

The Strategy of the Principal in Improving Teacher Competence

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Abstract: Teachers have a vital role in the educational process. Teacher competence could determine the realization of a quality learning process. This study aimed to describe the principal's strategy to improve teacher competence. The type of research was descriptive-qualitative research. Data collection tools included documentation, interviews, observation, and literature reviews. Data analysis techniques used descriptive and qualitative analysis techniques. The results of the study stated that the school principal's strategy to increase teacher competence through needs analysis, preparation of program plans, implementation, and evaluation of the implementation of increasing teacher competence had gone well and had a positive impact on increasing teacher competence. Increased teacher competence through the implementation of the principal's strategic program has an impact on the quality of learning in SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung. personality aspects are carried out by providing motivation and good examples for teachers to always do the best for students and the progress of the institution.

Keywords: Competence, Principal, Strategy

A. Introduction

The Improving the quality of educator performance through coaching is a step that needs to be taken by school institutions to improve teacher professional competence. Directorate General of Elementary and Secondary Education, Ministry of National Education (Wijaya, 2009), educator competency standards related to 1) learning management competency components and educational insights; 2) academic/vocational competency components according to learning materials; and 3) professional development The three components of the educator competency standard embody the professional, personal, and social competencies that must be possessed by a teacher (Hasanah et al., 2020).

Efforts to foster and improve the quality of teachers face several obstacles encountered by school institutions that must be considered. These obstacles are: 1) the development of teacher quality is not instant in nature or is a long-term investment. Meanwhile, people tend to want real and concrete changes and developments; 2) the development of the quality of educators leads to the improvement of soft skills that are not physically tangible but whose level of success

can be known in a relatively long time; and 3) developing the quality of educators requires planning and implementing sustainable programs. Without continuous development, the competence of educators will fade over time; 4) educators are prone to hijacking, which has been upgraded by other institutions with various motivations (Rivayanti et al, 2020).

To overcome the obstacles, it takes a school principal who has strong managerial skills, both in leadership in learning and in managing educational institutions (Cunningham and Paula, 2013). The success of the principal in carrying out his duties is largely determined by his leadership in mobilizing, influencing, motivating, and directing the people in the educational institution to achieve the goals that have been formulated (Basri, 2014). Regarding teacher development, Chan and Sam (2015) argue that the key to the success of school principals as supervisors in their schools is seeking to increase the ability of educators to develop conducive teaching and learning situations.

This research was carried out at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung. From the results of initial observations carried out by researchers starting on May 1, 2022, to May 15, 2022, there are several research findings related to improving the quality of educator performance carried out by the principal of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung. The results of the researchers' findings include the participation of teachers and educators at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung in continuous upgrading and training, both those carried out by the school and training activities outside of school. The participation of educators is regulated through the principal's policy, which requires educators to attend training and upgrade, which the principal considers can help improve competence.

In addition, the school principal carries out academic supervision with planning that has a clear goal, namely increasing the competence of educators at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung. From the results of their observations, researchers also found indicators that the working environment conditions at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung were relatively conducive for the implementation of effective teaching and learning activities. A comfortable working atmosphere and clean classrooms, as well as student discipline in carrying out school rules, are indicators that the principal of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung has carried out his managerial function. So that the principal of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung always encourages educators to continue their education from a minimum bachelor's (S1) to master's (S2) level. This is considered important by the principal given the increasing demands on educators in the future. The principal of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung also directs educators to carry out tasks in learning and tries to move educators to be able to maximize the learning process as measured by student learning outcomes.

From the results of observations made by researchers at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung, the initial findings related to increasing teacher competence by school principals are that 1) the principal conducts professional development of educators continuously, which aims to improve teachers' academic abilities; 2) the principal seeks to build the soft skills of educators regarding mental attitude, character, and personality so that educators can set an example for students; and 3) the principal seeks to create conditions for a conducive working environment for the development of teacher abilities.

The results of observations made by researchers are supported by the results of research conducted by Oktavia (2014), with the results of research stating that the efforts that can be made by school principals in increasing the creativity of educators in learning are 1) through the provision of supervision; 2) through the provision of guidance and development; 3) through providing rewards for educators who have high creativity; 4) through apprentice teachers; 5) through conducting case studies; 6) through creating a pleasant working atmosphere; and 7) through giving freedom to the teacher.

However, the results of the researchers' initial findings and research results that support the findings of the researchers have not been able to answer in depth the problems in this study, given that the obstacles faced by school principals and the responsibilities of their principals as managers are quite large. As stated by Caldwell and Spinks school principals have responsibility for 1) Knowledge, namely decisions related to curriculum, including decisions regarding learning goals and objectives; 2) technology (technology), namely decisions regarding teaching and learning facilities; 3) power, namely the decentralization of authority in making decisions; 4) material (material), namely the decentralization of decisions regarding the use of facilities, procurement and equipment of school equipment; 5) people (people), namely the decentralization of decisions regarding human resources, including the development of professionalism in matters relating to the teaching and learning process, as well as support for the teaching and learning process; 6) time (time), namely the decentralization of decisions regarding the location of time; finance, decentralization of decisions regarding financial allocations. Where all of these responsibilities lead to improving the quality of learning in schools.

