

Analysis of Principal Managerial Skills in State Senior High Schools: Empirical Evidence from Palopo City, Indonesia

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56457/jimk.v11i1.413>

Received: March 27, 2023

Accepted: May 12, 2023

Published: June 1, 2023

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the principal managerial skills, internal and external factors that contribute, and their impact on improving the quality of education in state senior high schools in Palopo, Indonesia. This research is field research using the mixed method approach. Data was obtained through questionnaires, interviews, observation, and documentation studies. The mapping of school positions was analyzed using the IFE (Internal Factors Evaluation) matrix and EFE (External Factors Evaluation) matrix. The study results show that the principals implement managerial skills, namely conceptual, interpersonal, and technical skills, to improve education quality. The results of the analysis of the internal (Strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (Opportunities and Threats) evaluation show that the strengths possessed by each school can overcome its weaknesses and are very responsive in overcoming threats in improving the quality of education. The implementation of principal managerial skills has a positive impact on improving the quality of education.

Keywords: Principal Managerial Skills, Quality of Education

INTRODUCTION

The principal managerial skills are important factors in improving the quality of education because the success or failure of education at schools is greatly influenced by the ability of the principal to manage each component of the school (Mulyasa, 2015). With adequate managerial skills, principals can manage education well to achieve quality education. However, based on the results of interviews with principals at the research site, for reasons of many administrative tasks and burdens, principals have difficulty carrying out their duties and being good managers. The principal managerial skills are needed to improve the quality of education (Yusak, 2016).

Education quality, as one of the pillars of human resource development (HR), plays an important role in the country's development. However, a Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2019 survey shows that Indonesia's reading, mathematics, and science scores are 371, 379 and 396. These scores are very far from the international average scores, namely 487, 489, and 489 (Dewabrata, 2019). The data shows that the quality of education in Indonesia is still not good. In comparison, the achievement of human resources quality is an important factor in determining the power of education (Umiarso & Gojali, 2010). The principal plays an important role in achieving the quality of human resources. For this

reason, principal managerial skills are needed in managing educational institutions effectively and efficiently (Sufyarma M, 2004). As a manager, the principal must understand and apply managerial skills, namely conceptual, interpersonal, and technical (Danim, 2014).

Several studies on the relationship between principal managerial skills and the quality of education have attracted the attention of several researchers (Fatmawati, 2018). His research proved that principal managerial skills affect the quality of education. Next, Muhtar's research revealed that the managerial skills of professional principals can lead to quality learning outcomes that lead to quality education (Muhtar, 2017). Interestingly, research by Lestari and Murniati reveals the roles of principal management. Even though they are located in rural areas with minimal facilities, infrastructure, and budgets, high-commitment principals can carry out education well (Dewi Lestari and Ngurah Ayu Nyoman Murniati, 2021). This study was inspired by the results of previous research and attempted to analyze the implementation of principal managerial skills in improving the quality of education in state senior high schools in Palopo City, Indonesia.

This research aims to complement the shortcomings of previous studies, which tend to only discuss the influence of principal managerial skills in improving the quality of education. In particular, this study seeks to reveal the principal managerial skills

in improving the quality of education in state senior high schools in Palopo City, Indonesia. To map the position of schools, internal and external factors that contribute to improving the quality of education are analyzed using the Internal and External Factor Evaluation matrix. In addition, this research also seeks to reveal the impact of implementing principal managerial skills in improving the quality of education.

METHODS

This study uses a mixed-method approach. Creswell put forward that the mixed method involves collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative in one study (Creswel, 2009). The qualitative method is used to describe the implementation of principal managerial skills, internal and external factors that contribute to quality improvement, and the impact of the implementation of the principal managerial skills in improving education quality, which is analyzed following the stages of qualitative data analysis, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Huberman & Miles, 2014). The quantitative method is used to map the position of schools through arithmetic estimation and analysis of the IFE and EFE matrix. The research instruments used are questionnaires, interview guidelines, observation guidelines, and documentation formats. The research locations chosen were 6 (six) State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia. Data sources were school principals, vice principals for curriculum, and all PAI teachers in each school using questionnaires, interviews, observation, and documentation studies.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Principal Managerial Skills

