides empirical evidence that strategic management, when implemented holistically and sustainably, can be a determining factor for success in efforts to improve the quality of education in Islamic educational institutions. By comprehensively understanding and applying the principles of strategic management, Islamic schools can continue

to transform and contribute significantly to the progress of education in Indonesia.

Suggestion

Based on the findings of this study, it is hoped that Islamic educational institutions need to strengthen the implementation of strategic management by involving all stakeholders and continue to improve the competence of principals and teachers through continuous professional development. Optimal use of educational technology, collaboration with various parties, and continuous evaluation and improvement are also key in improving the quality of education in Islamic educational institutions.

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