Strategy is a group of decisions about what goals to achieve, the actions needed, and how to use resources to achieve these goals (Winardi, 2013). Mulyasa (2011) states that school principals are one of the components of education that play the most role in improving the quality of education through managerial functions such as planning, organizing, directing, providing motivation, implementing, organizing control, evaluation, and innovation. According to Mulyasa (2014), there are at least 3 skills that must be possessed by a manager, namely: concept skills, namely skills to

understand and operate organizations; humane skills, namely skills to cooperate, motivate, and lead; and technical skills, namely skills in using knowledge, methods, techniques, and equipment to complete a particular task. Management is the process of managing an organization so that it is able to achieve the goals that have been previously set (Winardi, 2013). According to Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning teachers and lecturers, teachers are professional educators with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in early childhood education through formal, basic, and secondary education.

From the descriptions above, researchers feel it is important to conduct research related to school principal leadership in managing teacher competency improvement programs, which are considered very complex and require deep thought and extensive experience from a school principal. Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting research on principal leadership management and improving teacher competency at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung.

B. Methods

This research is qualitative, it means research that adheres to a naturalistic or phenomenological paradigm about what is understood by research subjects such as perceptual behavior, motivation, actions, etc. holistically, by means of descriptions in the form of words and language, in a special natural context, and by utilizing various scientific methods. The approach used in this study is a qualitative method with a descriptive design, namely research that gives a careful description of certain individuals or groups regarding the circumstances and symptoms that occur (Koentjaraningrat, 2013). In this research, what is expected to be revealed is the principal's strategy in an effort to improve teacher competence. The research subjects were school principals, teachers, students, and all stakeholders at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung. The data collection techniques used are observation techniques, interviews, and documentation studies (Iskandar, 2018).

C. Results and Discussion

Table 1. Findings of Identification of Needs for Increasing Teacher Competence at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung (Data Collection Results, June 20, 2022–August 15, 2022)

Research Focus	Analysis Aspect	Result
Teacher competence improvement strategy	Identification of Teacher Competency Needs at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung	1) The principal makes direct observations of learning activities. 2) School principals can identify teacher strengths and weaknesses covering aspects of teaching methods, classroom management, student involvement, and the use of learning resources. 3) The school principal analyzes the results of the evaluation that has been carried out at the school. 4) The principal can collect feedback from parents, students, and teachers. 5) Principals need to analyze the curriculum implemented in schools. 6) Principals can hold regular meetings with the teaching team to discuss their professional development needs. 7) Principals are up-to-date with the latest trends and developments in education. 8) Principals can seek help from experts or external educational institutions to conduct teacher competency assessments.

Table 2. Findings of the Preparation of a Teacher Competency Improvement Plan for SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung (Results of Data Collection on June 20, 2022, to August 15, 2022)

Research Focus	Analysis Aspect	Result
Teacher competence improvement strategy	Preparation of Teacher Competency Plans for SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung	1) The school principal draws up a plan based on the results of the needs analysis. 2) The principal draws up a detailed action plan to achieve the set goals and objectives. 3) The school principal must choose the appropriate development method to achieve the goal of increasing teacher competence. 4) The principal involves the teacher in planning. 5) The school principal allocates sufficient resources to support the implementation of the teacher competency improvement plan.

Table 3. Findings on the Implementation of Teacher Competency Improvement at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung (Results of Data Collection on July 20, 2022, to October 15, 2022)

Research Focus	Analysis Aspect	Findings Result
Teacher competence improvement strategy	Implementation of Teacher Competency Improvement at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung	1) The school principal ensures that the action plans that have been prepared are properly implemented. 2) The school principal must provide the training and support needed by teachers in their efforts to increase competence. 3) The principal must make routine class observations to see firsthand the teacher's teaching practices. 4) The principal encourages collaboration between teachers in an effort to increase competency. 5) The school principal provides individual guidance and coaching to teachers. 6) Principals must encourage teachers to continue to develop themselves.

Table 4. Findings of the Implementation of Teacher Competency Improvement for SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung (Data Collection Results, July 20, 2022–October 15, 2022)

Research Focus	Analysis Aspect	Findings Result
Teacher competence improvement strategy	Evaluation of the Implementation of Teacher Competency Improvement at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung	1) The school principal collects relevant data and information related to the implementation of the competency improvement program. 2) The school principal conducts a thorough analysis of the data collected on the achievement of program objectives. 3) The principal conducts a qualitative evaluation through class observations, interviews with teachers, and group discussions. 4) The principal conducts a quantitative evaluation using the available numerical data. The principal gathers feedback. 5) The principal identifies successes and challenges. 6) The school principal uses the results of the evaluation to plan improvements to the teacher competency improvement program in the future.

