

Servant Leadership School Principles in Improving Teacher Performance at SMPN 7 Mataram, Indonesia

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Abstract This study describes servant leadership in improving teacher performance and building student character at SMPN 7 Mataram. The research approach used is qualitative with the case study method. Interview techniques, observation, and documentation studies were used for data collection. Checking the validity of the data is done by testing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The study results show that the servant leadership of school principals can improve teacher performance, especially in discipline, with several efforts, namely supervising, providing motivation and increasing specialisation, activating school MGMP activities, and holding workshops.

Keywords: Servant Leadership; Teacher Performance; Principal.

INTRODUCTION

In an organisation, especially in education, leadership is undoubtedly vital because the progress and decline of an organisation are primarily determined by how a leader's leadership [1]. The ideal type of leadership is when the leader can direct, influence, manage existing resources, and provide work motivation to his subordinates [2]. Leadership is the behaviour of leaders who lead their members to carry out an appropriate activity to achieve predetermined goals. Thus, the personality of a leader is one of the factors that influence the formation of leadership types. One of the new types of leadership that leaders can apply today is servant leadership because its application can be in any kind of organisation, including educational institutions [3].

Greenleaf first introduced servant leadership in 1970, where the concept of servant leadership is a leader who prioritises others. In other words, a person's desire to serve others arises, triggering a desire to lead [4, 5]. The main drive to become a leader is to help and provide services to others as a top priority. Although, in general, people still see leaders and servants as opposites.

The characteristics of servant leadership of school principals are trying to understand, listen,

empathise with others, support subordinates regarding decision-making and create a conducive atmosphere to form solid teamwork [6]. With these characteristics, the principal will encourage teachers to emulate the leader in every job so that teachers can carry out their work correctly.

Principals with servant leadership tend to pay attention to organisational members, namely teachers, staff in the school and other stakeholders, through empathy, trust, appreciation for teacher achievements, and trying to take care of and develop their members ethically through good interpersonal relationships. The hope is that by applying servant leadership, principals can build teacher performance in their capacity as educators who provide services to achieve school goals.

Based on preliminary observations made by researchers on 20 January 2022, it was found that SMPN 7 Mataram has an outstanding principal, which impacts teacher and student achievement. And from the results of the preliminary study, it was found that there are SMPN 7 Mataram teachers who are among the outstanding teachers according to the decision of the Head of the NTB DIKBUD Office in 2019, from the information obtained that the principal of SMPN 7 is very attentive to all teachers who are reflected

through providing guidance and workshops to teachers and establishing solid cooperation with teachers. And the principal also entrusts tasks and responsibilities to teachers and staff according to their competence. This indicates that the principal is trying to improve teacher performance.

From the observations made by the researcher, it was found that some senior teachers still needed to improve in the utilisation of technology in the learning process. The lack of preparation regarding learning tools showed the low motivation of teachers works. Thus, SMPN 7 Mataram seems worthy of researching how the principal has performed her duties as a school leader for the past eight years.

METHOD

This research was conducted at SMPN 7 Mataram. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. In the stage of making conclusions, researchers collected data with several techniques, namely interviews, observations and documentation studies, to informants and then evaluated the results that had been obtained. After that, the researcher conducted a triangulation process to obtain conclusions in the form of a narrative that could be accounted for.

The researcher interviewed the principal, vice principal, and teachers. In the data analysis procedure, researchers use the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana: Data Condensation, Data Presentation, and Conclusion Drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings, the application of servant leadership by the principal has a positive impact, namely, the creation of a positive relationship between the principal and the teachers. This positive relationship can be seen in the maintenance of the cooperation mechanism between the components of the school. Creating solid cooperation has an impact on improving teacher performance and a sense of responsibility for their duties. Improved teacher performance can be seen when teachers work more actively in fulfilling their obligations in the learning process and student services. This improvement is influenced by implementing the principal's servant leadership style [7].

In line with that, [8] conveyed that the servant leadership style applied by the principal successfully influenced teacher performance. Principals assist in mediation related to discipline, commitment and motivation to teachers. This significantly affects teacher performance.

Based on the data, the findings show that the principal's servant leadership has an impact on improving teacher performance, especially at the level of discipline. The author [9] said that discipline is an attitude teacher must have because, with high work discipline, it is expected that school expectations can achieve the objectives of education.

Teacher discipline at SMPN 7 Mataram can be seen from the presence of teachers on time, entering and leaving class according to schedule, and the field in delivering material. This can happen because of the critical role of the principal. As a servant leader, the principal provides an excellent example of discipline and does not give sanctions but advice to teachers who lack the discipline to foster awareness of teachers to emulate the principal.

The level of teacher discipline can affect the achievement of school goals. If the level of teacher discipline is high, it will create learning effectiveness to increase student motivation and triumph, which impacts the quality of education. In line with that, the research results by [10] state that the discipline and ability of a teacher to be a role model for students will determine the quality of education.

MGMP (Subject Teacher Consultation) is usually implemented at the sub-district, district or city level. However, the implementation of MGMP like this is less effective and efficient. This is because not all school subject teachers can participate in these activities.

