ISLAMIC EDUCATION LEADERSHIP MANAGEMENT IN INDEPENDENT LEARNING EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM QUALITY: Challenge Analysis And Solutions

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Abstract:
This study examines the leadership management of Islamic education in the quality of education in the Free Learning Curriculum in terms of the analysis of challenges and solutions. The research used in this study is a qualitative research type of descriptive research. Primary data sources are school principals, teachers at SDN 01 Kota Bangun and secondary data from books, journals and websites related to the research title. Data collection techniques using observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis using data reduction, triangulation, member checks and making data conclusions. The results of this study indicate that school leadership identifies and validates the pathways through which leadership impacts key teaching and learning processes in schools. In addition, it was found that the use of digital technology provides new challenges in the world of education today. Innovation is needed especially for school principals as leaders in the school sector to realize the various aspirations of the nation's education. The leadership model most relevant to educational issues. Based on the results of leadership management research by school principals acculturated with a humanist approach to making technological innovation programs with an independent learning curriculum. One aspect that is realized is creating teacher human resources with high character and innovation in the digital era.

Keywords: Islamic Education Leadership Management, Free Learning Curriculum

Abstrak:
Penelitian ini mengkaji manajemen kepemimpinan pendidikan islam dalam mutu pendidikan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar yang ditinjau dari analisa tantangan dan solusinya. Penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah adalah penelitian kualitatif jenis penelitian deskriptif. Sumber data primer kepala sekolah, guru SDN 01 Kota Bangun dan data sekunder buku, jurnal dan website terkait dengan judul penelitian. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi. Analisis data menggunakan reduksi data, triangulasi, member check dan membuat kesimpulan data. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan sekolah mengidentifikasi dan memvalidasi jalan melalui mana kepemimpinan berdampak pada proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran utama di sekolah. Selain itu ditemukan penggunaan teknologi digital memberikan tantangan baru di dunia pendidikan saat ini. Inovasi sangat diperlukan khusunya bagi kepala
sekolah selaku pimpinan di sektor sekolah untuk mewujudkan berbagai cita-cita Pendidikan bangsa. Model kepemimpinan yang paling relevan dengan persoalan pendidikan. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian manajemen kepemimpinan oleh kepala sekolah diakulturasi dengan pendekatan secara humanis membuat program inovasi teknologi dengan adanya kurikulum merdeka belajar. Salah satu aspek yang diwujudkan adalah menciptakan SDM guru berkarakter dan inovasi yang tinggi di era digital.

Kata Kunci: Manajemen Kepemimpinan Pendidikan Islam, Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar

INTRODUCTION

Transformation in education is an effort to achieve success in implementing education. Independence in learning, in this case, emphasizes that educators and students are given freedom in the learning process. Independence leads to liberty, freedom, and improvisation in teaching and learning. Independent Learning is a natural process of achieving independence so that students do not feel shackled and feel that their space and movement are narrow in the learning process (Angga & Iskandar, 2022).

The world of education is increasingly challenging, especially in the digital era which requires school leaders to cultivate the use of digital technology in school administration and management. Principals are required to train themselves to master digital technology skills, including having leadership characteristics that focus on digital technology (Kahanna, 2021; Septiana & Hidayati, 2022; Siagian, 2021; Pietsch, Tulowitzki, & Cramer, 2022). A leader is an important element in an organization because they oversee the selection, preparation, training, and influence of followers. In addition, when the epidemic hit the country, all education sectors in Indonesia had fully integrated information and communication technology (ICT) (Ahmad Fadhly Arham et al., 2022; Ismanto, Novalia, & Herlandy, 2017; Suwandayani, Soenaryo, & Susanti, 2019). Thus, institutional leaders are an important component in ICT implementation because they must first understand the use of innovative technologies, have personal skills in their use, and prove a culture that encourages the study of new techniques in teaching, learning, and administration (Hafiza Hamzah, Khalid, & Wahab, 2021). Teachers are also encouraged to master ICT and digital technology competencies so they don't experience difficulties in implementing these changes. Thus, to achieve transformation in education, principals and teachers are required to use these skills to improve student academic achievement, using digital technology methods (Agustina, Kamdi, Hadi, Muladi, & Nurhadi, 2020).

