

Enhancing Educational Quality through Principals' Human Resources Management Strategies

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the principal's strategies for enhancing the quality of education through human resource management at MTs Al Anwar Sarang. The school faces several challenges, including teacher discipline, the mismatch between academic qualifications and teaching assignments, and the mastery of learning methods and media. A qualitative research method was employed, involving in-depth interviews to gather data on the strategies used by the school principal to improve education quality. Interviewees included principals, educators, education personnel, and other relevant parties. The data were analyzed using data condensation techniques as described by Miles and Huberman, followed by presentation and conclusion drawing. The study revealed that the principal implemented several effective strategies. These included granting educators the freedom to develop professionally, providing motivation and support, delegating training responsibilities, and involving resource persons. Additional support was given through adequate facilities, sufficient time, family meetings, and rewards. These strategies led to improvements in individual skills and fostered a dynamic, collaborative, and reward-focused school environment. Specifically, they enhanced educator discipline, improved the quality of teaching, and bolstered mastery of learning methods and media. The findings suggest that the principal's policies, which promote autonomy and professional development, significantly contribute to educational improvements. Furthermore, the strategies created a positive atmosphere and a solid community of educators, supporting sustainable growth for the entire educational team. This study provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers into how strategic human resource management can enhance education quality. The pragmatic framework introduced here demonstrates how school principals can effectively guide human resource management to achieve significant educational improvements.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Improving the quality of education is a process that is integrated with efforts to enhance the quality of human resources (HR) through superior educational development steps (Pulungan, 2015). The management of human resources, directly entrusted to the school education unit, is essential for developing the potential within the school (Tanjung, 2020). This development involves training educators, participating in education aligned with the required competencies, and implementing a system of rewards and punishments (Ezenne, 2012). Such strategies strengthen the connection between improving education quality and optimally developing the potential of individuals within the education sector (Suparliadi, 2021). By adopting these steps simultaneously, a holistic and integrated approach to enhancing education quality can be realized, ultimately leading to substantial and sustainable improvements in the educational landscape.

The improvement of education quality is an achievable goal through various strategies, and one of the approaches is the effective management of human resources in the field of education. Researchers assume that the strategies carried out by the Principal of MTs Al Anwar Sarang in managing human resources can provide solutions to the problems they are experiencing, including the discipline of educators, the mismatch between academic qualifications and the teaching assignments given, and the mastery of learning methods and media. Effective human resources management involves enhancing the qualifications and competencies of educators, optimizing their placement according to needs (Suryapriadi, 2020), and developing relevant training programs. Training and workshops are essential pillars for improving the quality and teaching skills of educators, with active participation and impact evaluation as crucial elements (Mustofa, Asy'ari, & Ratnaningsih, 2023). Thus, the improvement of education quality depends not only on curriculum and infrastructure but also significantly on the quality of human resources involved in the education process.

Educational human resources, including educators and education staff, are crucial components in the entire education system that should receive central attention foremost (Wijaya, Hidayat, & Rafida, 2019). Educators play a central role in transferring knowledge and shaping students' characters (Santi, Undang, & Kasja, 2023). Education staff, such as administrative personnel and librarians, provide essential operational support for the smooth learning process conducted by students (Muzakki, 2015). On the other hand, educational managers, including school principals or foundation executives, are responsible for planning, coordinating, and managing resources overall, including building good communication with all educators to establish a productive work culture (R. Tanjung, Hanafiah, Arifudin, & Mulyadi, 2021).

The harmony between the principal's leadership and motivation significantly impacts teachers' work performance and, consequently, the quality of education. Improved teacher performance at SMAN 1 Kota Bima is evident due to the effective cooperation between the principal, teachers, and all school community members (Saifullah, 2020). Similarly, studies in SMAN Medan City indicate that the principal's leadership significantly influences work motivation and teacher performance (Nasrun, 2016). Research by Leithwood et al. (2004) also highlights the critical role of school leadership in shaping school culture and teacher motivation, which directly impacts student outcomes. Furthermore, a study by Day et al. (2011) underscores the importance of transformational leadership in fostering a collaborative and high-performing educational environment. Therefore, human resource management in education must consider the needs and contributions of each group to ensure the overall smoothness and success of the education system. By addressing these factors, schools can create an environment conducive to continuous improvement and excellence in education.