Etymologically, the term skill means the ability or skill of a person to complete a task. Skills

can be interpreted as an ability, namely the ability of a person to carry out various types of cognitive or necessary activities effectively (Yulk, 1998). The word 'managerial' comes from the word manager, who has the authority to direct and organize work in their field, plan and organize its implementation to achieve the goals that have been set. Wahyudi expressed almost the same opinion that managers are responsible for organizational resources and their subordinates (Wahyudi, 2015). In comparison, the principal is a senior teacher functional staff in charge of directing the school where interactions occur between the teacher giving the lesson and the students receiving the lesson (Sumidjo, 2010). In simple terms, principal managerial skills can be defined as the ability of a school principal to lead and manage resources in a school based on the competencies set to achieve the school's goals.

The ability of principals to manage is the most important thing in the school management system to improve the quality of education in the schools they lead. It doesn't matter how many educational infrastructure facilities a school has, how much of the school budget is budgeted for school operations, and how many human resources it has, all of which are useless unless the principal manages them professionally, efficiently, and effectively. In his research, Katz and Kahn revealed three skills a manager possessed: conceptual, human, and technical (Katz, D., & Kahn, 1978). This study reveals the implementation of principal managerial skills in state senior high schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, by referring to three managerial skills findings by Katz and Kahn (Katz, D., & Kahn, 1978). The implementation of principal managerial skills in state senior high schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 Implementation of Principal Managerial Skills in State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia

No	Managerial Skills	Implementation of Managerial Skills
1	Conceptual Skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When compiling programs and making decisions. 2. Involve teachers through meetings. 3. Link programs and decisions with the school's vision, mission, and goals.
2	Interpersonal Skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Motivate teachers to attend training, seminars, workshops, and other developments. 2. Guiding the teacher through direct reprimand or a Letter of Reprimand while maintaining the teacher's dignity.

No	Managerial Skills	Implementation of Managerial Skills
		3. Communicate openly through the WhatsApp Group, inviting teachers to the principal's office, or visiting the teacher's room.
3	Technical Skills	1. During academic supervision, through supervision of class visits, personal guidance, or supervision of teacher administration. 2. Academic supervision is carried out once a semester. 3. Academic supervision is carried out in two stages. First by the principal, then the second stage was carried out by the School Supervisor from the Education Office, accompanied by the principal. 4. Helping teachers diagnose student learning difficulties.

a. Conceptual Skills

The implementation of conceptual skills in state high schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, is shown in two main activities: program preparation and decision-making. The understanding of principals in planning and decision-making is an important part of implementing conceptual skills in planning various school programs that are internal and external to school development. Principals are required to have adequate conceptual skills in supporting programs and decision-making. It is in line with Iskandar's statement that conceptual skills are skills needed by principals in determining strategies, planning, formulating policies, and making decisions (Iskandar, 2017). Even Pidarta explains that conceptual skills are needed to understand and guide an organization (Pidarta, 2011). More details in Hilal Mahmud explained that conceptual skills are the ability of managers to determine strategies and policies, create or plan something new, and make decisions (Mahmud, 2015). Thus, as a manager, the principal must have good conceptual skills to direct the school organization to become a professional organization to improve the quality of education.

b. Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills indicate a mutual relationship between superiors, subordinates, co-workers, customers, and suppliers (Frost, 2009). In this research, three important things are shown by principals at State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, in implementing interpersonal skills, namely motivating teachers, guiding teachers, and communicating school policies and programs. Even though the activities carried out in implementing interpersonal skills are the same, the approach used by each principal is different. Some principals use a direct approach, and others use an indirect approach. The skill level of each school is also different. It shows differences in understanding and ability to implement interpersonal skills. Principals,

as managers, need to be able to interact with various people, including motivating people to work, listening to others, and building relationships with others (Jawwad, 2004). Of the three areas of managerial skills, interpersonal skills require special attention from principals because, through interpersonal skills, a principal can understand other people's hearts, attitudes, and motives and why these other people say and behave (Wiwik & et al, 2021). With good communication and interaction, the principal's direction gets a good response to achieve goals. Wiwik et al. suggest that the interaction of principals includes skills in motivating people to work, listening to others, and dealing with others (Harwanti et al., 2021). More than a century ago, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, emphasized that getting along with others was the key to success (Bedwell et al., 2014). Thus, the principal interpersonal skills are important and are the key to the success of school principals in improving the quality of education in their schools.

