

Principal Leadership in Implementing Independent Learning Concept at Jatirasa Ii Public Elementary School, Bekasi City

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Abstract

Education is in the spotlight because it is a vehicle for human resource development. The purpose of this study was to examine the principal's leadership in implementing the concept of independent learning at Jatirasa II Public Elementary School, Bekasi City. The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive. The results of the study show that 1) the leadership of the principal plays an important role in the progress of the school 2) the implementation of independent learning at Jatirasa II Public Elementary School, Bekasi City a) the principal takes steps to support independent learning; b) encourage teachers to make learning fun for students, so students don't get bored; c) motivating students to always be ready and eager to learn; d) involve parents and the community actively; d) cooperate with the education office to improve the quality of teachers at Jatirasa II Public Elementary School, Bekasi City. Indicators of the success of the principal's administration in implementing independent learning at Jatirasa II Public Elementary School, Bekasi City are 1) there is an equal distribution of student participation in education; 2) effective and interesting learning; and 3) students are not left behind in the learning process.

Keywords: Leadership Principal; Independent Learning; Jatirasa II Public Elementary School; Bekasi City.

Abstrak

Pendidikan menjadi sorotan karena merupakan wahana pengembangan sumber daya manusia. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkaji kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah dalam mengimplementasikan konsep merdeka belajar di SDN Jatirasa II Kota Bekasi. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 1) kepemimpinan kepala sekolah berperan penting dalam kemajuan sekolah 2) pelaksanaan pembelajaran mandiri di SDN Jatirasa II Kota Bekasi a) kepala sekolah melakukan langkah-langkah untuk mendukung kemandirian belajar ; b) mendorong guru untuk membuat pembelajaran menjadi menyenangkan bagi siswa, sehingga siswa tidak bosan; c) memotivasi siswa untuk selalu siap dan bersemangat belajar; d) melibatkan orang tua dan masyarakat secara aktif; d) bekerja sama dengan dinas pendidikan untuk meningkatkan kualitas guru di SDN Jatirasa II Kota Bekasi. Indikator keberhasilan administrasi kepala sekolah dalam melaksanakan pembelajaran mandiri di SDN Jatirasa II Kota Bekasi adalah 1) adanya pemerataan partisipasi siswa dalam pendidikan; 2) pembelajaran yang efektif dan menarik; dan 3) siswa tidak tertinggal dalam proses pembelajaran.

Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah; Mandiri Belajar; SDN Jatirasa II Kota Bekasi

Introduction

The State of Indonesia is currently facing various educational problems which are increasing from time to time. Delays development at some various sectors including education effect to poor quality human resources and complicate the country's development process.¹ Lately the field of education has often been in the spotlight and has captured the attention of many people, this is because this aspect is a place where students' potential, interests and skills can be developed to maximize the improvement of their quality of life so that they can contribute to the development of the nation and state.

The problems that often arise and are discussed in the aspect of education have various types. Starting from the curriculum, the quality of the educators or facilitators, the quality of student behavior and so on. This problem is increasingly complex because now we have entered the era of globalization which has such a strong influence on life, including in the field of education.² Education faces various challenges that need to be addressed, starting from the simplest level (schools) to policy makers (government). The demands of the times, that the central and regional governments as the main decision makers need to take immediate strategic steps and make maximum efforts to improve the quality of education. Policies to improve the quality of education from the lowest level are carried out by executives with the position of school principal. For this reason, it is necessary to have leaders who can direct education in a better direction in the future through various ways that can improve the quality of basic education.

Literally, leadership means the nature, capacity, and ability of a person to lead. The meaning of leadership itself is very broad and varied. According to Charteris-Black, the definition of leadership is "leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal". Meanwhile, according to Sutarto, leadership is a series of structuring activities in the form of the ability to influence the behavior of others in certain situations so that they are willing to work

¹ Muhamad Romadhon, Zulela Ms, and Fahrurrozi Fahrurrozi, "Google Classroom sebagai solusi pembelajaran online di sekolah dasar," *Jurnal Elementaria Edukasia* (2021), accessed February 23, 2023, <https://garuda.ristekbrin.go.id/documents/detail/2038756>.

