



Developing School Culture through Transformational Leadership of the Principal at State Elementary School 167646, Padang Hilir District, Tebing Tinggi City

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Abstract

As the main leader in a school, the principal has a crucial role in building and developing a positive school culture. This study focuses on SDN 167646 in Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City. The approach used in this study is qualitative with descriptive methods. The main objective of this study is to analyze the development of school culture through the leadership of the principal at SDN 167646. By comparing the ideal conditions expected with the reality that occurs, this study is expected to contribute to improving the quality of education at the school. The results of the study indicate that the principal acts as a visionary leader, role model, cooperation facilitator, problem solver, and evaluator in forming a school culture that focuses on building student character, improving the quality of learning, and strengthening positive values. Although there are various challenges, such as resistance to change, budget constraints, and minimal parental involvement, the strategies implemented by the principal through a dialogic approach, teacher training, and cooperation with the community have succeeded in overcoming these obstacles. The resulting changes are seen in increased discipline, cooperation, and active participation of students in various school programs.

Keywords: Transformational, School, Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Learning is essentially a human life necessity with continuous efforts throughout his life, whether as an individual, social group or as a nation with the aim of improving all the abilities of the participants in preparing themselves to experience various challenges and obstacles in their lives (Muspiroh, 2018). Not only that, learning is an effort to instill morals, morals, values to students in order to create character and character. Furthermore, learning urges students to realize these values in everyday life. The success of learning includes the occurrence of students who have character, morals, culture, politeness, religious, creative, innovative and can apply it in life throughout their

lives. This is the dream of every school to continue to exist and compete to produce better output, both in terms of quality and quantity (Santosa et al., 2023).

Learning is one of the important aspects in the development of a country. One of the learning institutions that has a strategic position in the formation of personality and culture is the lower school. The principal as the main leader in the school has a very vital position in improving good school culture. One of the lower schools that is the focus of the research is SD Negeri 167646 in Padang Hulu District, Tebing Besar City. Based on the Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 13 of 2007, it states that the standards for school or madrasah principals

have 5 competencies. The 5 competencies that must be possessed by the principal are character, managerial, entrepreneurial, supervisory, and social competencies. The character competencies that must be possessed by the principal must have noble morals, have integrity, open behavior in carrying out their duties and positions, and be able to manage themselves in problems throughout their leadership (Riswandi et al., 2021). After that, managerial competencies must be possessed by a principal, not just competencies in leading. Managerial competencies that must be possessed by the principal include being able to carry out management functions in managing his school in formulating work programs and coordinating the implementation of programs so that it can produce a healthy culture in his organization and be able to overcome the changes that occur (Ariyanti, 2020).

The competencies that must be possessed by the principal are not only character and managerial, the principal should have entrepreneurial competencies. This competency will help schools in increasing attention and motivation to have an entrepreneurial spirit. This competency will create a hard-working spirit in producing innovation to manage their school into an efficient school. The fourth competency that must be possessed by the principal is supervisory competency. This competency is used to regulate and improve the quality of teacher performance in organizing learning so that they can provide good and sustainable guidance to their members (Ridho, 2019).

Not infrequently, principals are less able to practice the supervision process (Guntoro, 2020). The principal can improve teacher performance by providing coaching and direction to teachers to explore activities that can improve teacher quality, such as exploring workshops, seminars, and webinars (Setiyadi & Rosalina, 2021). After that, the fifth competency of the principal is social competence. The social competence possessed by the principal will help teacher

performance because the principal will be able to work well together, have sensitivity to his members, and always participate in social activities. In order for leadership to successfully empower all school energy sources, especially in terms of developing school culture to achieve goals, a principal who needs skills is needed, must recognize: character, subordinate skills, experience, training and knowledge (Syarifudin & Ginanjar, n.d.). The principal's leadership will result in a school atmosphere that is reflected both physically, socially and academically, will allow the educational process to take place efficiently, educators and education personnel are safe in the workplace, residents have a healthy, enjoyable work area, have good ties with partners such as parents of students and the wider community (Marcela, n.d.). A good school culture is a culture that prepares students who want to enter a civilized, humanistic, religious, and case-sensitive society (Rachmah, 2018).