c. Technical Skills

To guide teachers through supervision, each school principal studied implemented technical skills. Principal activities requiring technical skills are supervising class visits, evaluating and revising teacher learning programs, and helping teachers diagnose student learning difficulties. Even though some of the principal's duties were delegated to the school development team on the grounds of difficulty in allocating time, the principal's involvement in these activities was important to ensure that the teacher's performance in learning took place effectively and efficiently. It is in line with the views of Wahyudi that under supervision, the principal is responsible for the effectiveness of making learning programs, assisting teachers in improving teaching, assisting teachers in diagnosing student learning difficulties and organizing and supervising student discipline (Wahyudi, 2015). Ramadhan explained that supervisors' and principals' supervision aims to

empower teachers professionally in carrying out their professional responsibilities so that teacher performance in the learning process is optimal and qualified (Ramadhan, 2017). Thus, to empower teachers in carrying out their duties and responsibilities, principals not only let them do it themselves, but also they need a good example from the principal. For this reason, technical skills for principals are a necessity.

Internal and External Factors Influencing Education Quality Improvement

a. Internal Factors (Strengths and Weaknesses)

Several internal factors identified as contributing to improving the quality of education in State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, can be seen in Table 2. To map the position of

schools in improving the quality of education, Internal Factor Evaluation is carried out by calculating each factor. Based on the results of the internal factor analysis as shown in Table 2, the main strength of the State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, is "having teachers who are professional and competent in their respective fields" with a weight of 0.250, a rating of 4, a score of 1.000. The main weakness is "inadequate digital technology facilities," with a weight of 0.083, a rating of 1, and a score of 0.083. The weighted total score of 2,919 (>2.5) shows that the ability of the internal factors of State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, is very strong. It shows that the strength of the State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, can overcome its weaknesses in improving the quality of education.

Table 2 Evaluation of Internal Factors Contributing to Quality Improvement

No	Internal factors	Score	Weight	Ratings	Score
	Strength				
1	The principal managerial skills are quite good in supporting the improvement of education quality	2	0.167	4	0.668
2	Having professional and competent teachers in their respective fields	3	0.250	4	1,000
3	Most teachers have high motivation to develop their performance	2	0.167	3	0.501
	Total		0.584		2,169
	Weakness				
4	Inadequate digital technology facilities	1	0.083	1	0.082
5	Schools do not have a specific budget yet for teacher development through classroom action research	2	0.167	2	0.334
6	Some teachers are still constrained by digital technology	2	0.166	2	0.334
	Total	12	0.417	16	0.750
	Internal Total Score				2,919

In the current digital era, the quality of education and digital technology are interrelated aspects, especially in achieving educational goals. The results of the Internal Factor Evaluation analysis show that the main weakness of the State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, is "inadequate digital technology facilities." It is exacerbated by "some teachers still constrained by digital technology." As a result, the quality of education at State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, still contributes to the low quality of education in Indonesia. Ratnasari proves that the quality of education in Indonesia is still far behind

that of other countries (Ratnasari, 2019). Breakthroughs are needed so that digital technology facilities do not become an obstacle in improving the quality of education in Indonesia so that it can compete with other countries to overcome this.

Improving the quality of education is closely related to the professionalism and performance of teachers. Ahyani proves that there is a positive and significant influence between teacher professionalism and teacher performance in improving the quality of education (Rosmawati et al., 2020). Teacher professionalism in the educational process has a strategic role in guiding students

toward maturity and independence (Suartini, 2017a). For this reason, efforts to develop teacher professionalism are needed. Suartini concluded that the better the teacher's professionalism, the better the quality of education (Suartini, 2017b).