² Antovany Reza Pahlevi, "Globalisasi Dan Kosmopolitanisme, Studi Empiris Mengenai Pengalaman Mahasiswa HI Belajar Ke Luar Negeri Dengan Pembentukan Identitas Global" (Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2014), accessed February 23, 2023, <http://etd.repository.ugm.ac.id/penelitian/detail/76935>.

together to achieve the goals that have been set. Within the scope of leadership in educational institutions, the school is an organization led by a school principal.³ The main characteristic of leadership in this context is the ability to mobilize existing school resources as much as possible to achieve the planned goals. In this regard, it can be understood that the principal's leadership plays an important role in realizing the vision and mission of the school that has been set. According to Taufan school principals as sub-decision makers must be able to implement central and local government policies to contribute to improving the quality of teaching in schools.⁴

A good understanding of state government policies, starting from the central and regional governments and being reactive to implement them properly in their respective educational institutions, can be an indicator that ensures that school principals have carried out their role properly at the elementary school organizational level. Setiyati in her research said that the school principal is the person in charge of implementing the school organizational cycle. The principal has a strategic role in implementing the organizational cycle. In addition, the school principal also has great responsibility for the progress of the school he leads in order to achieve the goals that have been set.⁵

The principal, assisted by quality teachers, staff, and human resources, is expected to be able to produce superior students, improve the quality of the nation and the country to become advanced in the field of education. Especially in this era of globalization, with various advances in science and technology that are rapidly developing, school principals and teachers must also be able to improve their own quality for the advancement of education in the future and so they are not left behind. The leadership of school principals and teachers as carriers of basic education is crucial to the success of student education in the 21st century.⁶ Therefore, all

³ Rasdi Ekosiswoyo, "Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Yang Efektif Kunci Pencapaian Kualitas Pendidikan," *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 14, no. 2 (February 2, 2016), accessed December 30, 2022, <http://journal.um.ac.id/index.php/jip/article/view/24>.

⁴ Budianto A Andry, "Coping Mechanism Pada Peserta Didik Sd (Studi Kasus Di Sd Islam Terpadu Mutiara Hati Malang)," *Jurnal Konseling Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 1 (January 29, 2020): 41–50.

⁵ Andina Halimsyah Rambe and Siti Aisyah, "Correlation of Auditory, Intellectually, Repetition (Air) Learning Models on Student Achievement," *Molan : Journal Islamic Education* 1, no. 01 (January 18, 2023): 1–9.

⁶ Antonius Remigius Abi, "Paradigma Membangun Generasi Emas Indonesia Tahun 2045," *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan* 2, no. 2 (December 26, 2017): 85–90.

competencies and abilities they have must be commensurate and able to be on par with other schools.⁷

Schools need leaders who can lead schools well, especially at the elementary school level or scope. Elementary schools really need to be led by reliable leaders, supported by qualified teachers, and well behaved. This is because everything that is raised by them every day allows it to become a reference and role model for students. Students always imitate and learn independently of this. In addition, basic education is the starting point for students to continue to the next level of education, both in secondary education, higher education, and tertiary education.

In the learning process at school, apart from the principal, teachers also have an important role in every learning process in the classroom as well as the success of children's education. Therefore, it has recently been established that teachers must be able to interpret and apply the concept of independent learning in their own classrooms. The Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture and Technology Research has launched the Freedom to Learn Policy in 2019 and is in effect today. The Freedom to Learn Policy (Directorate of Elementary Schools, 2021) is a government policy to implement educational changes to create superior human resources with the character of Pancasila Students. This policy will certainly affect the learning of school children in the classroom.⁸

In line with the explanation regarding the independent learning policy above, students are expected to be able to adapt and have the character of a Pancasila Student. The character of Pancasila students consists of aspects in which they have faith, piety to God Almighty and have noble character, global diversity, cooperation, independence, critical thinking, and creativity.⁹ The independent learning policy and the profile of Pancasila students planned by the Ministry of Education and Culture are considered very appropriate to the current situation, therefore the Government expects

⁷ Nurul Nafiah Setiani and Novita Barokah, "Urgensi Literasi Digital dalam Menyongsong Siswa Sekolah Dasar Menuju Generasi Emas Tahun 2045," *SEMAI: Seminar Nasional PGMI* 1, no. 1 (December 29, 2021): 411–427.

⁸ Rikal Dikri, "Transformasi Konsep Wilayah Al-Faqih dalam Konteks Demokrasi Pancasila: Studi Muslim Syiah Indonesia Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia (Ijabi) dan Ahlul Bait Indonesia (Abi)" (bachelorThesis, FISIP UIN Jakarta, 2019), accessed February 6, 2023, <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/49213>.