As the primary leaders, school principals need to possess strong leadership skills. Quality school leadership can significantly influence educators' motivation and morale, which, in turn, affects the quality of learning and student achievement (Khana, Zainudin, Fanani, & Mirochina, 2023). Motivating and uniting educators and education staff is crucial in creating a harmonious and productive work environment (Khana et al., 2023). Moreover, principals must be able to address potential conflicts or mismatches among team members (Ismail, 2022) to prevent adverse effects on school performance and

goal achievement. Therefore, effective human resources management is not only about administration but also about the ability to lead and shape a team that can collaborate efficiently to enhance education quality. Collaborative leadership by school principals is a necessary leadership model for schools to build educator unity to meet educational needs (Wicaksono, 2022).

Based on initial observations, one effective approach that school principals can take for human resources management is to grant educators and education staff the freedom to develop themselves. By providing this freedom, schools create space for educators and education staff to access learning and professional development opportunities, such as training, seminars, and self-development programs. This freedom not only encourages personal growth but also strengthens individual competence, positively contributing to the quality of teaching and learning. This approach creates an environment where educators feel valued and supported in their efforts to continue learning and growing, serving as an effective human resources management strategy and a long-term investment in improving education quality at the school.

In this context, the researcher analyzes more deeply the strategies implemented by school principals in efforts to improve education quality through optimizing human resources management. Involving key aspects such as competence development, motivation, and well-being of education staff, this research aims to make a significant contribution to a better understanding of the role and impact of school principals' strategies in creating a quality and competitive educational environment. We used Austin Ezenne's theory of Human Resource Development (Ezenne, 2012) to analyse the findings of this study. Ezenne states that to develop human resources (educators), training is needed to improve specific skills and education to broaden general knowledge. With a focus on the human resources dimension, this research is expected to provide valuable insights for education practitioners, policymakers, and researchers in designing sustainable strategic innovations to enhance education quality at the school level.

2. METHODS

This research employs a qualitative approach focusing on the school principal's strategies to improve the quality of education through human resources management at MTs Al Anwar Sarang. Informants were selected using purposive sampling method, to conduct in-depth interviews. Purposive sampling is carried out in order to determine key informants first, as sources who know all the information raised by the researcher. After that, supporting informants were determined as additional information to complement the analysis and discussion in the research. The key informants determined are the principal, educators, and education personnel who have participated in training or other development activities. While the supporting informants are educators and education personnel who have not received development or training activities.

The research procedure was carried out through an initial survey to collect preliminary data and determine informants to be interviewed, then conduct in-depth interviews (Sugiyono, 2009a) to obtain data on human resource management carried out by school principals, and finally conduct document analysis to verify and strengthen data findings from interviews (Arikunto, 2006). The instruments used include structured interview guides and document analysis (Sugiyono, 2009b) related to school policies. The questions for the interview were compiled based on the need to obtain qualitative data in the research, for example, about training activities that have been held or participated in by educators and education personnel either within the school or outside the school, the types of rewards and punishments that have been given, and the principal's concern for improving the competence of educators and education personnel.