One of the models of school culture is Islamic culture which has a certain color and is in accordance with the objectives of national learning, namely improving students' personalities. With the presence of Islamic culture in schools or with the presence of Islamic learning culture, it is possible to bring and introduce Islamic religious values so that students always explore the values of Islamic teachings in their development process and can form students' character, namely moral values. Not only that, they can realize the values of religious teachings. Improving Islamic culture means improving religious life from the teachings of Islamic values which are manifested in students' behavior in playing roles and behaving (Junaedi & Falah, 2023). One of the reasons why the Principal practices this Islamic culture is because of the current moral crisis that has attacked all levels of society from top to bottom, so this is what underlies the importance of practicing Islamic culture in the school area to protect individual students and the school area from the moral crisis that is growing at

this time. The leadership position of the principal is very important for improving Islamic culture in schools because the principal has a great influence in shaping the atmosphere and values adopted in the school area. The principal has the power to shape the school culture. For Hadi (2017), the principal's leadership has a significant influence on the development of school culture. A principal who is able to provide clear direction and motivate all elements in the school will be able to create a conducive learning area.

This is in line with research conducted by Smith (2015) which reported that a principal who has an inclusive leadership style can create a harmonious and productive school culture. SD Negeri 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Besar City is an educational institution that is one of the references and is categorized as a favorite school in the Tebing Besar area, the indication can be seen from the residents' confidence in choosing this school as a place to study for their children. SD Negeri 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Besar City cultivates positive values that support the realization of school effectiveness, including a culture of discipline, a culture of honesty, a culture of reading, a culture of clean, orderly and comfortable living, a culture of achievement and others. This is in line with the social culture of the Tebing Tinggi community so that this school can be accepted and survive among the Tebing Besar community.

However, the factual conditions that occur at SD Negeri 167646 show challenges in developing school culture. According to data collected from the Ministry of Education and Culture (2019), the level of student participation in extracurricular activities at the school is still low. This indicates an imbalance between the programs offered by the school and the interests and needs of students. In this context, this study aims to examine the development of school culture through the leadership of the principal at SD Negeri

167646. By looking at the ideal conditions expected and the factual conditions that occur, it is hoped that this study can contribute to improving the quality of education at the school.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive overview of an event (Rusandi & Muhammad Rusli, 2021). The location of the research was carried out at SD Negeri 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Besar City. The selection of this location was based on the suitability of the school's objectives with the research theme. One of the goals of SD Negeri 167646 is to create a comfortable, safe, and enjoyable learning environment so that students can learn optimally and achieve better results. The data in this study were obtained through observation, namely a data collection method by conducting direct observations. In addition, data was also collected through interviews with various informants, including the principal, teachers, staff, and students. This study also utilizes documentation studies to record data that can be used as written or visual evidence.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. RESULTS

School culture is an important foundation in creating an educational environment that is conducive to the success of students, teachers, and all stakeholders. In this modern era, schools not only function as places of learning, but also as institutions that shape individual character, values, and behavior. To build a positive school culture, leadership is needed that is able to inspire and encourage change, one of which is through a transformational leadership approach. Sd Negeri 167646, located in Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City, is one example of an educational institution that can develop school culture effectively through the application of transformational

leadership by the principal. Transformational leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes vision, inspiration, motivation, and individual empowerment to achieve common goals. The principal acts as an agent of change who is able to move all elements of the school towards a better culture.