This study's encouraging findings are that "the principal managerial skills are quite good in supporting the improvement of the quality of education as one of the strengths in State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia. It is in line with Manik and Siahaan, which proves the influence of the principal managerial skills on teacher performance, improving education quality (Manik, J., & Siahaan, 2021). By implementing conceptual skills, principals can develop plans for developing teacher professionalism, which are spelled out in strategic planning and school operational plans (Suartini, 2017b). In the strategic planning and operational plans, various trainings, workshops, seminars, and teacher work groups are planned as a forum for developing teacher professionalism (Fitria & Martha, 2020).

b. External Factors (Opportunities and Threats)

External factors that contribute to improving the quality of education in state senior high schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, can be seen in Table 3. External Factor Evaluation is carried out by calculating each factor to map the position of state high schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, in improving the quality of education. Based on the results of the analysis of external factors as shown in Table 3, the main opportunities for State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, are "Government policies that encourage improving the quality of education" with a weight of 0.250, a rating of 4, a score of 1.000. The main threat is "student's neglect of teaching materials due to digital technology dysfunction," with a weight of 0.083, a rating of 1, and a score of 0.083. The weighted total score of 2,753 (>2.5) shows that the ability of the external factors of State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, is very responsive in dealing with threats. It shows that the State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, have a high opportunity to overcome their threats in improving the quality of education.

Table 3 Evaluation of External Factors Contributing to Quality Improvement

No	External Factors	Score	Weight	Ratings	Score
	Opportunity				
1	Organizing training by third parties online in support of improving the quality of education	2	0.167	3	0.501
2	Government policies encouraging the improvement of the quality of education	3	0.250	4	1,000
3	Advances in technology that support teacher creativity	2	0.167	3	0.501
	Total		0.584		2,002
	Threat				
4	The rapid development of digital technology far exceeds the digital capabilities of most teachers	2	0.167	2	0.334
5	Student's neglect of teaching materials due to digital technology dysfunction	1	0.083	1	0.083
6	The competitiveness between schools is getting higher	2	0.167	2	0.334
	Total	12	0.417	16	0.751
	Internal Total Score				2,753

The main opportunity for State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, is "government policies encouraging the improvement of the quality of education." Indonesia's education policy is to form superior, qualified, and competent human resources. To meet the changes and progress of the times, the government is restructuring the national

education system through an independent learning curriculum policy (Yamin, M., & Syahrir, 2020). Its implementation involves various learning media platforms as an initial change toward school digitization (Patilima, 2022). An independent learning policy can create a comfortable learning atmosphere and inspire enthusiasm for learning.

This policy allows teachers to master and utilize digital technology to support their creativity. The main weakness of the State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia: "Students' neglect of teaching materials due to technological dysfunction," can also be overcome through the

teacher's ability as a driving force. Motivator teachers can be tutors, facilitators, and inspirers and motivate students to be active, creative, and innovative (Savitri, 2020). The driving teacher also can actuate other teachers so that they can achieve common goals (Javanisa et al., 2022).

		Total value Weighted IFE		
		Strong 3.0 – 4.0	Average 2.0 – 2.99	Weak 1.0 – 1.99
Total EFE Score weighted	Tall 3.0–4.0	I	II	III
	Currently 2.0 – 2.99	IV	V	VI
	Low 1.0 – 1.99	VII	VIII	IX

Figure 1. Internal and External (IE) Matrix (Position of State Senior High Schools in Palopo City in Improving Education Quality)

Based on the analysis results using the IFE and EFE Matrix, each obtained a total internal score = 2.919 on the IFE Matrix and a total external score = 2.753 on the EFE Matrix. The total internal and external scores were then put into the Internal External Matrix to determine the position of State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, in improving the quality of education. The analysis results in Figure 1 place the position of State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, in quadrant V. Improving the quality of education is in Hold and Maintain conditions. This position allows the State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, to optimize the implementation of the principal managerial skills in improving the quality of education, be more proactive in collaborating with training institutions, and motivate teachers to develop their competence and professionalism.