The government together with various parties related to the education sector carry out continuous evaluations in a structured manner to obtain academic policies that can be accepted and applied at various levels of education without causing problems in the future. Increasing access to education is one of
the objectives of implementing a planned education system. Increasing access to education will become easier if all components of education, especially teachers, students and school principals, are literate about the progress of the times, namely the era of digitalization which is growing (Mulyasa & Aryani, 2022; Riani & Ain, 2022; Safri, 2016). Currently the government is implementing the Free Learning curriculum in the education sector. The four main principles in the implementation of the Merdeka Learning curriculum focus more on the freedom and accessibility given to schools to carry out the educational process based on the resources they have and refer to the goals and ideals of education. The whole principle of Freedom to Learn will only be achieved if every component in the educational environment, especially schools, participates and is active in taking a role (Mas & Zulistiawati, 2022).

The role of the Principal in improving the quality of education is related to the implementation of academic supervision. Regarding the curriculum, through visionary leadership, the Principal will be actively involved in the curriculum development process so that he can mobilize his teaching and academic staff to create a learning process that is pro-student (Astini, 2019; Muhaimin, 2012; Ramadina, 2021). The management carried out by the school principal in implementing the independent play program is by inviting foundations, teachers, and parents to play an active role in the success of the independent play program at school. Collaboration between parents and teachers facilitates the learning process for children. In addition, school principals and teachers also plan and prepare annual, semester, weekly, and daily lesson plans. This management includes planning, organizing, leading, controlling, and using resources to achieve predetermined goals (Khoirunnisa, Kris Hardiyani, Ni’matuzahroh, Latiana, & Formen, 2022). Mulyasa (Mardianah, 2021) argues that efforts to improve education quality continue to be attempted by various parties to develop national character and improve human resources.

Principals as leaders of educational institutions have an important role in improving the quality and empowerment of resources in their schools. There are two main roles of the school principal, namely as a leader and manager of education. As a leader, the principal must be able to encourage all components of the school organization to move towards goals (Jayanti, Hariri, & Karwan, 2021). Then as a manager, the principal must be able to empower all school resources effectively and efficiently. Empowerment will moderate the relationship between empowering leadership and creativity.

That leadership has a positive and significant correlation with employee organizational engagement. In that case, the school principal is responsible for macro management, namely education that is directly related to the learning process in schools (Kaso et al., 2021). In addition, the implementation of regional
autonomy requires school principals to be able to adapt to the situations and conditions that apply to regulations in their respective regions. Based on this thought, school principals must have leadership skills (Palar, Katuuk, Rotty, & Lengkong, 2021; Wijayanti, Wiarsih, & Dwiningrum, 2021).

In the Islamic view, leadership is not much different from leadership models in general, because the principles and systems used have some similarities. Leadership in Islam was first exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad, the leadership of the Prophet cannot be separated from the function of his presence as a spiritual and community leader. The basic principle of his leadership is exemplary. In his leadership, he prioritizes uswatun hasanah by giving an example to his friends who are led (Ni & Susanto, 2023).

Public Elementary School 01 Kota Bangun Sebawi, is an area located in an area surrounded by the small Sambas river, so that access takes time by crossing the river. The challenge that the teachers and principals of SDN 1 Kota Bangun have is to impart knowledge to students. SDN 01 Kota Bangun is led by a woman who has a high level of dedication in leading SDN 01 Kota Bangun. The leadership possessed by the school principal provides an excellent example and has a spirit of togetherness in building good cooperation with teachers. Therefore, in this study, research studies on managing Islamic education leadership in the quality of education in the Free Learning Curriculum are reviewed from the analysis of challenges and solutions at SD Negeri 01 Kota Bangun, Sambas, West Kalimantan.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. This research was conducted at State Elementary School 01 Kota Bangun, Sambas, West Kalimantan. Primary data sources come from the Principal of SDN 01 Kota Bangun, teachers, and secondary data sources from research journals, books, websites, and supporting documentation relevant to the research study. Data collection techniques were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. The data is also supported by various literature, theoretical studies, and research results, which are the focus of this research. Data analysis was done using the triangulation method by sorting and grouping to conclude. As stated by (Wiley, Wiley, Intolubbe-Chmil, Bhuyan, & Acheson, 2021)Miles and Huberman, qualitative analysis activities consist of three series, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. Can draw research results based on existing data on Islamic education leadership management in the quality of education in the Free Learning Curriculum regarding the analysis of challenges and solutions at SD Negeri 01 Kota Bangun, Sambas, West Kalimantan.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Challenges and Solutions to the Management of Islamic Education Leadership in the Quality of Free Learning Curriculum Education

Based on research findings from interviews with school principals that
leadership management in Islamic education in the quality of the independent learning curriculum carried out by the principal and teachers at SDN 01 Kota Bangun creates a fun learning style which is one of the ways used to make students feel at home in class both in giving assignments in groups at school with discussions. Children become more active because they are given the freedom to express opinions and constantly show appreciation to their friends. Teachers in giving good group assignments in class, thus respecting children’s ideas and realizing that their views are sometimes correct and there are differences of opinion among them. In addition, the tasks given by the teacher are carried out according to their respective responsibilities and are completed together. In addition, based on the results of observations, the school principal’s program of providing freedom for teachers to be administratively independent is given once a week, so teachers can feel unencumbered in their duties so that the atmosphere at school feels comfortable (Observation, 2023).

