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The Leadership of Principals in The Implementation of Limited Face-To-Face Learning During The Covid-19 Pandemic in Demak Regency

Ahsanuddin^{1*}, Utomo, Slamet² & dan Sri Utaminingsih, Sri³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Muria Kudus, 59327 Central Java, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: ahsiaafa@gmail.com

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Abstract: The Covid-19 virus has hit the world and has had a huge impact on all aspects of life, including the world of education. With so many confirmed cases, the government closed schools and closed schools. However, implementation of teaching and learning activities face-to-face is still limited. After the decline in confirmed cases of Covid-19 decreased, the government allowed little face-to-face learning, so school principals must be able to carry out limited face-to-face learning while still complying with the Health Protocol. This study aimed to analyze the principal's leadership, obstacles, and solutions in implementing little face-to-face learning and make a reference for school principals in evaluating face-to-face learning at Public Elementary School No. 1 Bungo 1 during the Covid-19 Pandemic. This study uses descriptive qualitative research, in natural object conditions where the researcher is the key instrument. Data collection techniques are carried out in a combined manner from interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis in this study is inductive or qualitative and analyzes the principal's leadership in face-to-face learning—face and the obstacles that need to be resolved appropriately and efficiently. The results of research in the field show that limited face-to-face learning is needed during the Covid-19 pandemic. In this case, the principal must be able to carry out little face-to-face learning by observing, analyzing, and solving problems and obstacles encountered in face-to-face education. From the findings above, the principal must be able to start planning, implementing, and evaluating all activities that take place during this limited face-to-face learning.

Keywords: Principal leadership, face-to-face learning, covid-19

1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has tremendously impacted human activities, including the learning process. Therefore, on March 24, 2020, the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia issued Circular Letter Number 4 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Education Policies in the Emergency Period for the Spread of Covid-19. In the Circular, it was stated that to break the chain of the spread of Covid-19, learning at all levels of education was closed. From March 2020 to mid-2021.

The implementation of learning is carried out from home or face-to-face (Bali & Liu, 2018). Then after there was a decrease in Covid-19 cases, limited face-to-face learning began. In the implementation of little face-to-face learning, coordination is needed. In this case, a school principal can provide direction for implementing limited face-to-face learning so that it can run according to health procedures that apply correctly (Legowati et al., 2021).

Principal leadership in limited face-to-face learning is important to its implementation and success. Therefore, researchers are interested in studying the leadership style of school principals, especially in Demak Regency. As for the theme of my research, it has been studied by other researchers. Among other things, research by Alhusna & Permana (2021). The results of this study were principals as supervisors in increasing the effectiveness of the learning process during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely by providing direction, guidance, and supervision. The supporting factors are 1) the availability of teachers in receiving direction, guidance, and supervision, 2) active participation of students/students in all school activities, 3) motivation/support from superiors, and good relations between school principals, teachers,

and students. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors are 1) the limitations of activities in schools so that the implementation of supervision is not optimal and 2) the lack of government operational assistance for the continuity of the teaching and learning process during the pandemic.

Then Suhartinah's research (2021) found that the implementation of character education during the Covid-19 pandemic for elementary school students by integrating the character values contained in each lesson, exemplary from a teacher and parents and good relationship partnerships between parents, teachers in implementing character in the learning process during the pandemic. Furthermore, research by Juariah, Fitria, & Rohana (2022) showed that the leadership role of school principals in improving teacher performance was carried out by carrying out their role as a) educators; where the principal provides coaching, b) managers; principals organize and coordinate educator resources, c) administrators; principals manage human resources, d) supervisors; the principal supervises, fosters, and assesses teacher performance, e) motivators; principals provide rewards and punishments and encourage teachers always to attend training, f) innovators; principals create programs related to distance learning, provide application training facilities for all teachers and add facilities and infrastructure to support teachers in implementing online learning to make teachers want to continue learning new things, g) leaders; the principal influences the people around him. The implications of the results of this study have an impact on increasing teacher performance. Thus, the results of this study are expected to be an example of improving teacher performance during the Covid-19 pandemic.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Principal Leadership

Principal leadership has various meanings according to the background of the giver of understanding. However, leadership can be understood as influencing others to do a job as directed to achieve organizational goals. Azhar (2016) argues that leadership is an ability that certain people have to move, influence, motivate, invite, direct, advise, guide, order, command, prohibit, and even punish and foster with the intention that others want to do and work to achieve the desired goal.

