

# SCHOOL HEAD STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE EDUCATION QUALITY THROUGH SCHOOL LEADING PROGRAMS

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## ABSTRACT

The quality of education in schools is a determining factor for the interests of community schools. School quality is translated into several school programs that are the branding of the school itself. Improving the quality of school quality cannot be separated from the role of the principal as a school leader (Yudi, 2012). School leaders certainly have a strategy that is considered appropriate to improve school quality, by looking at the potential quality of faculty, facilities and infrastructure, student performance and excellent school programs (Mahardhani, 2015). The strategy applied by school leaders to improve school quality through excellent programs is the key to school success in implementing these excellent programs (Saifulloh, Muhibbin, & Hermanto, 2012). Of course, the principal must prepare these programs carefully. Educational services are measured by the quality of teaching in schools. School quality is described in the curriculum which becomes a brand offered to the community as users of educational services provided by the school. The purpose of this study is to describe the principal's strategy in improving the quality of school education through the school's flagship program. This research was conducted at Ateuk Elementary School (SD) in Kuta Baro Subdistrict, Aceh Besar District, where a flagship program based on spirituality, learning and life skills is implemented. Qualitative research method, the research was conducted by interviewing the principal and teachers, then direct observation ie. observation and documentation. The resulting data were collected and recorded before being reduced and presented as field notes and interview transcripts. According to the results of the study, the school's main program has an effect on improving the quality of teaching.

Keywords: *Strategy, Principal, Quality improvement, Excellent program.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The quality of education in schools is a determining factor for the interests of community schools. School quality is translated into several school programs that are the branding of the school itself. Improving the quality of school quality cannot be separated from the role of the principal as a school leader (Yudi, 2012, Anwar et. al, 2019). School leaders certainly have a strategy that is considered appropriate to improve school quality, by looking at the potential quality of faculty, facilities and infrastructure, student performance and excellent school programs (Mahardhani, 2015). The strategy applied by school leaders to improve school quality through excellent programs is the key to school success in implementing these excellent programs (Saifulloh, Muhibbin, & Hermanto, 2012). Of course, the principal must prepare these programs carefully. Principals must also look at community trends to see what kind of schools are really in demand by the community so that better programs can be put together (Navy, 2013). If you look at the trend of society in this era of globalization. In the era of massive technological disruption, people are generally interested in schools that organize general education as well as religious or spiritual education and life skills (Ervan, Fitrihidajat, & Kuntjoro, 2015;

Amirin, 2012). This means that in today's society there is more interest in schools where all three aspects can be combined, because as time goes by, the demands for individual quality become increasingly complex. Therefore, to improve the quality of teaching, schools must pay attention to the phenomena that occur in society. The discussion is interesting on how school leaders implement appropriate strategies to improve the quality of school education through advanced programs based on religious, academic and life skills.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Strategy

A strategy is a long-term plan designed to lead to the achievement of specific goals and objectives.

### 2.2 Principal

Principal is simply defined as "a functional teacher assigned to lead a school where the teaching and learning process is organized or where there is interaction between teachers who give lessons and students who receive lessons".

### 2.3 Quality improvement

At its core, quality improvement is about making changes for the better and more rewarding. Typically, such changes cause fear, while commitment can eliminate fear.

### 2.4 Excellent program

Terminologically, an excellent program is a program developed by a school to achieve excellence in its educational output.

## 3. METHODS

This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive qualitative in written and oral form obtained from various research sources (Sugiarto, 2015). In the research process, field research is carried out by researchers to directly understand the events under study because researchers are the main tool in collecting results in the field. Using this method is a way to find out how management improves the quality of education at Ateuk Elementary School (SD) in Kuta Baro District, Aceh Besar Regency through the school improvement program. Data collection was carried out by school observation, interview sources and documentation of supporting questions. Observation is used to see how the principal's program improves the quality of education at Ateuk Elementary School (SD) in Kuta Baro District, Aceh Besar Regency. An interview is a conversation conducted by two or more

people for a specific purpose. The main informant of this research is the Principal of Ateuk Elementary School (SD) Kuta Baro, Aceh Besar Regency as the main informant who is considered to have a lot of knowledge about the problem under study. In addition, this documentary study supports research in the form of writings, pictures, and others. Data from the field was then analyzed using data reduction, presentation and verification of findings. Material reduction is done by sorting and selecting observations from observations, interviews and documentation. The data that has been reduced is then presented in the form of results and discussion. This is done to draw conclusions using relevant theoretical support, which is a confirmation of findings.