The Impact of Implementing Principal Managerial Skills in Improving Education Quality

a. Curriculum

Implementing the principal managerial skills impacts implementing the curriculum in State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia. Motivation, guidance, and good communication carried out by the

principal when carrying out academic supervision were responded to by the majority of teachers by carrying out their duties and functions based on the curriculum content and did not hesitate to communicate this with the principal or fellow teachers if they encountered learning problems. However, it is undeniable that its implementation still has some obstacles. This condition is in line with As'ari, who found that the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum was still experiencing several obstacles due to several reasons, namely: (1) the mindset of teachers who still positioned themselves as the main source of learning; (2) student books and teacher books are less communicative; (3) lack of familiarity with the use of a scientific approach in mathematics lessons; and (4) the rare application of authentic assessment (As'ari, 2014). Applying a good curriculum supports the creation of future generations who are responsible, creative, innovative, and experts (Julaeha, 2019). Frequent curriculum changes also cause obstacles in understanding and implementing the curriculum, so some teachers encounter difficulties in understanding and implementing it. Fernandes found that most teachers still do not understand how to implement the 2013 Curriculum (Fernandes, 2019). Of course,

implementing appropriate managerial skills can help overcome these barriers.

b. Learning Activities

The principal managerial skills also impact the implementation of learning activities. Through academic supervision, the principal applies interpersonal and technical skills well. By implementing interpersonal skills, principals can motivate, guide, and communicate learning obstacles and their solutions to teachers to utilize their potential. Rusman explains that in learning, teachers should use all their potential to encourage changes in student behavior (Rusman, 2011). By implementing technical skills, principals can assist teachers in preparing lesson plans, diagnosing student learning difficulties, and various other technical tasks. To teach well, a teacher must prepare lesson plans carefully because carrying out learning is the implementation of the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP).

In the learning process in State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, all teachers teach according to their respective competencies and fields. It shows that teachers teach according to their profession. They are professional and reliable teachers in their respective fields. The presence of professional teachers is expected to improve the quality of education at schools. It is in line with the results of Suwartini's research that there is a positive and significant influence between teacher professionalism and the quality of education (Suwartini, 2017b). It means the better the teacher's professionalism is, the better the quality of education is.

In this study, it was found that a small number of teachers were still negligent in carrying out their assignments. They have received a professional allowance, meaning their profession has been recognized by awarding a certification allowance as a professional teacher. Sennen found that it is alleged that there are still teachers who have not placed their work as a profession (Sennen, 2017). They have been certified and received certification allowances but have not seriously prepared and carried out their duties as teachers in a professional manner. To overcome this problem, teachers' awareness, willingness, and responsiveness in facing various problems are key to achieving teacher professionalism in their duties. Thus, the main element for becoming a professional teacher is the teacher's responsiveness and willingness to continue to develop themselves through continuous learning efforts, open to various developments and advances in information

technology, and demand change. In addition, to improve teacher professionalism.

c. Student Achievement

The impact of implementing the principal managerial skills also has an impact on the learning achievement of students at State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia. Achievement is the work result of a process that has been passed. In education, achievement is usually associated with learning. The learning achievement of State Senior High School students in Palopo City in the last three years has increased. However, it has not been able to compete with superior schools in big cities in Indonesia. Several alums were accepted at favorite universities. Although there are indeed more who continue their studies in Palopo City, apart from economic reasons, it is also because they choose to study at universities that create workforces, for example, nursing, shipping, agriculture, and others.

Several things cause low student achievement at State Senior High School in Palopo City, Indonesia: electronic devices such as gadgets and computers that are not used for educational purposes but only for entertainment and all the more if used for things that can damage the student's morale. There are many examples of students whose achievements are low because they only chat frequently rather than share about education (Kompasnia). Another cause is due to ineffective teaching in every school (Kompasana). Professional teachers must carry out good learning processes at schools to overcome this. The professional in question is a qualified and competent teacher (Danil, 2017), and the desired teacher to bring learning achievement and be able to influence the teaching and learning process, which later results in good learning achievement for students.

CONCLUSION

Managerial skills applied by principals at State Senior High Schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, are conceptual, interpersonal, and technical skills. Implementing the principal conceptual skills is seen when developing school programs and making decisions involving teachers. Implementing the principal interpersonal skills is demonstrated when motivating, guiding, and communicating programs, rules, and policies. Technical skills are implemented by principals when assisting teachers in completing their professional assignments, compiling lesson plans, diagnosing student learning difficulties, and others. The results of the evaluation analysis of

internal and external factors show that the strengths of the State Senior High School in Palopo City, Indonesia, can overcome its weaknesses and is very responsive in overcoming threats in improving the quality of education. An important finding of this research is that implementing principal managerial skills at state senior high schools in Palopo City, Indonesia, contributes positively to improving the quality of education.

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