Schools Leadership in Improving Islamic Education Teachers' Professionalism in Poso Regency

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ABSTRACT: In educational institutions, schools are led by a principal with the authority to lead the school with a leadership style. Leadership is how a leader influences subordinates' behavior so they want to work together and work productively to achieve organizational goals. A leadership style that does not involve assistants in making decisions will result in disharmony in the relationship between the leader and the led. Therefore leadership is one of the factors that determine a manager's success. This study aims to determine the leadership role of high school principals in Poso in increasing the professionalism of Islamic religious education teachers. This study uses a qualitative method. Data was collected through field observations, in-depth interviews, and written document analysis. The results of this study indicate three types of leadership owned and implemented by schools in Poso, namely democratic leadership, Laisses Faire, and Transformative. Then there are several efforts made by school principals to improve the professionalism of Islamic religious education teachers, namely empowering the competencies possessed by teachers, involving teachers in Islamic religious education teacher organizations, conducting training, workshops, and supervision, and providing opportunities for teachers to continue their education.

KEYWORDS: School leadership, Islamic education, teacher, professionalism

I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers have a significant role in the development of human resources. Therefore, a teacher is expected to have exemplary professionalism because students will develop optimally only with a professional teacher. Later, these students will become reliable human resources and compete in an era as complex and advanced as it is now. The teaching profession has the task of educating, teaching, and training. Education means continuing and developing life values, teaching means continuing and acquiring knowledge, and training means developing skills in students. In carrying out these duties and responsibilities, a teacher is required to have specific abilities and skills. These abilities and skills are part of the teacher's professional competence.

Competence is an ability the teacher owns so that his duties as an educator can be carried out correctly. The teacher is one of the human elements in the educational process at school, and the teacher holds a dual task, namely as a teacher and educator (Terehoff, 2002). As a teacher, the teacher is tasked with pouring several learning materials into the students' brains. In contrast, as an educator, the teacher guides and fosters students to become capable, active, creative, and independent moral human beings.

In educational institutions, schools are led by a principal with the authority to lead the school with a leadership style. Leadership is how a leader influences subordinates' behavior so they want to work together and work productively to achieve organizational goals. A leadership style that does not involve assistants in making decisions will result in disharmony in the relationship between the leader and the led. Therefore leadership is one of the factors that determine a manager's success.

In school management, schools are given the flexibility to manage their potential by involving all stakeholders to increase the school's quality (Hikmah, Dzakiah, Yanti, Haryanto, & Nurdin, 2023). Because the school has such broad authority, the presence of a leadership figure is significant. Good leadership certainly dramatically impacts whether or not organizational goals are achieved because leaders influence the performance they lead. The ability to influence a group to achieve goals is part of leadership (Carmeli, Sheaffer, Binyamin, Reiter-Palmon, & Shimoni, 2014). Each leader has a leadership style, which is the attitude, movements, or behavior chosen by a leader in carrying out his leadership duties. The style of a leader is different from

one another depending on the situation and condition of his leadership. Leadership style is a norm of behavior used by someone when that person tries to influence the behavior of others (Zaid, Pettalongi, & Nurdin, 2022).

In several senior high schools in Poso Regency, which are in urban areas, schools have achievements, and this varying number of students is possible because the Principal's leadership in managing or leading has different methods and strategies, especially towards Islamic Religious Education teachers at these schools. This research focuses on the three high schools which are geographically located in the same way, namely in the Muslim community. The output or achievement is closely related to the teacher's role in providing learning because a teacher should have several competencies to carry out the teacher's duties professionally. Therefore, the competence of this teacher must continually be improved so that the quality of learning also always increases as indicated by the achievement or output of the school's students.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Definition of Leadership

There are various types of leaders. There are formal leaders, which occur because leaders rely on legal authority. Some informal leaders appear because leaders without proper authority succeed in influencing the behavior of others (Silins & Mulford, 2002). As often expressed by leadership experts, power comes from rewards, coercion, expertise, charisma/personal strength.

In this case, what is meant by leadership is formally given responsibility for managing or managing something to achieve specific goals. In society, a leader always appears who can influence and direct the behavior of community members toward particular goals. Thus the leader is considered to represent the community's aspirations, and the leader can realize most people's hopes. However, in reality, leaders have broader intelligence and insight than the average follower, so it is only natural that the presence of leaders is greatly missed to overcome various problems community members face. Leadership is the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward goals that are desirable (Nurdin, Scheepers, & Stockdale, 2022). The essence of leadership is how to control other people to want to work together to achieve the goals that have been set.