## **4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Results**

The concept of improving the quality of education at Ateuk Primary School in Kuta Baro District (Aceh Besar District) has three areas of focus: spirituality, learning or academics and life skills. At Ateuk Primary School in Kuta Baro, Aceh Besar District, an excellent school program was launched for students, teachers and school staff. The current program also includes the involvement of parents and the student community in the school environment. This leadership program includes spirituality and life skills. The achievements of students and graduates show the effect of improving the quality of education at Ateuk Primary School (SD) in Kuta Baro Sub-district, Aceh Besar District. At Ateuk Elementary School in Kuta Baro Sub-district, Aceh Besar, which has a curriculum based on the Quran and Hadith, spirituality is the main focus to ensure the quality of education. As the principal of SD Ateuk Kuta Baro in Aceh Besar district, Indra Zahari explains why the school mainly focuses on spirituality to develop strong character in students. The principal further said, if students' Christian character and national insight are rooted and strong, then academics (learning) and life skills can follow. Therefore, students need an environment designed for child development, which is the dream of every parent. School Excellence Program at Ateuk Elementary School (SD) Kuta Baro District, Aceh Besar Regency. This spiritual program is LDK (Basic Leadership Training) and national understanding in collaboration with KOPASUS. LDK is a leadership training program whose main focus is Christian character building. In addition, there is an activity program "Saturday Sunday Camp (Persami)", which is a scout activity, educating and attracting the creativity of each student. Camp Ateuk Elementary School (SD) Kuta Baro District Aceh Besar Regency is held from Friday to Saturday which is then abbreviated as "JUMAT". Another advanced activity program at Ateuk Elementary School (SD) Kuta Baro District Aceh Besar Regency is "Outing Class". This program is a form of hands-on learning where students see and learn directly how the theory taught in class is applied in the field. This activity is usually accompanied by refreshments to refresh the minds of the students. Then, in the second year, students are introduced to other extra activities for 2-3 days.

To join this program, one must be able to know the student's interests and talents. The purpose of this program is to provide students with the opportunity to gain knowledge and work experience in the main subjects that are carried out according to the

interests and interests of each student, for example, interests and character, and other activities. Another advanced activity program is "Variative Learning". This activity is an enrichment of learning that leads to direct and indirect learning. The school organizes this education in accordance with the curriculum content by involving all elementary schools in Kuta Baro sub-district, Aceh Besar district, and high and low grade students. In the previous year, these versatile students were taught to plan and process used goods. In the following year, this activity took place in conjunction with a painting session. Sekolah Dasar (SD) Ateuk in Kuta Baro Sub-district, Aceh Besar District In addition to Sekolah Dasar (SD) Ateuk, the program launched for outstanding students at Sekolah Dasar (SD) Ateuk since grade V is a school visit weekend. School visit is an activity where students who plan to study outside the sub-district. The purpose of this program is to provide information about talents and interests so that students become familiar and understand their chosen expertise. In addition, social activities include spontaneous physical activities and entertainment. In addition, the activity program of teachers and staff of Ateuk Elementary School (SD) Kuta Baro Sub-district, Aceh Besar District includes "Healthy Spirit Saturday" and "Happy Spirit Saturday". This Saturday Healthy Spirit activity consists of a healthy walk, gymnastics, gymnastics together, which ends with hospitality and eating together. But sometimes it is also loaded with light but useful material presented by speakers. The purpose of the persami activity is to refresh the minds and bodies of the teachers and staff after a busy working day. Another goal is to strengthen the relationship between the teachers and staff of Ateuk Elementary School (SD) in Kuta Baro District in Aceh Besar Regency. At the same time, the Happy Spirit Saturday activity is a special training for teachers invited by those interested in subjects such as cancer funds, so that teachers have ideas about health.

The purpose of this activity is to provide information to teachers and staff of Ateuk Primary School, Kuta Baro Sub-district, Aceh Besar District to improve the skills of teachers and staff. At Ateuk Primary School (SD), Kuta Baro Sub-district, Aceh Besar District also attended by parents of students, held two meetings which were divided at the beginning of the semester and the end of the semester. This meeting aims to socialize the implementation and learning plans of Ateuk Elementary School, Kuta Baro Subdistrict, Aceh Besar District. In addition, Ateuk Primary School in Kuta Baro Sub-district, Aceh Besar District also involves parents in several programs held by the school. The school involves the surrounding community in every school program, such as giving the youth organization the opportunity to park at every school event and collecting report cards from parents. The school also offers all students different educational opportunities according to their interests and ability to develop themselves. Ateuk Primary School (SD) Kuta Baro Sub-district Aceh Besar District The extracurricular program of Ateuk Primary School (SD) includes extracurricular sports, music and other curricula. Extracurricular activities include Choir, Literacy, Archery, Photography, Scouting, Badminton. An extracurricular activity is valid for one year and students may not change courses because the score is one of the requirements for promotion. Extracurricular evaluation is based on student participation and competence for one year.

