

Increasing the Leadership of School Principals in Organizing Educational Units in the Digital Era "Opportunities and Challenges"

Pitriani^{1*}, Sulastris^{2*}

¹Department of Educational Administration, Padang State University, Padang, Indonesia

²Department of Educational Administration, Padang State University, Padang, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received June 13, 2023

Revised March 13, 2024

Accepted March 20, 2024

Available online March 27, 2024

Keywords:

Leadership, School Principals, Organizing Educational Units, Digital Era



This is an open access article under the [CC BY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license.

Copyright © 2024 by Author. Published by Laboratory of Educational Administration Department Universitas Negeri Padang

ABSTRACT

School principals must be able to face various educational obstacles in the digital era. To make a school capable of producing quality alumni, the principal must be able to turn various issues into open doors. The various challenges faced by school principals are the focus of this article, which aims to determine the appropriate leadership style for school principals in the digital era. Based on the research findings, it is very challenging for school principals to advance the schools they lead in the midst of globalization. School principals must also be able to come up with original and creative ideas to fulfill their responsibilities as leaders.

*Corresponding Author:

Pitriani

Email: pitrianipitriani911@email.com

1. INTRODUCTION

The status of schools as formal educational institutions is very determining, especially for the highly educated and skilled generation. The actions of school personnel regarding the collection, arrangement and coordination of various tasks (work) must be structured to achieve educational goals. A component called educational administration, which supports the educational process in schools, is very necessary for the effective implementation of the teaching and learning process in schools. Administration, according to Wijaya, A.W. (1986), is a comprehensive process of teamwork and use of facilities to achieve goals through dynamic and humane planning, organizing, acting, coordinating, regulating and controlling activities. (Education & Counseling, n.d.-b; Sulastris et al., 2022)

The person who leads is the leader. while his position is leadership. Viewed from another perspective, the word "leadership" comes from the word "lead" which means to direct or direct. Brodjonegoro (2018) workers in all fields during the Modern Upset 4.0 era are expected to have advanced capabilities, both specialized and administrative workers. It turns out that social skills are as important as the right skills for work in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0. Analytical and interactive non-routine skills are in high demand, according to research conducted in a number of developed countries. although there is a decrease in the requirements for cognitive routine, non-routine manual and routine manual skills. The best leadership is one that adapts to the needs of the digital era. leaders who follow technological developments. Skills in influencing, encouraging, directing, directing and mobilizing other people involved in the implementation and development of education and teaching in the digital era are very important for leaders to have (Rosita & Iskandar, 2022)

Given competing leadership theories, ideal leadership principles should be considered carefully when discussing leadership. Basically, joint human activities consistently require administration. In the current scenario, leadership is always required for human activities that require close cooperation. Consequently, for any program or project to be successful, it requires a specific perspective on leadership based on leadership theory. This perspective usually emphasizes important historical events such as the emergence of leadership, the desire to become a leader, the main characteristics of leaders, their main responsibilities and functions, and the professional ethics of leadership.

As a learning agent, the principal always strives to improve the school's educational standards. According to Wardani (2015:685) the leadership role of the principal in schools is very important. (Pd et al., n.d.; Sulastris et al., 2022; Syahril & Sulastris, 2022)

In the field of education, life in the digital era is a significant obstacle, according to Jannah (2020). Education is not just about providing information and utilizing knowledge and innovation, but must be able to create graduates who are able to compete locally, broadly and universally. According to Aisyah M. (2018), educational units are seen as places where students acquire knowledge, attitudes and various skills needed to develop personal qualities. (Pendidikan & Konseling, n.d.-a)

Technology makes everything simpler. The internet makes it easy to access various kinds of information. Technology has both beneficial and detrimental impacts. If technology is not used appropriately it can have a negative impact on the development of morals and character in students (Arrasyid, 2021)

If proper regulations and facilities are in place, digital technology can provide life-saving solutions (Medicine, 2019). Education stakeholders must quickly and seriously respond to the challenges of digital education (Fitriyah & Santosa, 2020). (Jannah, 2020) emphasized that the school principal as the main driver in providing education must be able to function effectively.