Leaders use their intelligence to meet expectations by utilizing the environment and the organization's potential. In other words, leaders try to involve members of the organization to achieve goals (Kort, 2008). The ability to move, direct and influence members of the organization to achieve organizational goals as a form of leadership. Meanwhile, an indicator of the success of a leader is marked by the ability to influence behavior toward the goals that have been set.

In line with this, Mulyasa said that leadership is fundamental in influencing organizational members. Principals must encourage teacher professionalism by showing a sense of friendliness, closeness, and full consideration of teachers as individuals and as a group. Positive leader behavior can encourage groups by directing and motivating individuals to work together in groups to achieve organizational goals.

Meanwhile, according to Ngalim Purwanto, leadership is a collection of a series of abilities and personality traits, including authority, to be used as a means to convince those he leads so that they are willing and able to carry out the tasks assigned to them willingly, enthusiastically, have inner joy, and feel not forced. So all members work with the feeling that it is not a burden but something fun.

The term leadership comes from the word lead which means to lead or guide, then leadership means about leading or how to lead (Kort, 2008). Thus leadership is how a person's technique or way of guiding or directing a person or group in achieving the target of a goal that has been planned and set.

From several definitions of leadership, there are common assumptions that are general, namely:
a.   Within a group phenomenon involves interaction between two or more people;
b.   It involves an influencing process in which intentional influence is exerted by a leader on members of the organization.

B. *Leadership Typology*

There are three leadership elements: humans or members, means, and goals. To empower all these elements proportionally, a leader must have the knowledge or skills to carry out his leadership. This knowledge and skills can be obtained through theoretical learning experiences or practical experiences while being a leader. The style of leadership is a way or technique of someone in carrying out a leadership. Furthermore, it is said that leadership style can also be interpreted as a behavioral norm used by someone when that person tries to influence the behavior of others as seen. In this case, the effort to harmonize between people who will influence behavior and those who will be influenced becomes very important.

The style of leadership is also understood as a pattern of behavior of a typical leader when influencing group members; what the leader chooses to do and how the leader acts in influencing group members forms his leadership style. There are three main types of leadership, which can also be called extreme, namely: the autocratic type, the laissez-faire type, and the democratic type. Meanwhile, the characteristics or indicators will be described below:

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a.   Autocratic leadership type

In autocratic leadership, the leader acts as a dictator toward the group members (De Cremer, 2006). For him to lead is to move and force the group. His interpretation as a leader is nothing but showing and giving orders. The obligation of subordinates or their members is to follow and carry out. They may not argue or submit suggestions. Autocratic leaders do not want meetings or deliberations. Gathering or meeting only means to convey instructions. Any difference of opinion among group members is considered shortsightedness, defiance, or a violation of discipline against the orders or instructions set.

His actions, he cannot be contested; supervision for an autocratic leader only means controlling whether all the orders given are obeyed or carried out correctly by his members (Caillier, 2020). So it's no supervision but inspection: looking for mistakes and scrutinizing people who disobey and don't trust the leader personally, then such people are threatened with punishment, transferred, or fired from their positions. Otherwise, people who are obedient and can please themselves as gold children will even be rewarded. This excessive attitude can lead to a philosophy of giving up without criticism, a perspective as long as the father is happy or submits to the leader without daring to give an opinion on the ideas he has. Excessive domination, as above, will lead to opposition to the leader or cause apathy towards the leader.

b.   Democratic leadership

The democratic leadership type interprets its leadership not as a dictator but as a leader among its group members (Gastil, 1994). The relationship with group members is not as employers and workers but as work partners. Democratic leaders always try to stimulate their members to work cooperatively to achieve common goals. In his efforts and actions, he always bases himself on his group's interests and needs and considers his group's abilities (Beerbohm, 2015). When carrying out their duties, they are willing to accept and even expect suggestions from their members and constructive criticism as feedback for consideration in further actions. He believes in himself as well as in the members of his group. Democratic leaders always cultivate a sense of kinship.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative case study method (Nurdin et al., 2022; Nurdin, Stockdale, & Scheepers, 2013) to investigate the role of schools' leadership in improving teachers professionalism in Poso regency in Indonesia (Nurfaiqah, Nurdin, & Alhabsyi, 2022; Rahmawati, Nurdin, & Pettalongi, 2022). Data were collected through direct observation in the case field and in-depth interviews with teachers and the elementary school principal (Jumahir, Nurdin, Pettalongi, Fitri, & Aftori, 2023; Nurdin, 2023). Written materials were also analyzed to understand the strategy used to implement moderate Islamic values in elementary school. Data analysis consists of several procedures, which include reduction and verification techniques with various data sources (Alamsyah, Pettalongi, & Nurdin, 2023; Arif, Nurdin, & Elya, 2023). The reduced data was then analyzed, reflecting on the theoretical concepts used in this study. Finally, the results were presented based on thematic issues found in the data (Muhaimin, Nurdin, & Alhabsyi, 2023; Nurdin, Agam, & Adawiyah, 2023; Nurdin, Pettalongi, Ahsan, & Febrianti, 2023), which show the insight relating to leadership style within schools in Poso regency in Indonesia.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A.   *Types of Principal Leadership in Improving Teacher Professionalism*