## 4.2 Discussion

The activities of all Ateuk Elementary School (SD) students in Kuta Baro District, Aceh Besar Regency Religion and education are interrelated and play an important role in various aspects of human life. In addition, religion contains teachings about noble and noble values to achieve human dignity (Amirin, 2012; Anwar, 2001; Kusumaningrum, 2014). The purpose of education is to develop students' morals, knowledge and skills. That every parent not only wants a smart child, but also a child who has good behavior in his daily life (Fadhli, 2017; Saifulloh, Muhibbin, & Hermanto, 2012). Therefore, religion and education cannot be separated because students must be taught many moral lessons (Mahardhani, 2015; Mukminan, 2014). The importance of religion in shaping one's character tends to minimize the negative behavior of students who are anti-religious. Because anti-religious behavior tends to harm the students themselves and the environment. This activity is considered to be able to form a good human character with patriotism and nationalism so that it becomes a good and virtuous citizen (Asriati, 2012; Rahmawati, 2014). This activity is also used as a way to increase the sense of belonging and kinship at Ateuk Elementary School (SD) in Kuta Baro District, Aceh Besar Regency. (Ervan, Fitrihidajat and Kuntjoro, 2015; Kurniawan, Istiningrum and Nuha, 2017; Trilling and Fadel, 2009). In addition to students' spiritual guidance, teachers also have their own programs where the duty to set a good example for students is developed (Mahardhani, 2015; Navy, 2013). The Life Skills Program is a program at Ateuk Primary School (SD) in Kuta Baro Sub-district, Aceh Besar District. which aims to offer students the opportunity to continue to a higher level, including in training competitions and in business. Since the first year, students of SD Ateuk in Kuta Baro sub-district, Aceh Besar district have been exploring universities in the vicinity, called the University Program. This program takes the form of an education exhibition by inviting various universities and foreign educators to the schools. The activity was also enlivened by basketball and dance competitions which were followed with the aim of developing the talents, skills and sportsmanship of those participating.

The Life Skills Program is a program at Ateuk Primary School (SD) in Aceh Besar Sub-district, Kuta Baro District, which aims to train students to reach higher levels, including competition training and entrepreneurship. Since the first year, Ateuk Elementary School (SD) students in Kuta Baro District, Aceh Besar Regency have explored their surroundings. This program is a shared responsibility, so everyone must participate in improving the quality of education. The Ateuk Primary School Teacher Action Program in Kuta Baro Sub-district, Aceh Besar District is a meeting and workshop organized by the government program and the foundation at the beginning of the new school year. This is done to train teachers in delivering learning to students (Ruyadi, 2010; Ulum, 2017). The improvement in the quality of Ateuk Primary School (SD) in Kuta Baro Sub-district, Aceh Besar District is reflected in the perfect scores achieved by several students in the UNBK in each year and student learning achievements. In addition, cooperation is increasingly widespread. This is reflected in the various activity programs of Ateuk Primary School in Kuta Baro District, Aceh Besar Regency with different agencies. The achievements of Ateuk Primary School in Kuta Baro Sub-district,

Aceh Besar District can be seen in school data in terms of the utilization of technology used in schools and the openness of school information (Yudi, 2012; Hamzah, 2013).

## 4.3 Impact of improving education quality

The Ateuk Elementary School in Kuta Baro Subdistrict, Aceh Besar District, has experienced an increase in several areas over time. According to Indra Zahari, the supervisor of Ateuk Elementary School in Kuta Baro Subdistrict, Aceh Besar District, the number of graduates is increasing because the number of interested students is also increasing every year.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In improving the quality of education in a school, a school principal plays an important role in the strategy of improving the quality of school education, preparing high-level programs that are the implementation of the quality of school education. Of course, the strategies of each principal and other school principals to improve the quality of school are different due to the experience and vision of school administration. It could be that what is implemented in Ateuk Elementary School (SD), Kuta Baro Subdistrict, Aceh Besar District is different from other schools, so it is necessary to check the principal's strategy in improving the quality of learning in schools for learning through better school programs in depth because of the special nature of each school. Of course there are differences between one school and another.

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