⁹ Aiman Faiz and Imas Kurniawaty, "Urgensi Pendidikan Nilai di Era Globalisasi," *Jurnal Basicedu* 6, no. 3 (March 11, 2022): 3222–3229.

students to have smart minds, good, and strong characters so that there is a balance between technological developments, information, and communication.¹⁰ In implementing this independent learning, teachers are required to be able to develop students' interests, talents, and potential by providing many opportunities for students to learn independently. Where the intention is that students can have a lot of time to learn and explore all the things they like. The role of the teacher in applying the concept of independent learning is to provide guidance or direction so that students can develop their potential and collaborate in creating a learning process that is in accordance with the wishes of students when they are in class. Therefore, training and guidance are needed so that teachers can carry out the independent learning program that has been planned by the government properly.

Referring to the conditions above, what the school principal must do to implement the concept of independent learning in his school is to improve his own leadership spirit so that he knows more about the skills of all staff and educators who are in their respective educational institutions.¹¹ Thus, it becomes homework for school principals to have a good understanding of their duties and responsibilities, as well as the duties and responsibilities of the staff around them so that educational institutions can apply the concept of independent learning in their schools effectively and efficiently.¹² Jatirasa II Public Elementary School has a principal who is considered reliable in implementing the independent learning curriculum.

Based on preliminary information, it is known that the principal has taken several effective steps to maximize the potential for independent learning which has been the basis of the independent learning curriculum. For this reason, the purpose of the research conducted was to find out about the leadership patterns carried out by the Principal of Jatirasa II Public Elementary School in maximizing the implementation of the independent learning curriculum in their institution. It is hoped that through leadership he will be able to apply the concept of independent learning as a pioneer in

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Siti Mustaghfiroh, "Konsep 'Merdeka Belajar' Perspektif Aliran Progresivisme John Dewey," *Jurnal Studi Guru dan Pembelajaran* 3, no. 1 (March 30, 2020): 141–147.

¹² Dela Khoirul Ainia, "Merdeka Belajar Dalam Pandangan Ki Hadjar Dewantara Dan Relevansinya Bagi Pengembanagan Pendidikan Karakter," *Jurnal Filsafat Indonesia* 3, no. 3 (September 26, 2020): 95–101.

educating students who have cognitive intelligence and ethical intelligence as superior and quality generations who will advance the nation and their country in the future.

Research Method

The approach used in this research is qualitative research with descriptive qualitative methods. The study focused on in this study is about leadership patterns and the efforts of the school principal in implementing the concept of independent learning at Jatirasa II Public Elementary School, Bekasi City. The data collection techniques carried out included interviews, observation and documentation studies of several documents related to the research topic.¹³ As for the form of interviews conducted, they were to the principal, the curriculum section and the guidance and counseling teacher at the Jatirasa II public elementary school.

Result and Discussion

The principal plays an important role in implementing the Free Learning concept in elementary schools. The principal must be able to handle his workload. The school principal's workload that can support the application of the independent learning concept in elementary schools is related to the main tasks of management, entrepreneurship development and teacher and educator leadership.

Based on the research conducted, it is known that the leadership pattern applied by the principal of Jatirasa II Public Elementary School is to implement all the steps that have been recommended by the government through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology. In this regard, currently several other efforts have also been held such as training for teachers or teaching staff to increase their adaptation to the concept of independent learning as outlined in the independent learning curriculum. Below will be discussed briefly about the research keywords and the conditions of their implementation at the research location.

Principal Leadership at Jatirasa II Public Elementary School

Leadership is the nature and value possessed by a leader. The concept of leadership has been extensively studied by experts, through their respective approaches and analytical perspectives. According to Sondang P. Siagian, leadership

¹³ Dr Eko Murdiyanto, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*, 1st ed. (Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian Pada Masyarakat UPN "Veteran" Yogyakarta Press, 2020).

is an activity of influencing other people to carry out joint work towards a certain goal. George Terry also added that leadership is a close relationship within a person, especially a leader, to influence many people around him to work together consciously in a task relationship to achieve the leader's wishes. Meanwhile, according to Ordway Tead, leadership is the activity of influencing people to want to work together to achieve the desired goals.