Challenges Faced by the Principal in Efforts to Develop School Culture at Sd Negeri 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City

School culture is an important element that reflects the values, norms, and practices that apply in an educational institution. A strong culture can create a conducive learning environment for students, support teacher professional development, and increase the involvement of all stakeholders. However, efforts to develop an ideal school culture are often not easy to do. The principal, as the main leader in the school, faces various challenges in creating and strengthening school culture. This was also felt by the principal of SD Negeri 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City. Although it has many benefits, the implementation of transformational leadership is not without challenges. Some of them are:

- Resistance to Change: Some teachers or staff may find it difficult to adapt to new approaches.
- Limited Resources: Lack of financial support or facilities can hinder the implementation of innovative programs.
- Lack of Training for Principals: Principals need to continue to hone their leadership skills in order to be able to carry out transformational roles effectively.

This is based on the results of an interview with the principal, namely that he said that "The main challenge is resistance to change from some teachers and staff. Some of them feel more comfortable with the old way of working. In addition, budget constraints are also a major obstacle, especially in funding programs that support

strengthening school culture, such as teacher training and student activities." Teachers are a key element in developing school culture. However, in some cases, principals face challenges in the form of a lack of commitment from teachers to support the programs designed. Some teachers may feel that their workload is too much or do not understand the importance of their contribution to shaping school culture. SD Negeri 167646 has diverse student and teacher backgrounds, both in terms of culture, social, and economy. These differences can be a challenge for principals in creating an inclusive culture that is acceptable to all parties. Principals must be able to understand individual needs while maintaining the alignment of the school's vision and mission. This is also based on the results of the researcher's interview with the principal, namely "There are still many parents who are less involved in school activities. Mostly because they are busy working. This makes it difficult for us to integrate the role of parents to support school culture programs. We are trying to improve communication with all parties through regular meetings, social media, and written announcements. In addition, we hold school activities that involve parents, such as competitions between students and parents. We also seek support from local sponsors to help overcome funding constraints."

Principals are often faced with limited resources, whether financial, material, or human. To develop a strong school culture, adequate support facilities, training programs, and self-development activities are needed. However, if the school budget is limited, implementing these programs becomes difficult. School culture is not only built by internal parties of the school, but also requires support from parents of students. One challenge that often arises is the lack of parental involvement in supporting school activities, either due to lack of time or awareness of the importance of their role.

This can hinder the development of an inclusive and collaborative school culture. Principals need adequate leadership skills to develop a strong school culture. However, leadership training for principals at the local level is often still limited, so principals must learn independently in facing various challenges. In the digital era, technology has become an important part of the world of education.

However, not all teachers and students in schools have the same access or ability to use technology to support the teaching and learning process. This is a challenge in itself in integrating technology into school culture. External environments such as the surrounding community, social media, and government policies also influence school culture. The principal must be able to respond to these external influences wisely so as not to interfere with efforts to develop school culture. This is based on the researcher's interview with the teacher, he said that: "The main obstacle is limited facilities. Some of the facilities in this school are quite old and need to be updated. In addition, coordination between teachers and staff is sometimes not optimal, especially when there are big activities. The school culture here is quite good, but still needs to be improved. For example, we need more activities that can build student character and strengthen the relationship between teachers, students, and parents. My suggestion is that the principal should provide regular training for teachers so that we are better prepared to support the school culture program. In addition, there needs to be a more creative approach to involving students and parents."

Developing school culture at SDN 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City, is a challenging task for the principal. Various obstacles such as resistance to change, limited resources, and lack of parental involvement require special attention. With strong leadership, a clear vision, and collaboration from all parties, these challenges can be overcome, so that a

positive and sustainable school culture can be created.

From the results of interviews with principals and teachers, the main challenges in developing school culture include resistance to change, budget constraints, lack of parental involvement, and limited time and facilities. However, various strategies such as improving communication, training, and collaboration with local sponsors have been carried out to overcome these challenges.

Strategies Used by the Principal to Overcome Challenges in Developing School Culture at Sd Negeri 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City

School culture is the foundation that forms the identity of an educational institution. At SDN 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City, the principal faces various challenges in developing a positive school culture. These challenges include resistance to change, limited resources, lack of parental involvement, and the diverse backgrounds of students and teachers. However, the principal plays an important role in facing these challenges by using various innovative and results-oriented strategies.