The principal must be able to grow into a leader with these five elements so that he can move from a leader who is only because of legality to a leader who is truly capable of making a difference in the development of the school. The principal is the driving force for the school's human resources, especially teachers and employees (Ulya et al., 2021). So significant is the principal's role in achieving educational goals, so it can be said that the success or failure of a school is largely determined by the quality of the principal, especially his ability to empower teachers and employees towards a conducive working atmosphere.

2.2 Barriers to Face-To-Face Learning Limited

In the learning process, so that learning can achieve the goals that have been set, teachers are often faced with obstacles that can affect the implementation of the learning process. In daily life, obstacles are known as hindrances. Obstacles can disrupt an activity that is being carried out. Obstacles are things that make activities being carried out to be hampered so that they cause interference in achieving predetermined goals (Pobiner, 2016). For example, a task or work will not be carried out properly if an obstacle interferes with the work.

3. Methodology

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research approach, and descriptive qualitative research is one of the examination techniques that is often used in research. Descriptive qualitative research is a review that uses a strategy based on post-positivism reasoning, used to check the condition of normal articles (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). Where the researcher is the key instrument, the method of collecting information is carried out in a mixture, the investigation of information is inductive or subjective, and the results of subjective exploration underline the importance of speculation. In carrying out this assessment, the area of Public Elementary School 1 Bungo, Wedung District, Demak Regency, and its implementation from January 2021 to February 2022.

4. Results

4.1 Geographical Overview of Public Elementary School Bungo No. 1 Sub. Distric Wedung Distric Demak

Public Elementary School No. 1 Bungo, Wedung District, Demak Regency, which has been located since its inception until now, has never experienced a change of location at all. Judging from its location, this area is rural, far from urban areas, approximately seventeen kilometers from the city center of Demak. Like rural areas, this area has a relatively cool and calm climate. The air temperature is not too hot, so living is comfortable—fishermen, farmers, traders, and migrants outside Java and abroad.

4.2 Leadership in The Implementation of Limited Face-to-Face Learning at Public Elementary School Bungo No. 1 During The Covid-19 Pandemic

The principal's leadership in school institutions greatly determines the direction of policy. In this case, the principal of a public school must follow the government's guide in this case represented by the education and culture office. During this pandemic, a school principal must sometimes make a policy direction from superiors because of the uncertain situation. At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, estimated in March 2019, the government had to dismiss students from Early Childhood Education to tertiary institutions through the ministry of education and school culture. After entering 2020, the government took distance learning and blended learning innovations, the policy of which is subject to change from time to time, and finally, after vaccinating teachers and education personnel, the government, through the ministry of education and culture, made limited face-to-face learning circulars and still adheres to strict health protocols.

4.3 Barriers to Face-To-Face Learning at Bungo 1 Public Elementary School During The Covid-19 Pandemic

In planning this limited face-to-face learning, the teacher's role is significant because the one who carries out all the directions or decisions from the principal regarding the obstacles experienced by the teacher is the teacher making learning tools. Based on the observations made by the researchers, it can be seen that before carrying out this face-to-face learning, the teacher has prepared several things, such as providing a learning place that is appropriate for the process, materials that are adapted to proper circumstances, and also a laptop or the like that will be used during online learning. The teacher has provided a lesson plan to the student worksheet. The lesson plans used by the teacher are conditioned according to the situation consisting of several things such as learning objectives, learning materials, learning media, methods, and assessments that will be used in this limited face-to-face learning. The teacher also prepares student attendance absences. This is according to an interview with one of the teachers.

5. Discussion

5.1 Leadership in the Implementation of Face-to-face Learning Limited to Public Elementary School No. 1 Bungo During The Covid-19 Pandemic

Covid-19 has dramatically changed the order of human life in all lines of life, especially in education. In March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic hit Indonesia. The existence of this endemic has made a change from the conventional education pattern to the latest, namely distance education. Until 2021, teaching and learning in Indonesia use limited face-to-face learning education. Under normal conditions, the learning system is where teachers and students meet face-to-face, and the application of information technology functions as additional teaching materials (Harun et al., 2021). But during the current pandemic, the situation is reversed. Namely, the online learning system and the application of information technology have become dominant. They have become a means of the learning process that is very much needed until now, using limited face-to-face learning.

5.2 Obstacles and Solutions for Face-To-Face Learning at Public Elementary School No. 1 Bungo During The Covid-19 Pandemic

As explained above, although the principal has performed his role well in implementing limited face-to-face learning, there are obstacles during the learning process. This obstacle can occur due to factors from conditions in the field and infrastructure to elements in the area. For example, many students and teachers ignore health protocols, and a lot of equipment has run out. From the teacher's side, they can still not make plans and learning videos, and school principals need to provide appropriate facilities and infrastructure and maintain the equipment. Another factor when learning that students do not go to school is through this application, signals constrain it, and each student does not have his cell phone when learning takes place because he has to take turns with his parents. Especially if parents are busy working all day outside the home, that is one of the main obstacles in implementing this online learning. Students often face constraints because many cell phones are under their parents, and internet quotas are a problem for some of these students, resulting in many students not knowing the information and assignments given by the teacher.

