

Principal's Leadership During the Covid-19 Pandemic for Face-to-Face Learning

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Abstract: The goal of this paper is to outline the leadership strategies used by school administrators during the first year of restricted face-to-face instruction following the Covid-19 pandemic. Using face-to-face instruction in accordance with the Joint Decree (SKB) of 4 Ministers, Number 737 of 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Descriptive qualitative research is what this study is. employing observation, interviews, and literature studies as data collection methods. According to the study's findings, Kayuagung 4 Public Middle School needs to make preparations before implementing limited face-to-face instruction. These preparations include having health protocol facilities and getting letters from parents approving the program. After limited face-to-face learning and online learning, this research offers a novel understanding of face-to-face learning in junior high schools.

Keywords: Covid-19, Face-to-Face Learning, Principal's Leadership

A. Introduction

The administration of schools and students toward the new normal is greatly influenced by the policies made by the government to go to the new normal (Firmansyah, 2020). The strategy for teaching at SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung during the Covid-19 pandemic is based on a circular letter from the Ministry of Education and Culture Number 15 of 2020 about Guidelines for Teaching from Home in the Emergency Period of the Spread of Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19). Following the COVID-19 pandemic, several institutions decided to implement a limited face-to-face learning system, one of which, SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung, started in March 2021 after a year of the Covid-19 pandemic, based on the Joint Decree (SKB) of 4 Ministers, namely the Minister of Education and Culture, Minister of Religion, Minister of Health, and Minister of Home Affairs, Number 737 of 2020.

Limited face-to-face learning is carried out by enforcing stringent health protocols, which are the new norm in which the learning system is implemented with stringent rules like parental consent letters, the obligation to adhere to 5M principles, regulating the schedule for student departure to school, reducing study time, and limited activities. According to Press Release Number 137/sipres/A6/ VI/ 2020 regarding the implementation of learning in the school year and the new

academic year during the corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic, one of the important points is that the implementation of face-to-face learning can be carried out in the green zone while still observing health protocols. Currently, SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung has implemented face-to-face learning in the second year after limited face-to-face learning. Due of this, various Indonesian regions that fall under the categorization of "green zones" engage in face-to-face learning activities (Nissa & Haryanto, 2020).

In the second year, face-to-face instruction continues as usual at SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung from Monday through Saturday from 8.00 to 11.30 WIB by adhering to health rules. The school believes that face-to-face instruction is crucial since it is the best teaching method as technology cannot take the place of teachers in the classroom. Technology cannot replace human connection between teachers and students, between students, and between teachers and parents (Hanum et al., 2020).

The local government (PEMDA), schools, and parents have full authority to decide whether to implement face-to-face instruction. The success or failure of face-to-face learning depends on these three factors. The principal, however, has a greater influence on the decisions made and how they are implemented. School administrators must be prepared to handle emergency scenarios in order to continue to effectively lead during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis situation and ensure that the educational process can continue (Nadeak & Juwita, 2020).

In addition to overseeing the academic operations of the school, the headmaster is also in charge of its physical environment, social dynamics, and interactions with the local community. The principal is responsible for implementing face-to-face learning due to the pandemic, which includes activities to control the teaching and learning process, student activities, personnel organizing activities, learning equipment organizing activities, building and supply organization and maintenance activities, financial management activities, and activities to control school relations with the community (Daryanto, 2013).

The principle is responsible for managing the educational institution he heads as the leader of the location where lessons are received and taught (Wahjosumidjo, 2013). The choice made must therefore take into account all factors, particularly those relating to the quality of schooling provided during the COVID-19 epidemic. The principal's responsibilities as a manager include ensuring that schools are managed well, supervising teachers, and making use of and maintaining infrastructure and facilities (Mulyasa, 2014).

In essence, the principal is in charge of maintaining peace and order in the school and among its students. Teachers, kids, and parents must all experience this sense of safety and comfort. In terms of comfort and safety, particularly during the Covid-19 emergency reaction time (Firmansyah, 2020). Success in school administration during the pandemic is backed by the principal's aptitude for running educational institutions and attitude toward that pattern.

School principals should be able to persuade the community that the decision to implement face-to-face learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has been

successful, including planning and implementing face-to-face learning, providing and utilizing teacher resources, student recruitment systems, school cooperation relationships with parents, and high-quality teaching and learning processes.