Data analysis followed the (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2019) method, involving three simultaneous processes: (a) Condensing data, the researcher compressed the data obtained from the interview transcripts and then summarised and grouped them according to the research focus. The process of compiling data took place continuously throughout the research, from the beginning of data

collection to the preparation of reports, until the research reached a saturation point. (b) Presenting data, the researcher presents the data in the form of a narrative that describes the principal's strategy at MTs Al Anwar Sarang to improve the quality of education through human resource management, such as providing freedom of self-development for educators, implementing recognition and incentive strategies, as well as supporting coaching and mentoring programmes, involving external sources, and family gathering activities, and (c) drawing conclusions, the researcher makes interpretations and gives meaning to the data that has been presented about the principal's strategy to improve the quality of education through human resource management.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings, several strategies employed by the school principal to enhance the quality of education through human resource management were identified. These strategies include granting educators and staff the freedom to pursue self-development, providing motivation and support for accessing learning opportunities and professional growth, and delegating staff to attend seminars and other self-development programs. Furthermore, the principal involves resource persons to deliver additional materials relevant to the roles and responsibilities of educators and staff. The principal also organizes gatherings to refresh minds and strengthen team collaboration, and acknowledges those who demonstrate creativity and professionalism. These comprehensive strategies contribute to a dynamic and supportive educational environment.

3.1 Strategies for giving freedom to educators and education personnel to develop themselves

One key strategy the school principal implements in this research is providing autonomy to educators and education staff for self-development. The principal openly encourages employees to learn and enhance their creative processes, rewarding those who take risks to be creative even if it means they fail (Tomlinson, 2004). This approach creates space for educators and education staff to choose and access professional development programs that align with their needs and interests. The principal not only grants permission but also provides financial support (Dahirin, 2023; Firmadani, 2021; Nurlindah, Mustami, & Musdalifah, 2020) and necessary facilities for educators to participate in relevant training or courses (Zakki, Maunah, & Patoni, 2023).

Furthermore, a recognition and reward system is given to educators actively engaged in self-development (Maisyaroh & Rokhman, 2021), such as special awards, promotions, or increased incentives (Nurlindah et al., 2020). By acknowledging the significant contributions made by educators, a positive atmosphere within the educational community can be formed. Providing opportunities for them to share their expertise and professional experiences enhances educator collaboration and establishes a solid foundation for innovative educational practices (Dickerson, White, Levy, & Mackintosh, 2021). Thus, educators' teaching practices become more dynamic and responsive to the latest developments in the education field. By offering meaningful rewards and opportunities, this system not only encourages individual self-development but also has a positive impact (Widiastuti, Khodijah, & Abdurrahmansyah, 2021) on the overall quality of education (Alfiandrizar, Sesmiarni, Devi, Syafitri, & Simbolon, 2023).

The positive impact of granting autonomy is also evident in the implementation of coaching and mentoring programs supported by the school principal. Developing confident and skilled educators and education staff is the result of a combination of training and mentoring programs (Duncan & Stock, 2010). Educators can actively engage in the evaluation of their own performance, enhancing self-awareness and responsibility for their professional development. Additionally, initiatives to encourage collaboration and the exchange of experiences among educators are integral parts of this strategy. Strategies such as effective communication (Alfiandrizar et al., 2023) to understand the needs of educators, professional development programs to enhance teaching skills, providing constructive feedback, recognition of achievements, and mentorship among educators can provide support and motivation (Maolana, Darmiyanti, & Abidin, 2023).

The policy of granting autonomy to educators for self-development not only creates a dynamic learning environment (Khana et al., 2023) but also provides opportunities for close collaboration and productive idea exchange (Dahirin, 2023). Through this strategy, not only is the collective teaching quality improved, but also the formation of a strong community of educators united to achieve common goals in enhancing educational quality. This aligns with the concept of independent learning that begins with the mindset of educators before imparting it to students. Learning independently allows educators the freedom and flexibility to design contextual learning (Sibagariang, Sihotang, & Murniarti, 2021). Educators and educational institutions have the autonomy and flexibility to maximize students' abilities, intelligence, and potential democratically, naturally, and joyfully (Adisel & Suryati, 2022). This freedom not only enhances individual growth but also improves collaboration among educators, creating a solid foundation for better education.