In fact, every school principal has various types or styles of leadership to move educators and education staff. This is done to increase the professionalism of all stakeholders. Besides, the kind of Principal's leadership is expected to maintain harmony throughout the school community in their respective duties and responsibilities. The types of leadership possessed and carried out by the three Principals of State Senior High Schools can be seen in the following interview results:

1.   Leadership Type of State Senior High School Principal

The democratic leadership type interprets its leadership not as a dictator but as a leader among its group members. The relationship with group members is not as employers and workers but as work partners. Democratic leaders always try to stimulate their members to work cooperatively to achieve common goals. In his efforts and actions, he always bases himself on the interests and needs of his group and considers the abilities and abilities of his group.

The elements of democratic leadership include opinions focusing on the results of deliberations, tolerance, accepting criticism and suggestions from subordinates, creating a family atmosphere, communication with associates, happy, creative subordinates, accepting suggestions and opinions, trusting subordinates, often holding meetings, fair and wise. The following are the results of interviews with the Principal regarding democratic leadership, which reveal that:

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There are several ways that I lead the school, including building good relationships with all teachers and staff at the school, because good relationships with all stakeholders, including teachers of Islamic Religious Education, will create better working relationships.

An effective school principal is to build good cooperative relationships with all members of the school environment for which he is responsible. Therefore the High School principal conducts and establishes good relationships with all teachers and education staff in the school, in the sense of not placing himself like a commander who makes teachers and education staff feel afraid, which in the end, all feel they own the school and together achieve the school's vision and mission.

The observations and facts in the field also show that the Principal exercises leadership well because he builds cooperative relationships with all stakeholders without discrimination. As long as people work at the school, the Principal maintains good relations, especially with Islamic Religious Education teachers.

In leading the school, the head of the High School implements a system that assumes that all teachers and education staff have the competence to carry out their duties at school. The school principal only provides encouragement and motivation for all teaching and educational staff following the slogan instilled by Mr. Kihajar *Dewantara Education Ing ngarso sung tuladha ing madya mangun karsa tut wuri handayani.* A participant said that:

Indeed, sometimes there are teachers or education staff who disagree with the Principal's policies, but of course, we approach them in a family way. Their motives made them disagree with the Principal's policies, but as long as the procedures are carried out, the aim is for the school's good. I don't know the background of making a policy, so I usually give arguments which, in the end, teachers or education staff who disagree then understand and agree. The point is to provide and fully understand the policies adopted by the school principal for the good and benefit of the school.

In responding to differences of opinion on the policies carried out by the school principal, as the head of the High School, overcame it by using a family system in the sense of explaining again the substance of the policies taken are for the good and benefit of the school and so that the vision or mission and school programs that have been set can be realized, to teachers or educational staff who disagree are given a detailed understanding of the policy objectives taken by the school principal and finally understand it, the High School principal who has experience as a school principal for four years realizes that there are indeed teachers or education staff who have thoughts and interpretations different from what is carried out by the leadership if it has not been understood correctly and in detail the purpose of taking a policy.

In line with this, the facts on the ground are based on observations that the Principal carries out leadership well. Suppose several stakeholders need help with the implemented policies that are decided. In that case, the Principal addresses them with a kinship approach so that no one feels hurt between them, as said by the following participant:

When I am going to carry out an activity, of course, I ask for opinions from fellow teachers and education staff at this school through meetings so that all stakeholders are involved in making the decisions that I will make, the decisions or activities that I do are known and approved by my fellow teachers and education staff at this school.