The results of the research carried out have similarities with the study of Nisa & Nurwarsih (2021), which shows the leadership carried out in the management of the elementary school. The covid-19 period included: 1) simplifying the curriculum, 2) coordination and intense discussion between directors, principals, and teachers regarding the adjustment of learning techniques, strategies, models, and methods, 3) more flexible budget management, 4) continuous evaluation of policies that have been implemented, 5) good communication between schools and parents, and 6) good cooperation with various aspects. Then the results of research by Meliska, Zohriah, & Muizzudin (2022) show that:

First, the principal plays an essential role in quality assurance, who is seen as a leader, being a central factor in determining the direction of academic success. Second, quality assurance of education in Public Senior High School No. 14 and Public Senior High School No. 26 District Tangerang has been maximal enough in meeting the needs of all school residents, such as making a Vision and Mission, compiling years programs and education quality assurance programs during Covid-19, carrying out those that have been established, carrying out evaluations, and providing interest in students' talents with extracurricular activities in the field of education such as scouts, futsal, hockey ball, youth red cross, and flag raisers. Third, the principal's leadership ensured the quality of education during the Covid-19 pandemic at Public Senior High School No. 14 and Public Senior High School No. 26 District Tangerang is the implementation of online learning that continues to run well and can overcome the problems that arise during this Covid-19 pandemic.

6. Conclusion & Recommendation

The principal in a public school will reflect on all policies of the Demak Regency Education and Culture Office. by coordinating with the teacher council and committee management so that policies can run optimally in the implementation of limited face-to-face learning during the Covid-19 pandemic at Public Elementary School No. 1 Bungo. Besides, principals must be able to plan, control, and evaluate by collaborating with all other agencies to improve the fulfillment of limited face-to-face learning facilities and infrastructure at Bungo 1 Elementary School while still inviting all teacher councils and committees because all of them become work partners, to make it a success. Face-to-face learning is limited during the Covid-19 pandemic at Public Elementary School No. 1 Bungo.

The obstacles encountered during the implementation of this limited face-to-face learning were that many teachers had difficulty making lesson plans and learning videos. The lack of time in face-to-face learning resulted in students not understanding what a teacher was teaching to students, resulting in students not being able to ask about what, which is a problem for students (Safira & Ifadah, 2021). Furthermore, many students complain of difficulty obtaining assignment information because of insufficient internet quota, and many do not have cell phones because they are under their parents. In addition, the lack of understanding of health protocols in the application of face-to-face learning is limited. With the above constraints, it is necessary to find a solution to solve them by coordinating with the teacher council and committee in planning the control and evaluation of this face-to-face learning activity (Cortez et al., 2009). The school provides facilities and infrastructure for health protocols to support learning as well as computers and Wi-fi networks for learning at home, making learning videos that are appropriate for the class sent through the class group, and opening questions through the WhatsApp communication tool. If there are still difficulties completing a teacher, they can visit students home who need their help.

Based on the conclusions above, the suggestions that the research provides are as follows 1) the principal in improving his leadership role needs to be conditioned according to the circumstances so that the role of a principal in the implementation of limited face-to-face learning can run effectively and efficiently to achieve the goals that have been set together. Democratic-style leadership is beneficial for the Covid-19 pandemic because, in its implementation, it requires the role of several people who play a role in making it successful. It is necessary to budget for health protocol facilities and infrastructure according to needs and provide quotas for underprivileged students so that learning continues, 2) the teacher, in the application of limited face-to-face knowledge as much as possible, can be an example to his students in implementing strict health protocols and to continue to provide material to students, it is necessary to make limited face-to-face material briefly, concisely and clearly so that it is easily understood by students, for students. Those who study from home are made interesting learning videos so that students can understand them more easily. It is expected that students can take limited face-to-face lessons with pleasure so that it is easy to understand the material presented by the teacher. The school needs to be facilitated by providing accessible material and providing internet quotas so that students learn quickly without being disturbed when the percentage runs out, 3) it is hoped that parents can give full support by encouraging and also facilitating so that students can participate in the learning process because during the Covid-19 pandemic, students learn a lot from home, so they need assistance and supervision from the head of students who study from home.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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