One of the main strategies used by the principal is to improve communication with all stakeholders, including teachers, students, staff, and parents. Through regular meetings, discussion forums, and the use of social media, the principal ensures that all parties understand the vision, mission, and values that the school wants to develop. This approach also aims to build a sense of shared ownership of the school culture, so that resistance to change can be minimized. Collaboration is also a major focus. The principal encourages the involvement of all parties in designing and implementing school programs. For example, the principal forms a working team consisting of teachers, staff, and parent representatives to design activities that support strengthening student character.

In the face of budget constraints, the principal implements creative resource management strategies. In addition to utilizing the school budget efficiently, the principal also collaborates with external parties, such as local governments, local communities, and private sponsors, to support school programs. Examples include obtaining assistance in the form of books, teaching aids, or funds for extracurricular activities. In addition, the principal seeks to develop internal training programs for teachers by utilizing existing human resources. Teachers with certain competencies are involved as mentors for their colleagues, so that professional development can be carried out without large additional costs. This is based on the results of an interview with the principal, who said:

"The main challenge I face is building commitment from all parties, including teachers, staff, and students. Not all teachers have the same passion for developing school culture. There are also obstacles related to limited funds, because many programs require costs to implement. In addition, parental involvement in supporting school programs is still lacking."

Parental involvement is one of the key elements in developing school culture. To address the low participation of parents, the principal holds activities that involve them directly, such as parenting seminars, family competitions, and collaborative social activities. In addition, the principal uses a personal approach to invite parents to get involved, such as discussing directly with them about the importance of supporting their children's education.

The principal focuses on developing programs that strengthen character values in the school. Programs such as "Pagi Inspiratif" where students, teachers, or parents share inspirational stories every morning, or "Jumat Berbagi" which involves social activities, are a means to instill values such as honesty, discipline, and cooperation. These programs are

designed to create an inclusive school culture and support the development of student character. In the digital era, principals strive to integrate technology into school culture. Although not all teachers and students have adequate technological skills, principals are gradually conducting training for teachers and utilizing available devices.

For example, the use of communication applications to facilitate coordination between teachers and parents, as well as the implementation of technology-based learning to increase student motivation. Principals realize that the success of developing a school culture is highly dependent on harmonious relationships among all members of the school community. Therefore, principals play an active role in creating a comfortable and open environment. Principals are always open to input and criticism, and give awards to teachers, staff, and students who excel to increase their motivation.

The principal routinely monitors and evaluates the programs that have been implemented. This is done to ensure that each strategy runs according to plan and has a positive impact on the development of school culture. In addition, the results of the evaluation are used to formulate steps for improvement in the future. He also said that:

"To overcome resistance, I prioritize a persuasive approach and communication. I often hold meetings to discuss new programs and explain their benefits, both for teachers, students, and the school as a whole. I also involve teachers directly in planning activities so that they feel they own the program. I try to hold activities that involve parents, such as parenting seminars, mutual cooperation activities, and family competition events. In addition, I also invite parents directly to discuss the importance of their role in supporting children's education. The indicators of success that I use are increased student discipline, harmonious relationships between teachers and students, and increased parental participation in

school activities. In addition, I also look at the results of the evaluation of programs that have been implemented."

Although these challenges are quite complex, the principal of SD Negeri 167646 can overcome them through several strategies, such as:

1. Improving Communication and Participation: The principal can build good communication with teachers, students, and parents to create a sense of shared ownership of the school culture.
2. Utilizing Resources Creatively: With limited budget, the principal can look for alternatives such as collaborating with local communities or sponsors to support school activities.
3. Conducting Training and Capacity Development: Leadership training and teacher professional development can be carried out routinely to improve their competence in supporting school culture.
4. Integrating Technology Gradually: The principal can start integrating technology gradually and provide training to teachers and students to utilize technology effectively.