The leadership of the senior high school principal applies collegial collective leadership in the sense that it is not authoritarian in carrying out school activities or programs, as evidenced by what was asked by the author. The Principal stated that when carrying out activities or programs at school, it is done first by asking for the considerations and opinions of teachers and education staff at the school through a teacher council meeting. Regarding the implementation of the meeting at the school, the management of the Intra-School Student Organization, Senior High School, Nabila Bunga Lestari student stated:

When the meeting was held at our school, the teachers and staff at this senior high school attended it. While we students were given independent assignments to study, we still did not go home; even though the teachers were at the meeting, we were still learning and given tasks to do independently.

From the results of these interviews, it is known that in senior high schools, even though teachers and staff attend the meetings, the students still study even though they study independently. This shows that the discipline of learning in this school is good. Furthermore, the results of the meeting decisions will be used as a benchmark and reference in the implementation of activities so that if the implementation is not following the meeting results, it will be communicated again. This is expressed in the following interview results:

Of course, we make the results of the meeting decisions a reference in carrying out activities or programs following the decisions of the meetings carried out because the results of the meeting decisions are already something that must be done at the time of implementing the meeting decisions are not following what was done then I need to communicate back to my fellow teachers, especially to the vice principal who is in charge of these activities, for example when it comes to procuring facilities and infrastructure then I have to communicate to the vice principal of facilities and infrastructure.

These interviews illustrate that the Principal of the Senior High School has a democratic leadership style because it allows all stakeholders to express aspirations but remains guided with the aim that no one feels disadvantaged, but all feel valued and

respected. Based on the results of observations in the field, the Principal listens to input or opinions from all existing stakeholders when they express views about what was discussed, besides that the Principal also provides an opportunity for the entire board of teachers and education staff (stakeholders) to convey their ideas or opinions, especially in school meetings.

Leadership that prioritizes deliberation or pays attention to suggestions and opinions from members, in this case, teachers and education staff, according to the head of the High School, is essential because if a decision is made without the knowledge of group members, or if at school the teachers and education staff are not involved or are not asked for opinions or suggestions, of course, if there are problems later they will not help to provide solutions. Still, if teachers and education staff are involved, they will feel they have ownership and will undoubtedly share responsibility for what has been implemented by the school.

The Principal who constantly communicates with all members will get support so that in making decisions, the Principal does not hesitate because he feels supported by members and stakeholders, as stated by the following participant.

Teachers, apart from being educators are, of course, also encouraged not to forget their fate in terms of their careers. As a principal, I always remind them to pay attention to rank and career class. If they meet the requirements, I encourage them to take care of their promotion because when it's time to get promoted, the teacher usually forgets, so as the Principal, I encourage that the promotion can be according to the time that has been targeted and the main task as a teacher is also carried out properly, so that the obligations in teaching and the right to develop and promotion are balanced.

The Principal of the senior high school is very concerned about the careers and ranks of educators and education staff so that almost all teachers and staff carry out their main tasks and functions correctly. The career and promotion of teachers and education staff also run smoothly and without obstacles because the Principal always encourages and reminds teachers and education personnel when it is time to be promoted. The Principal encourages and assists in managing the promotion of teachers and education staff in the school he leads.

Observations and facts on the ground also indicate that the Principal is very concerned about the needs of the teacher council and education staff, especially regarding promotions that all stakeholders will carry out because the Principal is aware that he has a responsibility as a motivator, so he often reminds teachers about promotions.

Apart from being a leader, a good school principal is also a motivator, meaning that the Principal must have an excellent strategy to encourage and motivate education staff or educators to carry out the tasks assigned to the fullest. Then the Principal also pays attention to his rights, including his career and rank must be considered so that the duties, obligations, and rights coincide. In line with the commitments fulfilled, their requests are fulfilled.

As an effective school principal, he must always pay attention to all the hopes and expectations of the teachers and education staff in the school. What is the hope or expectation of teachers and education staff, including how a teacher and education staff can carry out their duties properly and optimally and their rights are also fulfilled properly, including career advancement in the form of promotion and the class of teachers and education staff is carried out smoothly following applicable school regulations. A participant said as follows:

In all organizations, be it school institutions or other organizations, there are differences of opinion or what is commonly called conflict. However, as a leader, you must be able to manage and respond to these differences of opinion or conflict wisely. Of course, you have to explain in detail and detail what triggers these differences of opinion by asking parties who have different views and then listening to each party, and then providing a solution that must pay attention to the subject matter in the sense that it must be a win-win solution or take a middle ground so that the Principal becomes the judge and helps resolve these differences of opinion.