The progress of a school foundation depends on who is in charge and how they take the initiative. According to Nurhana (2021), a leader's leadership style is the characteristics or features they use to guide the organization and its subordinates towards certain goals. Then, of course there will be many changes in the power styles of school administrators due to different problems and situations. (Aryowan, 2019) The test for school principals in the electronic era is that they must be able to generate creative and imaginative thinking to be able to turn things into significant requests and opportunities in completing their tasks and capacities. to empower the present universe of preparation. continue. By explaining the various challenges of the digital era and various leadership styles of school principals (Pascasarjana et al.), this article aims to answer questions about the leadership styles school principals should use in the digital era.

This is in line with the findings of a number of studies (Agus Purwanto & Masduki Asbari, 2020), which found that the leadership style of school principals influences motivation, performance, work environment and teacher organizational culture and the school environment. According to other research (Dewi and Lazwardi, 2022), a voice-based management approach is suitable for computerized school foundations. Zulfan et al, conducted research in 2021) reached the resolution that school administrators' presentations were influenced by the school principal's initiative style. While administrative style has no effect on the speaker's execution (Agus Purwanto and Masduki Asbari, 2020), an innovative, value-based and legitimate authority style does. This is contrary to research conducted by Darmawan (2019) which found that the dictatorial initiative style had a significant impact on the development of instructor discipline and execution. Researchers are interested in examining various leadership styles of school principals in establishing more digitally appropriate educational units, based on previous research.

The following are problems that affect teachers as a whole: low work ethic and commitment among teachers, as well as a lack of public respect for the teaching profession and teacher qualifications and competencies. The lack of teacher guidance and supervision is closely related to the low work ethic of teachers. Moreover, this shows the weakness of the head administration as a guide and defender of subordinates.

The role of the school principal who is tasked with carrying out complete management of the organization of the course of education in an educational institution is very dependent on how the school is run. The main responsibility of the school leader is to act as a leader who directs the course of education, which is essentially a transformation from input into graduates. who gave birth to a good generation. This establishes a procedure that is carried out correctly and in accordance with the educational objectives themselves. In this case, a leader who functions as a top manager absolutely

needs effective management to ensure the quality of the school and its alignment with educational goals.

Apart from being the top manager of the school, the principal also oversees the school. This shows that top managers are considered the key to an organization's success and are a determining factor in its success or failure. This is in accordance with Daryanto's statement (2005:7) A professional school principal is able to mobilize and utilize resources from school stakeholders, pay attention to teacher welfare, meet student needs, and carry out financial management in a transparent and responsible manner. able to prepare a systematic work program that includes school elements in order to strengthen school management. School principals must be able to manage and utilize information and communication technology (ICT) to improve educational standards in the digital era.

2. METHOD, DATA, ANALYSIS

This article uses a descriptive method by conducting a literature study and analysis of literature relevant to the topic of discussion. By searching and analyzing literature related to school principal leadership and the use of ICT in education. This article is a literature study based on the results of research and literature reviews related to leadership. school principals in the digital era. The data used in this article is secondary data obtained from various sources such as scientific journals, books and trusted online articles.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Results Based on the findings of data analysis regarding school principal leadership strategies that can be applied in the digital era, including:

Leadership methods that focus on providing infrastructure and further working on the nature of human resources, especially in the ICT sector;

- a. The strategy of leading with an open mind;
- b. Leadership strategies prepared for the unexpected;
- c. Leadership strategy that quickly adapts to change;
- d. Leadership strategies that are not process oriented but result oriented;
- e. The 4 Cs of leadership techniques are critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication and
- f. a leadership approach that can foster an entrepreneurial spirit.