Leadership is a key factor that contributes to the effectiveness of education, especially in the school environment. Previous studies have shown that school leadership is the second factor after teachers that significantly influences student learning processes and outcomes. Schools are unlikely to succeed in improving the performance of their students without the presence of talented leadership. Leadership functions as a catalyst that unleashes potential capacities within the organization (Ahmad, 2022). Recent studies identify four effective school leadership practices. The four leadership practices in question include: building a vision and setting direction, understanding and developing people or staff, redesigning the organization, and managing teaching and learning programs. In addition, the research results show that school leadership management is influenced by context. For example, large schools with high community cultural diversity can hinder the principal’s ability to design organizations or communicate with the community (Werdiningsih, Sunismi, Umamah, & Wahyuni, 2022).

Improving the quality of Islamic Education in the aspects of management and leadership is a discourse and a must that must be prepared in the future battle of the education market. Previous research has shown that there is a significant relationship and correlation between effective schools and effective leadership management (Rahman & Akbar, 2021). Essentially, all models of educational management and leadership are very good and suitable for improving the quality of Islamic Education. In this paper, the authors propose three management models: entrepreneurship-based management, community-based management, and mosque-based management and two leadership models: situational leadership and spiritual leadership (Fathih, 2023).
Based on the results of the interview with the Islamic Religious Education teacher, Abduh, S.Pd.I stated that "the independent learning curriculum provides meaningful learning for students, that's why because this curriculum provides fun learning freedom, therefore I am a teacher usually providing a learning process a lot outside the classroom (learning while playing). The principal also gave permission and was very helpful in creating a friendly atmosphere with this independent learning curriculum. Meanwhile, Ms. Lindawani S.Pd.SD revealed "the program offered by the school principal adapts to a mother's conscience because the school principal is a woman who has provided so much inspiration in the progress of this school".

The acculturation of digital and Islamic leadership will bring about change because it uses digital tools in all education management. Digital devices are also needed as learning media through a strategic planning process that is aligned with the school's vision. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE-A) standard defines five dimensions of digital leadership: visionary leadership, digital era learning culture, excellence in professional practice, systemic improvement, and digital citizenship (E. Nugraha & Fauzi, 2020).

The advantage of this kind of leadership is that it is obligatory to integrate digital technology in teaching activities so that learning becomes more accessible and more flexible. The teacher quality factor is also important for a successful learning process to improve learning outcomes. Principals must allocate ongoing training with teacher competencies to ensure smooth implementation of the vision of expanding digital education (Ruloff & Petko, 2021). In this case, the following are solutions that can be implemented and must be owned by education management in the digitalization era to implement the Merdeka Learning curriculum.

Table 1. Aspects and Indicators that must be possessed in Islamic Education Leadership Management in the Digitalization Era

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
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<tr>
<td>Visionary leadership</td>
<td>1. Support and provide digital tools to make changes to optimize the achievement of learning objectives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Play an active role in all sustainable activities, especially in the development, implementation and communication of technology-based strategic plans</td>
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<td>3. Deliver the program and provide funds for implementation of the technology integration plan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Support and provide digital tools to make changes to optimize the achievement of learning objectives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Play an active role in all sustainable activities, especially in the development, implementation and communication of technology-based strategic plans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. Deliver the program and provide funds for implementation of the technology integration plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Provide time, resources, and access so that sustainable and professional teachers can be realized, who will be able to implement technology effectively and efficiently
2. Provide facilities and play an active role in the learning community that initiates the realization of technological developments
3. Socialize and set an example in communicating and collaborating according to the wishes of stakeholders by utilizing the latest technology
4. Be aware of trends in the use of appropriate technology and encourage the creation of new technologies that can improve the quality of learning implementation and student learning outcomes
5. Ensuring that the application of technology always follows developments in the world of education
6. Initiating change to realize technology-based learning objectives and the creation of media-rich resources.
7. Establish collaboration in the application of metrics, data collection and analysis, and finding results to improve teacher performance and student learning outcomes
8. Using human resources who have competence in the application of technology to achieve academic and operational goals
9. Realizing strategic partnerships to improve systemic quality
10. Develop and ensure the maintenance of supporting infrastructure for the application of technology that supports the realization of quality management, operations, teaching and learning
Excellence in Professional Practice