Table 5. Findings Regarding Obstacles and Obstacles to the Implementation of Principal Leadership Management in Efforts to Improve Teacher Competence at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung

Research Focus	Analysis Aspect	Findings
Constraints Strategies for increasing teacher competency	Needs analysis	The lack of information received by the principal regarding the needs of teachers at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung
	Planning	Not all teachers participate in the preparation of teacher competency improvement plans.
	Implementation	The limited ability of some teachers of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung, School financial limitations, Some teachers are not financially ready to continue their education at the next level.
	Evaluation and Follow Up	The school principal has not been able to foster the abilities of teachers in several ways, including increasing their ability to write scientific papers, due to the lack of knowledge of the principal in compiling scientific papers.

Based on the results of data collection conducted by researchers using interviews, observation, and documentation, it can be stated that the results of the strategy for increasing the competence of teachers at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung are as follows.

The results of an interview with Mr. H. Anis Joko Santoso as the headmaster of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung on December 20, 2020 He stated that in carrying out additional assignments, the school experienced problems, including the inability of other teachers, because they thought that there were several teachers who were qualified to carry out this task. Such as attending seminars and training outside of school, which is almost carried out by only a few teachers. In fact, if every teacher is willing, it will have an impact on an even greater increase in teacher professionalism.

The results of an interview with Afrilyta as a teacher at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung on December 27, 2020 She stated that SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung currently has several teachers who are relied on not only by the school principal but also by other teachers. Such as carrying out the task of being a school treasurer, which is carried out by a teacher for quite a long time. The school principal has given directions to other teachers to replace the teacher as the school finance manager. But until now, there has not been a single teacher who is willing to replace him. In my opinion, there are no teachers who are willing to replace them because there is no experience that makes teachers confident in carrying out this mandate. Obstacles in the implementation of professional development carried out by the principal of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung include the limited abilities of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung

teachers, especially in carrying out teacher professionalism development activities. This is quite an obstacle because the coaching process takes quite a long time. One example is where some teachers have not been able to operate computers and access data via the internet.

Related to efforts to improve the academic qualifications of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung teachers, they are experiencing problems where some teachers are not financially ready to continue their education to the next level because some teachers are still not certified and are still on honorary status. Another obstacle in the implementation of increasing the competence of teachers at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung is the financial limitations of the school. The school does not collect committee money, so practically it only relies on BOS funds for school operations. Therefore, the principal is very selective in choosing which activities are more urgent to carry out and in accordance with the needs of the SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung teachers. Muflihah & Haqiqi (2019) states that the principal observes and identifies problems or things that deviate from being then directed and carried out coaching so that activities can be directed at achieving goals. According to Sodiah & Nurhikmah (2017), principals look for innovation or renewal in the education system. It is hoped that a quality educational atmosphere will be created and adapted to the times with creation.

Based on the results of the research, it can be stated that the strategy for the principal of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung was carried out in four stages: (1) analyzing needs; (2) preparation of plans; (3) implementation; and (4) evaluation. The determination of the plan begins with identifying all the problems that might arise through a needs analysis carried out by the principal of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung. The analysis is part of total quality management. The needs analyst can place situations and conditions as input factors, which are then grouped according to their respective contributions. By conducting an initial needs analysis, the principal of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung can describe the situation that is being faced or that might be faced by the organization, especially the needs of teachers at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung. This needs analysis can also assist in the effort to formulate a mature plan to achieve goals, both short-term and long-term. Through the results of this analysis, the principal of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung determines a plan to increase the competence of teachers at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung (Anam, & Malikkah, 2020).

D. Conclusion

From the results of the research and discussion above, the following conclusions can be drawn: (1) The principal's strategy for increasing teacher competency at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung is carried out through needs analysis, preparing program plans, and implementing and evaluating the implementation of increasing teacher

competency. (2) The obstacles faced were the lack of information received by the principal regarding teacher needs and the limited abilities of teachers and principals at SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung. (3) The solution to some of the obstacles faced by the principal of SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung in increasing teacher competency includes implementing continuous coaching for SMA Negeri 3 Kayuagung teachers, supervising teachers, evaluating and providing directions for improvement, and providing self-development activities carried out through sending training participants, workshops, outreach, and training.

From the findings of the research results, the following suggestions can be made: (1) Principals should improve their competence so that they can effectively carry out teacher competency improvement. (2) Teachers are expected to improve their competence through coaching programs held both by schools and outside schools, such as workshops, seminars, and training. (3) The school principal must provide a special budget for implementing teacher competency improvement programs. (4) For future researchers to be able to examine more specifically the factors contributing to increasing teacher competence.

E. Acknowledgment

This research can be carried out properly thanks to the help of various parties; for that, the researchers would like to thank the principal and teachers at elementary school Muhammadiyah Sagan Yogyakarta who have given permission and facilitated this research activity. May the kindness of all those who contribute be rewarded with a better reply.

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