To facilitate the implementation of the administrative methodology described above, it can be adapted and upheld with the mindset in the view of the Panca Usaha Sandhi consisting of Maya, Upeksa, Indra Jala, Vikrama, and Lokika. A leader must always take decisions based on relevant data that has been properly analyzed and codified in a professional and proportional manner, seek solutions based on the findings of the analysis and adhere to established guidelines, according to part of the Five Sandhi Efforts. determined and continually places a high value on logical considerations in problem solving.

- a. Strategies for educating students in the digital era can be derived from data analysis;
- b. Monitoring strategy focused on improving the quality of human resources and utilization of infrastructure in ICT offerings;
- c. Open-minded strategies (that can be used);
- d. Strategy for achieving goals that does not yet exist;
- e. The most impactful leadership strategies in the current period;
- f. Performance improvement strategies that are procedure-oriented rather than results-oriented (process-focused);
- g. Critical thinking, creativity, communication, and teamwork are the 4C strategies; And
- h. Leadership strategies that are able to develop an entrepreneurial spirit.

Achieving the functions and goals of national education depends on the leadership of the school principal. You can't just because the teacher is great; The principal must also ensure that teachers carry out their role and bring out the potential for goodness and responsibility of teachers in carrying out their duties. Because they are afraid of their superiors and the Almighty human creator, Allah SWT, good school principals and teachers are also responsible in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. In fact, school principals must be able to establish efficient schools with the right leadership skills and methods. Schools, on the other hand, are not very successful as educational

institutions because it is difficult to understand and implement educational leadership strategies in schools.

Consequently, school principals must use appropriate leadership strategies when managing schools to ensure that they are efficient and achieve educational goals. Changing to become a school principal requires going through different stages of determination, starting from regulatory choices, scholastic choices, to graduation without stopping preparing future school directors. School principals must be able to respond and adapt to various dynamics that are developing rapidly in the digital era, such as curriculum implementation, rules for accepting new students, increasing teacher competence, and increasing competence, in addition to leading the school in accordance with its main tasks and functions. school principal, for example. In the ongoing period of regional independence, a school principal apart from getting a centralization strategy, also needs to get territorial head arrangements, even strategically, sometimes the impact of the provincial head's strategy is more dominant than the central government's arrangements, because the school director is chosen and appointed by the head area.

There are many problems in the education industry today. An insightful school principal will definitely answer these challenges with sensitivity and agility. A strategic issue that has received a lot of attention in the current digital era is how important it is to improve the quality of graduates to be able to compete in the world of work. Even though at first glance it looks identical to SMK, the policy behind implementing the 2013 curriculum to replace the 2006 curriculum is to increase the competitiveness of graduates and the quality of their education at all levels. Much work has been done digitally in the digital era. It is possible to manage multiple tasks with one device (multi-tasking). In the end, just contact the screen, then, at that time, the work should be able to be done or the requirements can be met. Currently, e-KTP, e-passport, e-book, e-learning, e-ticket, e-banking, e-commerce, e-toll, and so on are all electronic. Teachers must also master ICT because apart from being a learning tool, it is also a learning resource, and its use is increasingly widespread along with the increasing need for ICT devices. Because students may be more proficient in using ICT devices than teachers, teachers should not be tech savvy or technologically illiterate. However, related to his duties as a teaching leader, it is hoped that the school principal can mobilize, motivate and guide teachers in carrying out their duties as teachers in schools, Sulastri, et al (2021).

In this digital era, school principals must implement several leadership strategies considering the importance of mastering ICT in learning activities.

- a. First, improve teacher skills with ICT-based learning.
- b. Second, the arrangement of offices and supporting foundations, for example PC research facilities, web organizations, learning assets, visual guides and ICT-based learning media.
- c. Third, establishing partnerships with ICT service providers or operators, either through training collaboration or providing ICT equipment.

Apart from that, according to Joko Widodo (Al Alawi, 2018), massive human resource development must be followed to face the digital era. There are no half-hearted measures that must be taken.

First, an open-minded leadership approach is needed. Being open-minded means being open to all aspects of the school, including the budget, open to suggestions and criticism, open to current issues, and open to students, staff, parents and the general public. When a school opens, everything that happens there will become clear, and all parts of the school will feel like they belong, which will motivate people to make the school better.