Based on some of the definitions above, it can be understood that leadership is the knowledge or ability possessed by someone to influence, move, and direct a person or group of people to carry out various activities and achieve organizational goals. Organizations in all fields need leaders, including education. Education is one way to improve superior and quality human resources. Schools play an important role in the development of human resources, therefore schools must also be led by superior, competent and qualified principals. The principal is the highest leader in the school, every action and decision made by him will have a major impact on the future progress of the school.

In several previous studies, it is known that one of the things that must be possessed by a school principal is adequate competence and a great desire to advance and improve the quality of education that will be produced later for all students. This is an important condition that must be met because the role of the school principal can determine the progress of the school towards national education goals.¹⁴ The principal must be able to set the focus and rhythm of the school. Because the school is a complex institution, and as a form of educational organization, it requires the interaction of all available resources. Schools will grow and develop if they are led by a school principal who is able to manage all school resources properly.

In this research study or analysis, which refers to the leadership pattern of the principal of the Jatirasa II public elementary school, Bekasi City, information is obtained that the progress of the school is largely determined by their current leader. Based on the interviews conducted, it is known that the leadership of the Jatirasa II public elementary school, Bekasi City, can understand the workload that he bears. Based on the explanation in it knowing that the school principal's workload is the

¹⁴ Uray Iskandar, "KEPEMIMPINAN KEPALA SEKOLAH DALAM PENINGKATAN KINERJA GURU," *Jurnal Visi Ilmu Pendidikan* 10, no. 1 (May 22, 2013), accessed December 30, 2022, <https://jurnal.untan.ac.id/index.php/jvip/article/view/2061>.

main task of controlling, developing entrepreneurship and leadership of teachers and education staff. The purpose of understanding the principal's workload is to develop student-centered learning, then create a safe, comfortable, and inclusive learning environment. Then create a culture of reflection in the development of education unit citizens and management of education unit programs and improve the quality of teaching and learning and student learning outcomes. In accordance with the above, the goal of principal leadership in general for now is the implementation of Free Learning activities at their respective institutions. This has certainly been carried out by the Jatirasa II public elementary school, Bekasi City through direct supervision and guidance from the school principal.

Independent Learning

Based on the regulations that have been set Kemdikbud now and in the next few years the Indonesian government has started steps to improve existing education with an independent learning curriculum program. Merdeka Learning is used as a means of major change to answer the challenges of the 21st century with rapid technological developments.¹⁵ The purpose of independent learning is to create a comfortable learning atmosphere for students and keep abreast of technological developments. Freedom to learn can be understood as freedom to think. The essence of independent learning is that students are then free to think both individually and in groups to produce superior, critical, creative, cooperative, innovative, and participatory students according to future needs in the 21st century.

With this independent learning policy, it is hoped that the active role of students in learning will increase. For this reason, collaboration between teachers and students is needed in the implementation of learning that applies the concept of independent learning. The teacher must be the first person to feel the freedom of learning. This means that teachers must be able to think freely, be innovative, creative when planning learning to be carried out with students. In the end, what the teacher plans in the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) can be implemented in learning so that the desired independent learning occurs, that is, both students and teachers feel

¹⁵ Nadia Fairuza Azzahra, "Mengkaji Hambatan Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh di Indonesia di Masa Pandemi Covid-19" (May 7, 2020), accessed February 23, 2023, <https://repository.cips-indonesia.org/ms/publications/309163/>.

comfortable while learning. This independent learning policy is one of the government's ways to prepare superior and quality human resources in the 21st century. Therefore, this independent learning policy is expected to produce superior, intelligent, and quality generations.

The independent learning policy is in line with what was conveyed by Ki Hajar Dewantara. According to Ki Hajar Dewantara, free humans are independent and productive, they don't depend on other people, and they are also very enthusiastic and know how to plan and determine tomorrow. Independent Learning is a policy that is very suitable to be implemented in the 21st century due to the demands of a very complex era amid the rapid development of technology. Merdeka Learning can answer the challenges of the 21st century today, as demands that the future golden generation must have the ability to think critically, think creatively, communicate, and collaborate which must be continuously developed.¹⁶

Continuing the discussion above, although independent learning is often complained about as a learning model that is very suitable for strengthening students' skills needed in the 21st century, it is also very important to remember that these skills will be achieved if teachers can carry out learning through applying the concept of independent learning while also increasing competence. In such a way that learning can be useful, fun, and interesting for students.¹⁷ Based on the explanation above, it is also known that Jatirasa II Public Elementary School has implemented training for teachers in their institution to maximize the role of facilitators in executing student self-learning as government policy as an effort to improve the national education system and give birth to a golden, superior, creative generation, innovative, smart, strong character, passionate, independent, and critical to face the flow of progress that is very fast.