According to Article 15, Paragraph 1 of the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6 of 2018 concerning the Assignment of Teachers as School Principals, the Principal's workload is entirely to carry out the main responsibilities of management, entrepreneurial development, and supervision to teachers and education staff. The principal has had a variety of management experiences coping with challenging circumstances brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic in the second year after the epidemic. School administrators who provide face-to-face instruction must be prepared to meet obstacles that have already occurred as well as those that may arise due to internal and external issues (Musfah, 2020). Whereas the principal was forced to be able to carry out his leadership in accordance with the challenges in the second year of face-to-face learning during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the school's internal problems involving teacher and staff weaknesses in learning technology competence, as well as financial problems and external problems resulting from the pandemic.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, school administrators must develop strategic measures to enhance the quality of face-to-face instruction. In response to pandemic situations that arise as demands to implement crisis management, i.e. the process of preparing and managing emergency or unforeseen situations that affect students, teachers, staff, and stakeholders, school principals can take strategic steps through the implementation of leadership roles (Murfi et al., 2020). This means that school principals as control holders can formulate policies that are in accordance with school needs in order to improve the quality of education (Rahman & Darmiyanti, 2022). For this reason, this article will discuss some of the strategic steps taken by the principal's leadership in the second year of face-to-face learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

B. Methods

At SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung, this study was carried out using a descriptive qualitative methodology. Interviews, observations, and literature reviews are used as data collecting strategies. The interviewer spoke with SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung's principal. The SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung and other schools that utilized face-to-face instruction in the second year of the COVID-19 epidemic were the locations of the observations. Literary studies draw on a variety of secondary sources, such as books, journals, and research-related materials. Qualitative data analysis is used in data analysis. Research is conducted in stages, with the first step being the acquisition of all data using data collection methodologies (Miles and Huberman, 2013). Data reduction, which involves summarizing all collected data, is the second stage. The presentation of the data, which has been organized and presented systematically, is the third stage. drawing conclusions and confirming the findings are the final stages.

C. Results and Discussion

After introducing limited face-to-face learning where students participated in the teaching and learning process in groups the first year, SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung implemented face-to-face learning in the second year. A group structure was still used to implement face-to-face learning throughout the first year (limited). At SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung, the introduction of limited face-to-face learning calls for preparations such as health protocol facilities and parental consent letters. It also requires compliance with 5M principles, regulation of student departure schedules to school, reduction in study time, and limitation of activities. In the second year following the epidemic, face-to-face learning is implemented using a learning system as usual. Every student studies during the regular study hours, which are from 8:00 to 11:00 WIB. However, when putting it into practice, the principal of SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung must continue to pay attention to health protocols and provide the necessary facilities. Although less strictly enforced than it was when face-to-face implementation was restricted, the mandate to wear masks in classrooms is still in place. Hand cleaning and taking the body temperature are still being done.

The SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung principal makes an effort to keep the students' behavior in check as they follow safety procedures. The principal, who serves as the board's chief executive, not only issues directives but also sets an example by following the government's request to stop the COVID-19 virus. The school has sufficient medical resources, including masks that are accessible to all students. Teachers and school administrators must promote the use of health practices in classrooms and other settings (Musfah, 2020). As a result, educational institutions must set an example for the public and warn them not to undervalue covid 19, which is currently thought to be harmless or nonexistent. The principal of SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung encourages all teachers to make health-conscious learning activities a regular part of their daily routines at the school. SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung expects that by enforcing discipline in following health protocols throughout the second year of face-to-face instruction, the teaching and learning process would be successful.

In the second year of face-to-face instruction at SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung, normal working hours are no longer used, and working days have been changed to work hours as usual and in accordance with health standards, with instructors, staff, and students beginning activities as usual. School administrators must be able to discover answers to every post-pandemic issue in order for the teaching and learning process to function as intended in the midst of a pandemic. This will ensure that instructors, staff, and students are at ease and prepared to carry out teaching and learning. It is challenging to run a system that underwent significant transformation during the COVID-19 pandemic, where new practices in the teaching and learning process have been in place for a considerable amount of time. The pandemic's dependence on technology has a significant impact on how teaching and learning are conducted. As a result, the SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung principal is responsible for ensuring that all school personnel, particularly teachers and students,

are prepared to reintroduce face-to-face instruction. Teachers were urged by the principal to keep working to enhance their digital-based teaching techniques and use them in face-to-face instruction.

It is evident that due to the pandemic's effects, educators, parents, and students must switch to digital learning platforms. Also, technology advancements have altered how people view the world and what they hope to accomplish (Syafril, 2019). The effects of the epidemic and the advancement of modern technology provide difficulties for school administrators, particularly when it comes to face-to-face instruction, which demands forward planning. Principals who aspire to be more than just managers need to possess fundamental principles that will elevate their work to that of a great leader.

The principal of SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung works hard to maximize the supervision function to oversee and evaluate the performance of SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung teachers, especially in managing the teaching and learning process, in order to maintain the stability of teacher performance following face-to-face learning. While students are engaged in the learning process, things that are directly in the learning activity environment are referred to as academic difficulties and are the focus of academic supervision (Suhardan, 2010). The principal carries out teacher teaching planning, teacher teaching execution, and teacher teaching evaluation as part of academic supervision. The principal of SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung creates assessment tools for the implementation of teacher duties and assessment of deficiencies in the implementation of teacher duties with the goal of improvement through guidance and guidance to overcome teacher weaknesses when carrying out academic supervision. Then, the principal engages in coaching with activities to promote a positive attitude in teachers, enabling them to evaluate themselves and work to improve in order to develop skills that are in line with the needs of the community (Nawawi, 2005).

At SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung, teachers' readiness to create Learning Implementation Plans (RPP), face-to-face learning schedules, learning materials and media readiness, parental cooperation, infrastructure preparation, and competency development can all be assessed by school principals using academic supervision.

After some limited face-to-face learning, face-to-face learning can be implemented successfully with the help of school principals. The introduction of face-to-face instruction at SMP Negeri 4 Kayuagung has given school administrators motivation to raise the standard of instruction. The principal also makes an effort to inspire instructors to effectively handle the less successful teaching and learning process. In addition, school administrators can motivate teachers to accept internal and external training opportunities so they can learn new skills, particularly those related to technology. Since practically all abilities can be taught digitally and at no cost, there is no excuse for not being able to teach teachers. Love of science and learning are essential. For teachers to avoid having their knowledge and abilities destroyed by the times, the principal should serve as a motivator.

Based on the study's findings, it can be said that the principal's leadership in the second year of face-to-face instruction during the Covid-19 pandemic took certain strategic initiatives, including rearranging school programming with regular activities while still paying attention to health procedures. In order to ensure that the implementation of face-to-face learning during the pandemic runs as smoothly as possible, the school administrator also works to create communication with parents and local governments, who in this situation serve as the policy makers.

In cases like this, a school principal's important job is to maintain the quality of his leadership by conducting crisis management, which is the process of planning for and handling unforeseen events that have an impact on students, teachers, staff, and stakeholders (Murfi et al., 2020). The headmaster encouraged teachers to increase their proficiency, particularly in leading face-to-face learning after online learning, to assist these efforts. By encouraging teachers to participate in training and enhancing the principal's supervision role by implementing academic supervision, it is possible to improve teacher competency.

The principal makes sure that the infrastructure and learning spaces at the school are ready for face-to-face instruction. To raise the standard of instruction, a school principal is supposed to act as a supervisor within the institution (Nur, 2016). In order to respond to learning planning during the pandemic, school principals first consult with school stakeholders, including school leaders, teachers, parents of kids, education offices, and regional offices. There was effective communication between the school, students, and local authorities during this conversation. The preparation of facilities and infrastructure that support learning takes place in the second stage, which also involves the acquisition of facilities and infrastructure that support learning and the consideration of the available resources, including materials, evaluation materials, skill development, monitoring schedules, and materials. Creating offline items while abiding with health regulations (Nadeak & Juwita, 2020).

Enhancing teacher proficiency seeks to ensure that in-person instruction runs smoothly while also paying attention to safety procedures. The final step entails inspiring all parties involved to adopt positive behaviors and concentrate on learning goals in order to combat this pandemic. The established learning objectives can be best attained by supplying learning motivation.

There are a number of strategies that can be used by each school to implement learning during the epidemic in Indonesia while taking into account the resources already available. While monitoring employed during the pandemic is to verify teaching materials prepared by instructors; Ensure that teaching materials are delivered to pupils, school principals are required to continuously keep an eye on learning that is carried out in a variety of methods. The application of learning can be directly observed by school principals, and results can be quickly disclosed. To determine the outcomes of learning, the implementation of the learning must ultimately be evaluated. During this pandemic, school administrators evaluate students using learning monitoring summaries that are reviewed collectively,

followed up on, and then reported to the Education Administration. By comparing the outcomes, evaluation is the method through which we determine if the program is carrying out the plan.

The findings of the evaluation of the teaching and learning process will be followed by the provision of remedies for every difficulty teachers encounter, continually inspiring teachers to be more inventive in imparting knowledge to students offline while still adhering to safety regulations. The success of students in completing what has been programmed by the school is one of the goals that the school wishes to attain, therefore understanding and implementation of student management are crucial. School principals are also used as leaders in this pandemic to be able to guide individual and group accountability and autonomy, justice and excellence, welfare and workload.

The findings of this study are corroborated by those of Nissa & Haryanto's (2020) study, which found that face-to-face instruction during Covid-19 was carried out with RPP learning planning that was tailored to pandemic conditions, that implementation of instruction focused on the delivery of material, that assessment and evaluation were done in accordance with the circumstances at the time, and that health protocols were followed. According to government laws, face-to-face learning activities typically take place for a short period of time. Throughout the assessment phase, teachers continue to evaluate students' attitudes (affective) about the subject, such as by giving them daily quizzes, midterm assessments (PTS), and final semester assessments (PAS), which evaluate their cognitive abilities.

D. Conclusions

According to the study's findings, the principal's leadership strategically rearranged the school calendar to include regular activities while still paying attention to safety precautions during the second year of face-to-face instruction during the Covid-19 pandemic. In order for the adoption of face-to-face learning to proceed as smoothly as possible throughout the school, the principal also tries to create communication with parents and local governments, who in this situation serve as the policy makers. The headmaster encouraged teachers to increase their proficiency, particularly in leading face-to-face learning after online learning, to assist these efforts.

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