With that, the principal took the initiative to activate the MGMP programme at school to become a forum for subject teachers to discuss. The author [11] said that MGMP is an association forum for subject teachers to communicate with each other, exchange ideas, and share thoughts and experiences to improve teacher performance as classroom learning practitioners. The author [12] also states that implementing MGPM has a strategic role in improving teacher performance.

MGMP is carried out by SMPN 7 Mataram once a month. To create more effective MGMP activities, the principal also occasionally invites external

presenters or coaches, such as from UNRAM. The principal still provides supporting facilities for MGMP activities to smoothly implement activities.

The findings explain that the principal occasionally organises special workshops for teachers in the SMPN 7 Mataram environment. This workshop activity is beneficial for teachers in understanding the duties and responsibilities that will be carried out, which ultimately affects the improvement of teacher performance. According to [13], the workshop's purpose is to quickly obtain the level of performance required in a job and develop existing arrangements to improve achievement. Through workshops, teachers are prepared to accept greater responsibilities in the future.

Teacher involvement in workshop activities can build teacher motivation in carrying out tasks. This is due to the new knowledge gained from workshop activities.

Supervision activities carried out by school principals aim to foster and determine the extent to which teachers carry out the quality of the learning process. With that, the principal can assess the time to which the improvement of teachers performs in carrying out their duties as educators. The author [14] explains that supervision aims to help make it easier for teachers to learn and improve their abilities to implement students' learning goals.

Suitable supervision activities can have an impact on increasing teacher motivation and loyalty at work. The high commitment of teachers in carrying out their duties will increase the productivity of their performance. The goals will be easier to achieve with the increase in teacher performance. Conversely, if the principal needs to supervise correctly, it will increase motivation and teacher productivity.

Therefore, principals must be competent supervisors to assist teachers in carrying out their duties, namely, learning students. With this competence, it is hoped that it can minimise or overcome aspects that can interfere with teachers' tasks, especially in the learning process, of course in a more familial way so that teachers are more motivated to improve their performance which in turn can achieve predetermined educational goals. This aligns with what [15] said: the increasing awareness of teaching staff indicates the principal's success as a supervisor in improving

their performance and the growing skills of teaching staff in carrying out their duties.

Based on the research findings, principals conduct supervision with classroom visits to observe teachers' teaching and learning processes. In line with that, [16] said that class visits are a way of coaching teachers by principals to follow the teaching and learning process to obtain the data needed for teacher coaching. This class visit can be carried out with or without prior notice and at the teacher's invitation. Principals can directly contact teachers in classroom learning activities by conducting class visits. However, the principal must work with regular supervision due to other duties or activities outside the school. Therefore, the principal formed a school supervision team to help carry out supervision activities for teachers.

From the results of this supervision, the principal can find the shortcomings of the teachers while carrying out their duties so that later they can be given assistance, namely coaching and follow-up related to their weaknesses so that they can be corrected and maintain their excellence in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. It can be interpreted that supervision with class visits carried out by the principal will not affect teacher performance if there is no follow-up in the form of coaching for teachers.

In addition to being a leader, the principal is expected to motivate teachers at school. The principal must encourage teachers to carry out and complete their duties optimally. Providing motivation regularly can impact teacher performance because teachers will feel cared for and become more enthusiastic about working. Conversely, a lack of motivation from principals towards teachers can lead to low-quality teacher work.

Good work motivation is the key to an organisation's success in achieving its goals. In addition, good motivation creates a solid working relationship and a comfortable and pleasant working atmosphere. High work motivation can be reflected in a person's sense of responsibility for the tasks.

The findings show that principals in motivating teachers provide input and awards or rewards to teachers who excel or can carry out their duties well, support teachers, and provide learning support facilities. In line with this, [11] their research stated that teacher motivation could grow through setting the work atmosphere, physical arrangements, effective rewards, encourage-

ment, discipline, and providing various teaching and learning resources for teachers.

Researchers found that discipline is a top priority implemented by the principal of SMPN 7 Mataram. Authors [17] stated that principals in improving teacher performance could 1) apply discipline, 2) be democratic, 3) and apply good communication. Discipline is the first step to achieving the goals of education and teaching that have been programmed. Education and teaching can run effectively if discipline is really applied in schools. Teachers must carry out the value of discipline well.

The strategy of the principal of SMPN 7 Mataram in improving discipline is by providing positive examples such as being present on time and directing and fostering school members to obey and follow the field according to the provisions. With that, the learning process will be easier to achieve because all school members already know the rules that have been set. One indicator that can be seen that teacher performance has improved is the enforcement of teacher work discipline at school, which includes being present and in class on time, being disciplined in presenting learning materials and leaving class on time according to a predetermined schedule.

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In applying the value of discipline, the principal does not pressure teachers who do not obey the rules by giving advice. The principal does this to create communication and a sense of kinship between the principal and the teacher.

CONCLUSIONS

The servant leadership of principals can improve teacher performance, especially in terms of discipline which includes: arriving on time, filling attendance, discipline in delivering material, and leaving class according to schedule. The principal's efforts in improving teacher performance are by:

- 1) Conducting supervision assisted by the school supervision team;
- 2) Providing motivation;
- 3) Improving discipline by not putting pressure on teachers who do not obey the rules.

Principals activate school MGMP activities that can be a forum for subject teachers to discuss and occasionally organise workshops by involving teachers as participants to increase their knowledge and competence.

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