The strategies used by the principal of SD Negeri 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City show a strong commitment to overcoming the challenges of developing school culture. By improving communication, optimizing resources, involving parents, developing character-based programs, utilizing technology, fostering harmonious relationships, and conducting ongoing monitoring, the principal has succeeded in creating a school culture that supports student growth and development and reflects positive values.

This success is proof that visionary and collaborative leadership can effectively face various challenges. Interview results show that principals and teachers face similar challenges in developing school culture, such as resistance to change, budget constraints, and lack of parental involvement. However, through communication strategies, involvement of all parties, and development of interesting

programs, they strive to overcome these challenges. Greater support from various parties, including facilities and active parental involvement, is expected to accelerate the development of a positive school culture at SD Negeri 167646.

The Role of the Principal in Developing School Culture at Public Elementary School 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City

School culture is an important foundation in creating a conducive, effective, and character-based educational environment. School culture includes values, norms, and habits that are adopted by all members of the school, including the principal, teachers, staff, students, and parents. The principal has a very vital role in developing a positive and sustainable school culture. At SDN 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City, the role of the principal is the key to success in creating an environment that supports the formation of character and student achievement. The principal at SDN 167646 has the responsibility to formulate a vision and mission that serve as a guide for all members of the school. As a visionary leader, the principal must be able to communicate this vision to teachers, staff, students, and parents. A clear and inspiring vision will be the basis for creating a school culture that is oriented towards the formation of student character, improving the quality of learning, and strengthening positive values. For example, the principal at SDN 167646 has established superior programs that reflect the values of discipline, cooperation, and responsibility. Programs such as Clean Friday, morning exercise together, and weekly religious activities have become part of the school culture that encourage students to have a caring attitude towards cleanliness, health, and spirituality. This is based on the researcher's interview with the principal, namely:

"Our vision is to create a school environment that is conducive to learning, based on the values of discipline,

cooperation, and character. The mission is to implement habituation programs, such as religious activities, literacy, and strengthening student character, in order to create a school culture that supports the development of student potential holistically."

The principal must be a role model in implementing positive values in the school environment. The behavior of the principal who is disciplined, honest, fair, and caring will be an example followed by teachers, staff, and students. At SD Negeri 167646, the principal is actively involved in various school activities, such as leading morning assembly, supervising the implementation of the cleanliness program, and giving awards to students who excel. The example given by the principal is able to create a harmonious and enthusiastic atmosphere in the school.

This role model is also an important factor in building trust and cooperation between the principal and the entire school community. Developing a school culture requires cooperation from all parties, including teachers, staff, students, and parents. The principal at SD Negeri 167646 acts as a driving force for collaboration by holding regular communication forums, such as coordination meetings, parent-teacher meetings, and teacher training. Through this collaboration, the principal ensures that all parties have the same understanding of the values and goals of the school culture. In addition, the principal also collaborates with the surrounding community to support school programs, such as greening programs or community service activities.

This community participation shows that school culture not only influences the school environment but also has an impact on the wider social environment. In developing a school culture, various challenges inevitably arise, such as resistance to change, budget constraints, and lack of parental involvement. The principal at SD Negeri 167646 acts as a problem solver by identifying problems,

finding solutions, and making the right decisions. Meanwhile, to increase parental involvement, the principal holds parenting activities and discussions that actively involve parents. In this case, based on the results of the researcher's interview with the principal, namely: "We involve them through routine meetings, parenting, and cooperation programs such as mutual cooperation. Teachers have an important role in implementing cultural programs in the classroom, while parents are invited to support through participation in school activities, such as committee meetings or social activities. We evaluate the program periodically by observing changes in student behavior, the level of teacher and parent participation, and student learning outcomes. This evaluation is carried out through joint meetings, direct observation, and reports from the team of teachers responsible for each program."