¹⁶ Aan Widiyono, Saidatul Irfana, and Kholida Firdausia, "Implementasi Merdeka Belajar melalui Kampus Mengajar Perintis di Sekolah Dasar," *Metodik Didaktik : Jurnal Pendidikan Ke-SD-an* 16, no. 2 (January 31, 2021), accessed February 23, 2023, <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/MetodikDidaktik/article/view/30125>.

¹⁷ Agustinus Tanggu Daga, "Makna Merdeka Belajar Dan Penguatan Peran Guru Di Sekolah Dasar," *Jurnal Educatio FKIP UNMA* 7, no. 3 (August 10, 2021): 1075–1090.

Implementation of Independent Learning at SD Negeri Jatirasa II

The school principal's workload that can support the application of the independent learning concept in elementary schools is related to the main tasks of management, entrepreneurship development and teacher and educator leadership. According to existing policies the steps that need to be taken to implement the concept of independent learning in schools include that the school principal can implement policies that can support the implementation of independent learning in schools. Then teachers are expected to be people who can accept changes related to the curriculum at school, so they are able to carry out fun learning in the classroom. In addition, students have readiness and enthusiasm for learning so that they can think critically, be curious, and participate actively in learning. Then the student guardians and the surrounding community can take an active role in supervising student learning outcomes and participate in collaborating with various parties. Finally, to support the implementation of the concept of independent learning, it is hoped that the education office will prepare various trainings to improve teacher competence and aid in implementing independent learning in schools.

In accordance with the Ministry of Education and Culture, that the leadership of the school principal is the highest policy maker in schools which greatly determines the success of implementing independent learning in schools, especially at SD Negeri Jatirasa II. What the school principal might be able to do is implement a policy to support the implementation of independent learning at SD Negeri Jatirasa II. Principals can support the independent learning policy by assisting teachers in obtaining training and assisting teachers in making lesson plans (RPP) so that teachers are able to plan the learning process well so that the independent learning process in learning can be carried out. Then improve the quality of teachers so that they can create fun learning and motivate students to have readiness and enthusiasm for learning so that they have the ability to think critically, be curious, and participate actively in learning. This is because if students are ready to learn, they will give a positive response that will affect student learning achievement. In addition, student guardians and the surrounding community can take an active role in supervising student learning outcomes and participate in collaborating with various parties. Finally, to support the implementation of the concept of independent learning, it is

hoped that the education office will prepare various trainings to improve teacher competence and aid in implementing independent learning in schools. In accordance with the Ministry of Education and Culture, that the leadership of the school principal is the highest policy maker in schools which greatly determines the success of implementing independent learning in schools.

The implementation of independent learning in schools has several indicators of success, namely, the participation of students in Indonesian education is evenly distributed. The meaning of equity here is that access to education must be of good quality, so that all students can have equal access to education throughout Indonesia. Then the next indicator is learning that is interesting, effective, and fun. With the interaction between teachers and students in each learning process, the quality of learning will increase. Education in independent learning can support the realization of intelligence through various enhancements and the application of technological adaptations to create world-class education based on collaboration, critical thinking, and creative. Then the next indicator is that students who are lagging in the learning process are reduced. Students have the same abilities, so the quality of these students is superior. If there are students who are still lagging in the learning process, the teacher must help these students by providing guidance to optimize the interests, talents and potential of the students and learning problems can be solved. And if the three indicators mentioned above can be implemented, then the school principal's leadership is successful in applying the concept of independent learning in elementary schools, especially at SD Negeri Jatirasa II.

Conclusion

Based on all the explanations above, it can be concluded that the principal of the Jatirasa II public elementary school has implemented an effective leadership pattern and refers to all workload provisions determined by the Ministry of Education and Culture. In addition, in implementing the independent learning curriculum, the school principal made several efforts such as training teachers and outlining the steps for applying that apply according to the proper level of education.

Researchers are aware of the findings of this study, so they recommend to all school principals to maximize their role and be able to make maximum efforts in implementing the independent learning curriculum. Indonesian education requires

leaders who are innovative, careful, and able to maximize the quality of education. Therefore, further research can be determined by increasing the role of the principal in other aspects in order to create a superior generation

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