3.2 Strategies for providing motivation and support in professional development

In this research, the school principal also implements an effective strategy by providing motivation and support to educators and education staff to utilize learning opportunities and professional development. Professional development for educators is carried out through scholarly activities, learning development workshops, and joint activities with other educators (Firmadani, 2021). This approach creates an environment where each member of the education staff is actively encouraged to continuously improve their skills and knowledge. Then, educational institutions must be able to develop an atmosphere that encourages, motivates, and maintains high-performing teachers when they execute efficient plans for human resource management (HDM) (Nurjaman, 2023). By providing motivational incentives, the school principal demonstrates attention to the professional development of educators and education staff, acknowledging that educators and education staff who continue to learn can contribute significantly to improving the quality of education. The school principal encourages educator performance through methods such as awards and recognition for their achievements (Muhamad & Wibowo, 2022), granting freedom to innovate, providing guidance and mentoring, empowering, showing attention, organizing picnics, and offering incentives to educators who achieve outstanding results (Hartawan, 2020).

Furthermore, the school principal provides tangible support to educators by ensuring the provision of adequate facilities and time. This is done to ensure that educators can easily take advantage of learning opportunities (Dahirin, 2023). This method not only helps create a positive school environment (Firmadani, 2021) but also assists educators in overcoming real challenges. Therefore, this method not only creates an overall supportive educational environment (Khana et al., 2023) but also provides practical support, enabling educators to grow as professionals. The increased quality of teaching and the contribution of educators to the overall improvement of education quality are favorable outcomes.

3.3 Strategies for delegating educators and education personnel to take part in seminar training

The school principal also implements an effective strategy by delegating educators and education staff to attend seminars and other self-development programs (R. Tanjung et al., 2021). This approach reflects the school principal's responsibility to empower the entire education team to enhance their skills continuously. By delegating participation in training and self-development programs, the school principal creates opportunities for educators to be directly involved in relevant and beneficial learning experiences. Moreover, delegating this responsibility reflects the school principal's trust in the capacity of educators and education staff (Maolana et al., 2023) to take an active role in their own professional development.

Through the implementation of this policy, the school principal aims not only to improve individual skills but also to optimize the potential of the entire education team. This approach focuses not only on knowledge transfer but also on providing responsibility and developing autonomy among educators. By empowering through this participatory delegation (Asiah, Tiro, & Apriyanti, 2021), it is expected to make a significant long-term contribution to the improvement of education quality in the

institution. By promoting collaboration, creativity, and shared responsibility, this policy aims to shape a dynamic learning environment (Khana et al., 2023) and support sustainable growth for the entire education community.

3.4 The strategy of bringing in resource persons

As part of efforts to improve the quality of education, the school principal in this research implements a crucial strategy by bringing in guest speakers to mentor teachers (Rosyadi & Pardjono, 2015) regarding the duties and functions of educators and educational staff. This approach aims to provide educators with in-depth insights beyond their routine duties. By bringing in experts in their fields (Ramadoni, Kusmintardjo, & Arifin, 2016), the school principal creates opportunities for educators to gain a more comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of current issues in the field of education.

This strategy also serves as a means to motivate and inspire educators and educational staff to perform their duties better. By providing additional relevant material (Asiah et al., 2021), the school principal demonstrates a commitment to the development of knowledge and skills (Gustuningtiyas & Roesminingsih, 2019) for educators and educational staff, thereby enhancing the overall quality of teaching and educational services. It is expected that with this strategy, educators and educational staff can integrate new knowledge into their daily practices, providing a sustained positive impact on the quality of education in this institution.

3.5 Strategy for organizing family gatherings

As a commitment to the well-being and engagement of the entire education team, the school principal in this research implements an innovative strategy by organizing family gatherings (Hartawan, 2020). This activity aims not only to provide a refreshing moment for educators and educational staff but also to create a friendly and amicable atmosphere (Ningsih, Herawan, & Sutarsih, 2016) and strengthen teamwork. Through a relaxed and informal atmosphere, the family gathering creates an opportunity for members of the education team to get to know each other personally outside the work context. Simultaneously, this activity is designed to stimulate the formation of solid teamwork (Rosita et al., 2022), where each team member feels valued and engaged in achieving common goals.