The role of the principal also includes supervision and evaluation of the implementation of the school culture development program. The principal at SD Negeri 167646 routinely monitors planned activities, such as literacy, cleanliness, and character building programs. Evaluations are carried out to ensure that the program is running according to its objectives and has a positive impact on all school residents. Through evaluation, the principal can also identify strengths and weaknesses in program implementation, so that corrective measures can be taken. Evaluations that are carried out periodically demonstrate the principal's commitment to continuously improving the quality of school culture. This is based on the researcher's interview with the teacher, namely:

"The principal plays a very important role in creating direction and guidance for us as teachers. He always provides motivation and support to implement habituation programs, such as morning literacy activities, character strengthening through subjects, and discipline habits. aligning the school culture program with a fairly dense curriculum. In

addition, there are also students who are less disciplined and parents who are less supportive, so a more intensive approach is needed. The principal always holds training to improve our competence, especially in implementing learning methods that support character building. He is also open to discussion if we face difficulties in class and provides practical solutions. As teachers, we play a role in implementing school culture programs in the classroom, such as instilling the values of discipline, cooperation, and honesty. We also try to be role models for students in terms of discipline and responsibility. The impact is very positive. Students become more disciplined, value time, and are more active in school activities. We also see an increase in cooperation between students, both inside and outside the classroom.”

The principal has a central role in building school culture. In the context of transformational leadership, the principal of SD Negeri 167646 is expected to be able to:

1. Develop a Clear School Vision and Mission: The principal needs to formulate a vision and mission that describes the values that the school wants to realize. This vision must be conveyed clearly and consistently to teachers, students, and parents. Thus, all school residents have the same direction in achieving educational goals.
2. Increase Teacher and Student Motivation: Through a transformational approach, the principal can provide motivation to teachers to continue to improve their competence. This can be done through training, workshops, or appreciation of teacher performance. Motivation is also given to students through creative programs, such as competitions, awards, and extracurricular activities.
3. Instilling Positive Values: Values such as discipline, cooperation, responsibility, and integrity must be part of the school culture. The

principal can be a role model by implementing these values in his/her leadership.

4. Encouraging Active Participation of All School Members: Transformational leadership encourages the principal to empower teachers, staff, and students in making decisions related to school management. By providing space for participation, each individual feels they have an important role in advancing the school.
5. Creating an Innovative Learning Environment: An innovative learning environment can support a dynamic school culture. The principal can encourage the use of technology, creative learning methods, and management of a comfortable physical environment to support the learning process.

The role of the principal in developing school culture at SDN 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City is very important. As a visionary leader, role model, collaboration driver, problem solver, and evaluator, the principal has a great responsibility to create a positive, harmonious school culture that supports the formation of student character. With the support of teachers, staff, students, parents, and the community, the principal can realize the school's vision that is oriented towards educational progress and character development of the nation's next generation.

B. DISCUSSION

Developing school culture is one of the important elements in creating a conducive learning environment. A positive school culture can encourage the involvement of all school members, including students, teachers, and education personnel, in achieving the vision and mission of education. In the context of SDN 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City, the role of the principal's

transformational leadership is very significant in forming a strong school culture. Transformational leadership is a leadership style that focuses on inspiring, motivating, and transforming individuals in an organization. The principal's transformational leadership at SDN 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City has proven effective in developing a positive school culture. Through a clear vision, good communication, and empowerment of all elements of the school, a school culture that is conducive to learning can continue to be improved. By overcoming existing obstacles and implementing the recommendations that have been submitted, schools can achieve a better educational vision.

Challenges Faced by the Principal in Efforts to Develop School Culture at Sd Negeri 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City

One of the main challenges is resistance from teachers, staff, or parents to changes attempted by the principal. Many parties feel comfortable with the old routine so that they are less enthusiastic about new programs aimed at developing school culture. Limited funds, facilities, and human resources are obstacles in implementing school culture development programs. For example, the lack of an adequate budget for teacher training or the provision of learning support facilities can hinder the principal's initiative (Maulidin, 2024).