Second, leaders who are ready to face unexpected things are needed so that the digital era or industrial revolution 4.0 can take place. Because change occurs quickly, leaders must not be caught off guard and must be ready to face it.

Third, leaders need to act quickly when new developments occur. because change happens quickly. The four leaders must be managed by results (result based) not managed by technique (process managed). Lastly, leaders must be able to work with other people. Cannot lead a closed team. It is very important to be able to discuss difficulties and problems with stakeholders due to the rapid changes in the future. Reformers who bring change and respond quickly with straightforward work procedures and regulations will emerge as a result of the industrial revolution 4.0. apart from being able to maintain its existence in the era of the fourth industrial revolution.

According to the Head of Science and Technology Assets and Advanced Education of the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education Ali Ghufon Mukti (Director General of Science and Technology Assets and Advanced Education Innovation, 2018) a pioneer must be able to

apply the 4C methodology in order to exist in this fourth era. modern era. The first component of the 4C formula is critical thinking. Although a leader is intelligent, he must be skeptical and critical; However, if leaders are not critical, the organization will become ineffective and stagnant. Second, creativity, in particular, has the option to give birth to new developments. For organizational progress, a leader must be able to create something new and unique. Third, communication: A leader must be able to convey all information effectively so that it can be understood by members of the organization and the wider community without causing misunderstandings. In addition, to improve the image of the school organization in the eyes of the public, all forms of innovation and progress achieved by the school must be published. The actions of others are influenced by a leader's communication.

Fourth, the ability to collaborate or work well from a leader will be able to strengthen the organization and resolve any problems that arise. A school principal, for example, can collaborate with other schools to carry out educational activities such as teacher training, sharing technology owned by all schools, and other related collaborations. They can also work together with graduate users, such as at the vocational school level, so that graduates can quickly integrate into the world of work.

Saputra & Syahril (2022) and Sulastri et al (2021) stated several main duties of a school principal as a teaching leader in a school, namely influencing, directing, guiding and motivating teachers so that they can carry out their duties and responsibilities well. Furthermore, one of the teachers' duties in organizing education in schools is to carry out teaching (Syahril & Sulastri, 2022)

Because they are vulnerable to misuse, some schools have implemented policies that prohibit students from using cell phones. Even though it seems like distancing oneself from the use of ICT, this effort is actually a preventive step. As a result, there needs to be a proportional policy regarding the use of ICT among students; For example, students only use cell phones when studying, when they really need them, and this is also prohibited because cellphones can be a learning resource. The internet has now become a part of everyone's life, even students. A person cannot be disconnected from the internet connection for more than 24 hours, from waking up to going back to sleep. Children can also develop their creativity and learn from it by using various applications that they can download from the play store.

However, to prevent misuse, parents must accompany its use. Quality schools will make maximum use of ICT in their education and learning services. Some students have won Olympiads or produced innovative work. This will of course greatly affect the image and image of the school according to the wider community, considering that currently the local community is also increasingly condemning the nature of the school. As a school leader and manager, the principal is tasked with implementing ICT in the school. However, a typical barrier to achieving this is a lack of funding. Thus, school managers must have an entrepreneurial spirit and be adept at establishing partnerships and networks with various stakeholders, such as school committees, the business and industrial world, as well as non-governmental organizations, in order to achieve program synergy. implementation (Apandi, 2018).

Opportunities in the digital era:

School administrators can improve the quality of education they provide in various ways thanks to the digital era. The ease with which high-quality educational resources can be accessed online is one opportunity. These resources can be used by school principals to enrich the curriculum and offer students more interactive learning opportunities. Digital technology also allows school administrators to communicate effectively with parents and the general public through social media and other online platforms.

