

Best Principal Management of School Mission and Instructional Programs of Secondary Schools in Banda Aceh, Indonesia

Mohamad Johdi Salleh *, Muhammad Hatta **

* Institute of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia

** Faculty of Education, University Negeri of Aceh Indonesia

Abstract- The main focus of the study is to analyze the principals' management of school mission and instructional programs of secondary schools in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. The framework of the study is based on the models by Dwyer (1984), Hallinger and Murphy (1985), and, Latip (2006). Data was collected using survey methods and the questionnaires are the main tool of the study. Questionnaires used were the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) that had been adopted from Hallinger and Murphy (1985). One hundred and sixty three teachers and twelve principals of twelve public secondary schools in Banda Aceh were chosen as the respondents of the study. The data gathered from the survey was analyzed using descriptive and inference statistics of the SPSS-Versions 16.0 programme. The findings show that the principals of secondary schools in Banda Aceh had practiced the highest on 'Monitoring Student Progress' as perceived both by teachers and the principals themselves. It is hoped that this research will provide useful findings which will effectively assist the innovation of instructional leadership quality among principals and teachers of secondary schools in Banda Aceh in order to enhance students' academic performance.

Index Terms- Best Principal Management - School Mission and Instructional Programs

I. INTRODUCTION

Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, with its three special privileges in terms of religion, culture, and education, is facing the low quality of education as well as low students' academic achievement especially in the national examination grades. According to data provided by the Department of National Education of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam ranks 22nd out of the 33 provinces of Indonesia in term of the quality of education. Even though there are various factors contributing to the low quality of education in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, principals as instructional leaders play a vital role in determining the success of the education in their schools (Firman & Tola 2008).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW: DIMENSIONS OF SCHOOL MISSION AND INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT

Dwyer (1984), Hallinger and Murphy (1985), Doyke & Rice (2002). and, Latip (2006) suggest that the basic instructional

management role of the principals can be subdivided into two general dimensions comprises of 'defining the school mission', and, 'managing the instructional programme'.

III. DIMENSION OF THE SCHOOL MISSION

Hoy & Hoy (2006) state that one of the important dimensions of the principal's role as instructional leader is to define and communicate a mission or purpose for the school. Instructional leaders are often said to have a "vision" of what the school should be trying to accomplish. Defining a school mission involves communicating this vision to the staff and students in such a way that a sense of shared purpose exists, linking the various activities that take place in classrooms throughout the school (Southworth 2002; McMillan, 2004). The principal's role in defining the mission involves framing schoolwide goals and communicating these goals in a persistent fashion to the entire school community (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). In fact, operating without a clear mission is like beginning a journey without having a destination in mind. Chances are you will not know when you get there (King, 2002).

Leithwood et al. (1999) and McEwan (2003) noted that effective leaders will involve staff in determining and defining school mission to be implemented and evaluated at the end of the year. This condition will increase their commitment to cooperate in achieving the school's goals and objectives. Therefore, each school will be confident of being a success if it has a clear vision and mission as well as teacher commitment towards high students academic achievements.

IV. MANAGING THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME

This dimension of instructional leadership involves working with teachers in areas specifically related to curriculum and instruction. Krug (1992, as cited in Terry, 1996) emphasized that instruction is the primary service that schools offer. Therefore, it is imperative that principals have at least an awareness of all subject areas and the special needs of each. They should be able to provide information and direction to teachers regarding instructional methods, and they should be actively involved in and supportive of curriculum development (Lashway, 2002; Green, 2005; Glikman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon 2007). This dimension consists of several related job functions. These are supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the

curriculum, and monitoring student progress (Andrews & Soder 1987).

Major findings on the subject indicate that principals who are strong in these areas make a considerable impact on the function of the school (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Lashway, 1999; Quinn, 2002; Fullan, 2002; Firman & Tola 2008).

Based on that reason, it is appropriate to conduct this study because there are no studies on the practice of instructional leadership among secondary school principals in Banda Aceh. More specifically, the main focus of the study is to analyze the principals' management of school mission and instructional programs of secondary schools in Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

V. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study is to identify best principal management of school mission and instructional programs of secondary schools in Banda Aceh, Indonesia and to analyze the relationship with students' academic achievement.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The questionnaires used were the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) that had been adopted from Hallinger and Murphy (1985). One hundred and sixty three teachers and twelve principals of twelve high achievements public secondary schools in Banda Aceh were chosen as the respondents of the study. The data gathered from the survey was

analyzed using descriptive and inference statistics of the SPSS-Versions 16.0 programme.

The respondents, the principals' demographic background contains the five variables of gender, age, academic qualifications, teaching experience and years of experience as principal. The teachers' demographic background contains the four variables of gender, age, academic qualifications, and teaching experience (Best & Kahn 2003; Creswell 2005).

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT OF THE STUDY

The practice of five job functions can be measured based on the interpretation of mean score classified into 4 levels (Latip, 2006). Those 4 levels are low level or not implemented ($x = 1.000 - 2.000$), simple low level ($x = 2.001 - 3.000$), simple high level ($x = 4.001 - 4.000$), and high level ($x = 4.001 - 5.000$).