Principals often face challenges in the form of a lack of parental and community involvement in supporting school activities. This can be caused by a lack of awareness of the importance of education or the busyness of parents in their daily work. In some cases, teachers may have limited competence to apply innovative learning methods. This affects the principal's efforts to create a more progressive learning culture in schools (Musa, 2022).

Principals are often faced with a high administrative workload, reducing their focus on managing aspects of school culture development directly. This makes the time to monitor the implementation of school culture programs limited. Ineffective communication between the principal, teachers, staff, students, and parents can be a barrier to building a harmonious school culture. Misunderstandings or lack of clear information delivery can affect the success of the designed program. The social and economic environment around SD Negeri 167646 can also be an inhibiting factor. If students come from family backgrounds with economic or social challenges, this affects their participation in supporting a positive culture at school. Support from the education office, school supervisors, or other related parties is sometimes not optimal. Lack of guidance or direction from superiors can hinder the principal in implementing school culture development policies. Programs designed to develop school culture are sometimes not implemented consistently, either by the principal or teachers. This makes the results achieved less than optimal (Ridho, 2019).

Strategies Used by the Principal to Overcome Challenges in Developing School Culture at Sd Negeri 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City

In the digital era, principals can utilize information technology to support the development of school culture. For example, using online platforms to communicate with parents, provide training for teachers, and disseminate information about school activities and programs. This not only speeds up the communication process but also builds a more modern and adaptive culture. To overcome resistance to change, principals can develop better communication strategies with all stakeholders, including teachers, staff, students, parents, and the community. Through regular meetings, open discussions, and clear program socialization, principals can explain the

vision and goals of the expected changes (Rahayuningsih, 2022). A transparent and inclusive communication approach will help reduce misunderstandings and encourage active participation from all parties. In the face of limited resources, principals can optimize the use of existing funds and facilities in a more efficient way. For example, utilizing BOS (School Operational Assistance) funds for more basic programs such as teacher training, purchasing books, or important learning tools. In addition, principals can seek additional resources through collaboration with external parties such as educational institutions, communities, or social institutions that support education. To increase parent and community participation, the principal can hold programs that involve parents in school activities, such as educational seminars, social activities, or working groups to support school programs (Solechan, 2023).

The principal can also build networks with community leaders or related institutions to strengthen support for school culture programs. To overcome the lack of teacher competence in implementing learning innovations, the principal can hold regular training and workshops. In addition, empowering teachers through professional development such as mentoring and peer learning can also help improve their skills. This approach not only encourages teacher professionalism but also strengthens a culture of collaboration in schools. To overcome challenges related to the principal's workload, the strategy of delegating tasks to staff or vice principals is very important. By delegating most of the administrative and operational tasks to the school management team, the principal can focus more on developing school culture. A clear and effective division of tasks will ensure that all aspects of school management run smoothly (Roja, 2024).

The principal can strive to create a comfortable school environment that supports the learning process by paying attention to the physical aspects of the

school, such as improving facilities and cleanliness. In addition, creating an inclusive and friendly atmosphere is also important to build a positive culture among students and teachers. To increase the motivation and enthusiasm of teachers and students, the principal can give appreciation to those who show good performance. For example, by giving awards to teachers or students who excel, both in academic and non-academic fields (Jani, 2023). This not only encourages them to continue to excel but also strengthens the culture of appreciation in the school environment. To ensure consistency in program implementation, the principal needs to conduct regular evaluations and monitoring of the various activities that have been planned. This evaluation will help to determine whether the program is running according to expectations and has a positive impact on school culture. Thus, the principal can make improvements or adjustments if necessary.

The Role of the Principal in Developing School Culture at Public Elementary School 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City

The principal acts as a leader who has a clear vision regarding the direction of school culture development. As a visionary leader, the principal must be able to formulate the desired cultural values and goals and communicate them effectively to all members of the school. With strong leadership, the principal can encourage change towards a more positive, innovative, and educationally-oriented school culture. The principal plays an important role in building harmonious relationships between teachers, students, parents, and the community. Through open and collaborative communication, the principal creates a school climate that is conducive to learning (Ridho, 2019).