The school principal understands that strong interpersonal relationships among educators and educational staff are key to success in achieving optimal educational quality. By creating close bonds outside the classroom, it is hoped that the collaboration built during family gatherings will be reflected in enhanced teamwork within the education environment. Thus, this strategy is not only about providing relaxation time but also about a long-term investment in building a strong foundation for collective success in this educational institution.

3.6 The strategy of giving a reward

The school principal practices a reward-giving strategy (Gustuningtiyas & Roesminingsih, 2019) to educators and educational staff, demonstrating high levels of creativity and professionalism. This approach aims to provide a tangible appreciation for the efforts and dedication of individuals who contribute significantly to improving the quality of education. Through rewards, the school principal not only offers formal recognition of individual achievements (Alfiandrizar et al., 2023) but also creates positive incentives to encourage best practices throughout the institution.

Reward-giving can take various forms, such as financial bonuses, public recognition, or career development opportunities (Daheri, Pattiasina, Saputra, Nurdiansyah, & Uzlifah, 2022). In this way, the school principal not only assigns value to individual achievements but also shapes a culture that encourages innovation and professionalism among educators and educational staff. This strategy is expected to enhance the internal motivation of educators and educational staff, stimulate healthy competition, and, in turn, contribute to the overall improvement of educational quality (Maisyaroh & Rokhman, 2021).

In conclusion, the principal's multifaceted approach to human resource management significantly contributes to the enhancement of educational quality within the institution. By fostering an

environment that prioritizes autonomy, professional development, and continuous learning, the principal empowers educators and staff to achieve their fullest potential. The strategies of granting freedom for self-development, providing motivational support, and facilitating access to learning opportunities enable educators to remain dynamic and responsive to the evolving demands of the education sector. Additionally, the deliberate inclusion of external resources and structured gatherings fortifies team collaboration and ensures a cohesive and supportive educational environment. This comprehensive approach not only elevates individual and collective performance but also establishes a robust foundation for sustained educational excellence.

The implementation of these strategies underscores the critical role of effective leadership in shaping a thriving educational community. By recognizing and rewarding creativity and professionalism, the principal cultivates a culture of innovation and continuous improvement. The positive reinforcement through rewards and acknowledgment motivates educators and staff to excel and contribute meaningfully to the institution's mission. The holistic focus on both professional and personal well-being, through initiatives like family gatherings, further solidifies a sense of belonging and teamwork among the education personnel. Ultimately, these strategies reflect a profound commitment to advancing educational standards and fostering a nurturing, collaborative, and high-performing learning environment, thereby ensuring the long-term success and development of both educators and students.

4. CONCLUSION

Principals implement strategies to improve education quality by giving educators and education personnel the freedom to develop themselves through access to learning and professional development opportunities. This creates an innovative and highly motivated atmosphere with the freedom to choose development programs according to their needs, as well as implementing recognition and incentive strategies. Delegating responsibilities, involving resource persons, and supporting coaching and mentoring programs are important steps in improving the quality of education. These strategies not only improve individual skills but also shape a dynamic and collaborative school environment. The principal's role in shaping a school culture that supports professional growth and mutual success is crucial in improving education quality.

The strategy not only supports the broader educational goal of creating a dynamic and collaborative learning environment, but also shapes a school culture that supports professional growth and shared success, in accordance with adaptive and highly competitive education standards. So that these strategies can be adopted by other schools that want to improve the quality of education through human resource management. Future researchers can explore more data in empowering educators and education personnel to increase their capacity and competence to provide maximum service to students. This study has limitations in the findings, namely on the freedom of educators and education personnel to develop themselves through access to learning opportunities and professional development. This limitation lies in the lack of educators and education personnel who take the initiative to access learning or training opportunities.

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