The data analysis and result of the study are presented in the following sections.

Research Question:

What is the best practice of Management of School Mission and Instructional Program among the principals of secondary schools in Banda Aceh?

The detailed distribution of each function of Management of School Mission and Instructional Programme among the principals of secondary schools in Banda Aceh is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The best practice of Management of School Mission and Instructional Program among the principals of secondary schools in Banda Aceh according to Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions (n = 175)

The Functions of Instructional Leadership		Frequency & Percentage				Mean	of Level Implementation	Superiority Ranking
		Mean (1.000-2.000) L	Mean (2.001-3.000) SL	Mean (3.001-4.000) SH	Mean (4.001-5.000) H			
Framing School Goals		2 1.1%	16 9.1%	72 41.2%	85 48.6%	3.957	Simple High	2
Communicating School Goals		2 1.1%	16 9.1%	94 53.8%	63 36%	3.872	Simple High	4
Supervising and Evaluating Instruction		3 1.7%	23 13.1%	98 56%	51 29.2%	3.750	Simple High	5
Coordinating Curriculum		2 1.1%	17 9.7%	83 47.5%	73 41.7%	3.913	Simple High	3
Monitoring Student Progress		1 0.6%	18 10.3%	59 33.7%	97 55.4%	4.072	High	1
Total Mean (X)						3.836	Simple High	

* L = Low; SL = Simple Low; SH = Simple High; H = High

The table exhibits that the best practice of Management of School Mission and Instructional Program among the principals of secondary schools in Banda Aceh according to Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions was 'Monitoring Student Progress' mean 4.072 implemented at 'high' level. It was followed by 'Framing School Goals' mean 3.957, 'Coordinating Curriculum' mean 3.913, 'Communicating School Goals' mean 3.872, and, 'Supervising and Evaluating Instruction' mean 3.750.

Discussion on the best practice of Monitoring Student Progress among the principals of secondary schools in Banda Aceh

Table 2 shows in detail the mean score, standard deviation and the level of implementation of each task related to this function.

Table 2: The Practice of Monitoring Student Progress as perceived by Principals and Teachers (n = 175)

The Tasks of Monitoring Student Progress	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of Implementation
1. Meet individually with teachers to discuss student academic progress	3.966	0.830	Simple High
2. Discuss the item analysis of tests with the faculty to identify strengths and weaknesses in the instructional programme	4.080	0.812	High
3. Use test results to assess progress towards school goals	4.234	0.908	High
4. Distribute test results in a timely fashion	4.023	0.953	High
5. Inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form (e.g. in a memo or newsletter)	4.086	0.801	High
6. Inform students of the school's performance results	4.143	0.889	High
7. Identify students whose test results indicate a need for special instruction such as remediation or enrichment	3.949	0.886	Simple High
8. Develop or find the appropriate instructional programme(s) for students whose test results indicate a need	4.097	0.895	High
Total Mean (X)	4.072	0.670	High

The findings of the study show that two tasks involved in monitoring student progress were implemented at the simple high level, i.e. first, meet individually with teachers to discuss student academic progress, with a mean score of 3.966 and standard deviation of 0.830. Secondly, identify students whose test results indicate a need for special instruction, with a mean score is 3.949 and standard deviation of 0.886. Meanwhile, other tasks related to this function were implemented by principals at a high level with mean scores ranging from 4.023 to 4.234.

Moreover, the result of the data analysis as shown in Table 3 indicates that there was a significant relationship between monitoring student progress and students' academic achievement. This is clear when the Pearson Correlation shows $r = 0.207$, $p < 0.05$.

Table 3: Relationship between Instructional Leadership and Its Eleven Job Functions with Students' Academic Achievement

H1	Instructional Leadership & Its Eleven Job Functions	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig. p	Level of Significant	Hypothesis
H1	Monitoring Student Progress	175	0.207	0.006	P<0.05	Accepted

Meanwhile, there was a positive correlation between monitoring student progress and students' academic achievement. It could be interpreted that the higher the monitoring of student progress, the higher students' academic achievement.

Hence, the study indicates that the principals of public secondary schools in Banda Aceh were more concerned with 'monitoring student progress' in order to improve their academic achievement, especially in terms of the grades achieved in national examinations.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The findings show that the principals of secondary schools in Banda Aceh had practiced the highest on 'Monitoring Student Progress' function. As a school leader the principal has to monitor student progress in order to improve their academic achievement. It is hoped that this research will provide useful findings which will effectively assist the innovation of instructional leadership quality among principals and teachers of secondary schools in Banda Aceh in order to enhance students' academic performance.

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AUTHORS

First Author – Mohamad Johdi Salleh, johdisalleh@gmail.com
Institute of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia
Mohamad Johdi Salleh: The Presenter/Researcher is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur. He possessed BA Hons. (Malaya), MA Education (London), and, PhD Education (Birmingham). His area of specialization and interest are Educational Leadership & Administration, Teacher Professionalism, and, History Education.

Second Author – Muhammad Hatta, Faculty of Education
University Negeri of Aceh Indonesia