Principals at senior high schools are fully aware that differences of opinion are something that is sunatullah and must happen in every organization, be it educational institutions or other institutions, which is difficult to avoid. Still, as a headmaster at senior high schools, in addressing the differences that exist and occur in the school they lead, they always put forward a persuasive approach or approach that pays attention to parties with differing opinions. It is carried out in a way that touches on the problems that trigger differences of opinion. The Principal provides solutions that certainly make parties with differing views feel relieved. And leaders can indeed manage differences of opinion. They can also offer alternative ways to properly reconcile parties with different opinions by taking a middle ground so that all feel cared for.

B. *Efforts of the Principal in Improving Teacher Professionalism*

The Principal has an essential role in producing a professional teacher. The teacher also determines where the direction and, at the same time, the goals of students. The task of the Principal as a leader and, at the same time, as a supervisor is to assist teachers in schools to develop their profession and, at the same time, help teachers to be able to see the problems they face both in class and outside the classroom.

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The skills of school principals in managing and empowering educators and education staff impact the quality of the professional development of Educators and Education Personnel. Building collaboration and cooperation between staff and reviewing and evaluating staff performance are examples of developing and empowering teachers. This is very important to support excellent service to all students to improve their learning achievement significantly. By having this skill, the Principal can optimally manage and empower teachers.

In increasing the professionalism of teachers of Islamic Religious Education, school principals must have various efforts and strategies so that the school's direction and goals can be achieved and improve school quality. The Principal is an educational leader whose position is crucial in the school environment because the Principal is more closely and directly related to implementing every education program in the school.

Therefore, school principals are required to have various abilities, both abilities related to management and leadership issues, to be able to develop and advance their schools effectively, efficiently, independently, and productively. Whether or not an educational program can be implemented and whether or not the educational goals are achieved depends on the skills and wisdom of the Principal as an educational leader. For more details, it can be seen in the results of interviews with high school principals who revealed that:

Efforts were made to increase the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers, namely, empowering the competencies possessed by teachers, and subject teacher deliberations held training, which training is one of the coaching techniques to add insight/knowledge of teachers, especially Islamic Religious Education teachers and provide opportunities for teachers, especially Islamic Religious Education teachers to improve their knowledge and skills by studying at a higher level of education. Training activities must be carried out by teachers of Islamic Religious Education, followed by follow-up efforts to apply the training results. Furthermore, namely joining the certification program, the certification reflects the existence of a fit and proper test that must be carried out by a teacher against the ideally set criteria.

The explanation presented by the respondent above is related to the efforts of the Principal in increasing teacher professionalism by the Principal both from empowering the competencies possessed by Islamic Religious Education teachers, teacher deliberation groups, and conducting training, where this training is one of the coaching techniques to add insight/knowledge of teachers, especially Islamic Religious Education teachers and providing opportunities for teachers, to improve their knowledge and skills by studying at a higher level of education. Furthermore, the vice principal of curriculum revealed that:

The efforts of school principals have a massive role in increasing their professionalism, workshops, and upgrading, where this workshop is an attempt to develop the ability to think and work together on both theoretical and practical issues to improve the quality of life in general and quality in terms of work. In addition, the school is working with the tilawati foundation to enhance the Qur'an reading skills of Islamic Religious Education teachers.

The efforts of the school principal in increasing the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers in Senior High Schools are pretty good due to the explanation from the respondents above who have participated in programs including Subject Teacher Consultations, Training activities, upgrading, and workshops which should be carried out to increase the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers. Then the Islamic Religious Education Teacher revealed that:

Efforts are being made to increase the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers, namely involving teachers in workshops and seminars on the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers, then holding training. This training is a process of developing and directing knowledge and skills, attitudes, and behavior that can be planned to meet current and future needs. Participate in subject-teacher deliberations and evaluations by the school principal to determine how far teachers in Islamic Religious Education understand and master the subjects they teach.

The Principal's efforts to improve teacher professionalism are empowering the competencies possessed by teachers in subject-teacher meetings, which is the purpose of holding subject-teacher meetings to strengthen the competence of working group participants in carrying out the learning process in a sustainable manner. Besides that, by holding subject teacher deliberations, teachers can also improve their professionalism.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Three types of leadership are owned and implemented by the three high school principals: democratic, laissez-faire, and transformative, and all of them are well-implemented except laissez-faire.

Efforts or policies made by the three school principals in increasing the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers, namely: empowering the competence possessed by teachers, participating in subject teacher deliberations, conducting training, upgrading, and workshops, evaluating/supervising, conducting meetings, providing opportunities for Islamic Religious Education

teachers, completing facilities and infrastructure, providing motivation and has been carried out well following expectations, although not all have been fulfilled.

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