1. Guarantee the availability and easy access to obtain the necessary digital tools and resources according to the needs of teachers and all students
2. Encouraging, developing models, and formulating policies to realize the availability of safe, legal, and ethical digital technology
3. Socializing and exemplifying social responsibility interactions related to the implementation of technology and information
4. Support the formation of shared cultural understanding and global issues by using communication and collaboration tools

Source: (Istaryaningtyas, L., & E., 2021)

Various studies have shown that to change from a negative cycle to a positive cycle or to change from a less quality school to a quality one, the leadership factor plays a very decisive role. Good educational institutions are led by good leaders, although not all good leaders are able to make educational institutions good. For Islamic educational institutions that face serious problems and have very noble missions, namely education and da'wah, they need to be led by leaders who have extraordinary powers (Wahyudi & Harris, 2022). Conventional leadership models such as situational, transactional and transformational leadership, need to be refined with Islamic or spiritual educational leadership models. Spiritual leadership is leadership that bases its vision, mission and leadership behavior on divine values (Adlin, 2016).

The implications of school principal management in improving the quality of education in the independent learning curriculum in schools require the professionalism of school principals in managing schools to be the primary key to producing quality schools. To achieve educational goals, cooperation between school personnel (teachers, students, principals, administrative staff) and people outside the school who are related to the school are needed. Cooperation in this school's administration must be fostered so that all those involved in school matters contribute to the maximum (Rostini & Dianah, 2017). In addition, (Walikota Pekalongan, 2022), the objectives of improving the quality of education through support for the implementation of the Driving School Program and the Implementation of the Independent Support Curriculum are: strengthening the commitment and consistency of the Regional Government in strengthening policy direction and regional budgeting in order to accelerate the process of Improving the Quality of Education through the implementation of the Driving School Program and Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at every level of the education unit every year.

Based on the results of interviews with the school principal, the existence of an independent learning curriculum makes it easy for teachers to deal with
administrative matters; moreover, SDN 01 Kota Bangun is a remote area where road access to the city is limited by crossing a river, so it takes time to drive to the city of Sambas, with the system digital makes it very easy to accelerate information and access to teacher administration in schools.

School leaders have ideal standards for occupying strategic positions; this is stated in Permendiknas Number 13 of 2007, which consists of qualifications and competencies. The qualifications themselves are divided into two, namely general qualifications, such as academic qualifications, and special qualifications, where each institution has its requirements. Meanwhile, school principals must possess personal, managerial, entrepreneurial, supervision, and social competencies (Vika Mirawansya, 2019). The independent curriculum has three types of learning activities, namely: (a) intra-curricular learning, which is carried out in a differentiated manner, (b) curricular learning in the form of strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile, which is based on interdisciplinary learning, which is oriented towards character and general competence and (c) extracurricular learning is carried out according to the interests of the participant's students and the resources in the education unit (Vika Mirawansya, 2019).

While implementing the Independent Curriculum as an option for this educational unit in the learning process, data was collected to determine which academic units were ready to implement the Independent Curriculum. Afterward, 2024 will determine the National Curriculum policy, which the Ministry of Education and Culture will carry out based on an evaluation of the curriculum during the learning recovery period. The results of this evaluation will later become a reference for the Ministry of Education and Culture in making follow-up policies after the recovery from the learning crisis (T. S. Nugraha, 2022). The independent learning curriculum has a vital role because it is a learning process that refers to the needs of students. The independent learning curriculum policy was initiated due to the co-19 pandemic in Indonesia. The education manager, namely the school principal, faces a significant challenge in understanding the implementation of the independent learning curriculum in schools. Implementation of distance education, schools also need to adapt to curriculum changes (Rapang, Yunus, & Apriyanti, 2022).
CONCLUSION

The problems that pose a challenge to Islamic education leadership in improving quality include the skepticism of society towards weak institutional vision and mission, overloaded curricula, low competitiveness of graduates of educational institutions, inadequate infrastructure and underdevelopment of technology, less professional educators and education staff, as well as the dichotomy of science. Not only that, one of the biggest challenges faced in the leadership of Islamic Education today is that leadership is generally traditional in nature and very dependent on a person or central figure so that institutional commitment from leaders, teachers and employees towards effective and productive organizational management cannot run smoothly. maximum. So that it is necessary to build public trust in Islamic education, determine the vision and mission of Islamic education that is mature and in accordance with the Qur’an and Hadith, design a curriculum that suits the needs of the community, produce graduates who have high competitiveness, have adequate facilities and infrastructure and improve competitiveness through science and technology, improving and increasing the performance of teaching and educational staff, as well as integration between religious and general sciences.
REFERENCES