Challenges in the Digital Era

According to Fitriyah & Santosa (2020), in order to carry out their duties and responsibilities at school, school principals can master IT. Schools are expected to be able to produce students who are dynamic, imaginative and tough. To be able to create quality and strong alumni both broadly and globally, schools are expected to be able to provide quality human education so that they can produce an older generation. individuals who maintain virtue, and schools are expected to have the option to produce teachers and educational staff who are capable in the IT field and have the personality of 21st century humans.

Strategy to Improve the Leadership Quality of School Principals

To further develop the authority of school administrators in the future, several procedures can be carried out. Namely: school principals must take part in training related to digital technology and

professional development. They must remain aware of the latest advances in educational innovation and find ways to coordinate them into their training. To support the implementation of digital technology in schools, school principals must also form a team of experts in the field of technology.

4. CONCLUSION

Organizing educational units in the digital era requires school principals to improve the quality of their leadership. School principals, on the other hand, can better face these challenges by implementing the right strategies, such as having a strong understanding of educational technology and innovation, managing human resources effectively, implementing appropriate educational innovations, establishing strong relationships with the community and stakeholders, as well as fostering a culture of innovation and creativity.

5. REFERENCES

- Aryawan, I. W. (2019). *Strategi Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0 Berlandaskan Pada Konsep Panca Upaya Sandhi*. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Sosial*, 5(2), 132. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jiis.v5i2.22519>
- IMPLEMENTASI TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM) DI LEMBAGA. (n.d.).
- Kurniawan, K., Dwi Hurriyati, S., Fathi Amirrasyid, A., & Studi Magister, P. (2023). *Strategi Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah dalam Menghadapi Revolusi Digital 4.0*. *Journal on Education*, 05(02), 2238–2247.
- Pascasarjana, T., Kalimantan, U. I., Muhammad, S., & Al-Banjari, A. (n.d.). *KEPEMIMPINAN KEPALA SEKOLAH DI ERA DIGITAL*.
- Pd, Sulastris., Pd Syahril, M., Pd, M., & Dra Nelfia Adi, P. D. (n.d.). *KEPEMIMPINAN PEMBELAJARAN BERBASIS ACTION LEARNING*. PENERBIT: CV. EUREKA MEDIA AKSARA.
- Pendidikan, J., & Konseling, D. Sulastris (n.d.-a). *Peran Pemimpin dalam manajemen Pengambilan Keputusan Suatu Organisasi* (Vol. 4).
- Pendidikan, J., & Konseling, D.sulastris (n.d.-b). *Peranan Tenaga Administrasi dalam Peningkatan Mutu Layanan di Sekolah* (Vol. 4).
- Ridho, M. R. (n.d.). *KEPEMIMPINAN KEPALA SEKOLAH DALAM MENINGKATKAN KUALITAS PENDIDIK DI ERA REVOLUSI 4.0 PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATORS IN THE ERA OF REVOLUTION 4.0* (Vol. 6, Issue 1).
- Rosita, R., & Iskandar, S. (2022). *Gaya Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah di Era Digital*. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(4), 6005–6011. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i4.3127>
- STRATEGI PEMIMPIN DALAM DIGITAL LEADERSHIP DI ERA DISRUPSI DIGITAL RINI
- DEWI ANDRIANI Mahasiswa Program Doktor MPI FITK UIN SU Medan. (n.d.). <http://jurnal.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/al-irsyad>
- Sulastris, S., Syahril, S., Adi, N., & Ermita, E. (2022). *Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Profil Pelajar Pancasila bagi Guru di Sekolah Dasar*. *JRTI (Jurnal Riset Tindakan Indonesia)*, 7(3), 583. <https://doi.org/10.29210/30032075000>
- Syahril, S., & Sulastris, S. (2022). *Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah di Era Pandemi*. *Jurnal Konseling Dan Pendidikan*, 10(2), 227. <https://doi.org/10.29210/182200>
- Triyanto, T. (2020). *Peluang dan Tantangan Pendidikan Karakter di Era Digital*. *Jurnal Civics: Media Kajian Kewarganegaraan*, 17(2), 175–184. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jc.v17i2.35476>