Good relationships between all parties will strengthen the sense of togetherness and involvement in supporting school culture development programs. The principal is an example or role model for

teachers, staff, and students in implementing the desired school culture. The principal's attitude and behavior, such as discipline, integrity, and responsibility, will be an example followed by the school community. The principal must demonstrate commitment in implementing school culture policies and values, so that it can inspire all parties to adopt the same behavior. The principal plays an important role in managing human resources in schools, including teachers, staff, and students. The principal is responsible for ensuring that teachers and staff have adequate competence to implement a positive school culture (Syamsuddin, 2020).

One way for the principal to develop human resources is by providing training and professional development for teachers, and encouraging them to innovate in teaching. In addition, the principal must also direct students to appreciate school culture through extracurricular activities and the habituation of positive values. The principal has a role in instilling and strengthening positive values that are part of the school culture, such as discipline, cooperation, a sense of responsibility, and ethics. Through daily activities at school, the principal can provide examples and encourage the implementation of these values in the behavior of students and teachers. Programs such as the habituation of good behavior, awards for achievement, and strengthening morals and ethics, must be part of the culture implemented by the principal. The principal also plays a role in creating a school environment that supports the desired culture. This includes the maintenance and management of adequate physical facilities, such as classrooms, libraries, and sports rooms. (Jannah, 2025)

A clean, tidy, and safe environment will create a comfortable learning atmosphere and support the development of a positive school culture. The principal is also responsible for introducing environmentally friendly culture and diversity to students and staff. The principal has a key role in establishing good

relationships with the surrounding community and parents of students. Through this collaboration, the principal can involve parents in school activities, such as regular meetings, educational seminars, or social programs that support the development of school culture. In addition, collaboration with social institutions, government, and other organizations can enrich students' learning experiences and strengthen school culture. The principal is responsible for formulating policies that support the development of school culture, such as rules on discipline, learning ethics, or good habit programs (Anjarrini, 2022).

This policy must be implemented consistently to create a stable school culture and support the achievement of educational goals. The principal must also ensure that all these policies run well and have a positive impact on students and teachers. The principal plays a role in evaluating and monitoring the implementation of the planned school culture. Through this evaluation, the principal can find out to what extent the school culture has been implemented and has a positive impact on all members of the school. Continuous monitoring allows the principal to make improvements or adjustments to the program so that the school culture remains relevant and effective. Through visionary leadership, harmonious relationships, effective learning, and supportive school environment management, the principal can shape and strengthen a positive culture in the school. In this case, the principal does not only serve as a manager, but also as a driver of change who inspires all members of the school to play an active role in creating a quality school culture.

CONCLUSION

The development of school culture in Sd Negeri 167646, Padang Hulu District, Tebing Tinggi City, through transformational leadership is a strategic step in creating a quality educational environment. A principal who is able to

inspire, motivate, and empower all school members will bring positive changes in school culture. Although there are challenges, with commitment and cooperation, transformational leadership can be a solution to present a school culture that supports the success of students, teachers, and the entire education community. The principal plays a central role as a visionary leader, role model, collaboration driver, problem solver, and evaluator in creating a school culture that is oriented towards building student character, improving the quality of learning, and strengthening positive values. Although there are challenges, such as resistance to change, budget constraints, and lack of parental involvement, the strategies implemented by the principal, such as a dialogic approach, teacher training, and collaboration with the community, are able to overcome these obstacles. Changes are seen in changes in student attitudes and behavior, increased discipline, cooperation, and active participation in various school programs. This shows that the development of school culture not only supports academic achievement, but also creates a harmonious educational environment and supports the development of the character of the younger generation. With good synergy between the principal, teachers, staff, students, and parents, SD Negeri 167646 can continue to build a better school culture, creating a superior generation, with character, and ready to face future challenges.

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