DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPLE IN GROWING TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Leadership is one of the factors that determine the success of a school. Principals have various references regarding leadership styles. Choosing the right leadership style will encourage teachers to follow the policies set by their superiors to advance the quality of education for their students. The purpose of this study was to describe the democratic leadership style of the principal of Kindergarten Kemala Bhayangkari 13, Kepanjen District, Malang Regency, in fostering teacher professionalism and to see how far the principal’s personality supports the democratic leadership style.

Method: The descriptive qualitative technique and case study research design are used in this study, while Participant observation, interviews, and documentation studies were employed to obtain data.

Results: The findings of this investigation revealed: 1. The principal of Kindergarten Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen Malang Regency applies a democratic leadership style, which can be seen from six (six) aspects of activities, including: a. The school principal plans a learning program in conformity with the vision and objective of the school; b. The school principal makes decisions jointly based on deliberation; c. The principal manages school resources to produce optimal resources; d. Principals communicate and cooperate harmoniously; e. The principal is able to manage conflicts that occur in schools until they subside; f. The school principal always gives awards for the achievements of his teacher.

Conclusion: The principal of Kindergarten Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen has used a democratic leadership style well, as seen from the close relationship between the principal and the teacher which like a big family, so that it can encourage teacher professionalism. This school principal’s democratic leadership assessment includes 6 (six) aspects of activity and 5 (five) aspects of personality.

Keywords: democratic leadership, kindergarten, school principle, teacher professionalism.

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RESUMO

Objetivo: Liderança é um dos fatores que determinam o sucesso de uma escola. Os diretores têm várias referências em relação aos estilos de liderança. Escolher o estilo de liderança certo incentivará os professores a seguir as políticas definidas pelos seus superiores para promover a qualidade da educação para os seus alunos. O objetivo deste estudo foi descrever o estilo de liderança democrática do diretor do jardim de infância Kemala Bhayangkari 13, distrito de Kepanjen, regência de Malang, na promoção do profissionalismo dos professores e ver até que ponto a personalidade do diretor apoia o estilo de liderança democrática.

Método: A técnica qualitativa descritiva e o desenho de pesquisa de estudo de caso são utilizados neste estudo, enquanto a observação do Participante, entrevistas e estudos de documentação foram empregados para obter dados.

Resultados: As conclusões do presente inquérito revelaram: 1. O principal do jardim de infância Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen Malang Regency aplica um estilo de liderança democrática, que pode ser visto a partir de seis (seis) aspectos de atividades, incluindo: a. O diretor da escola planeja um programa de aprendizagem em conformidade com a visão e o objetivo da escola; b. O diretor da escola toma decisões em conjunto com base na deliberação; c. O diretor gere os recursos escolares para produzir recursos ótimos; d. Os diretores comunicam e cooperam harmoniosamente; e. O diretor é capaz de gerir os conflitos que ocorrem nas escolas até que eles diminuam; f. O diretor da escola sempre dá prêmios pelas conquistas de seu professor.

Conclusão: O diretor do jardim de infância Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen tem usado um estilo de liderança democrática bem, como visto a estreita relação entre o diretor e o professor que como uma grande família, para que possa incentivar o profissionalismo do professor. A avaliação de liderança democrática do diretor desta escola inclui 6 (seis) aspectos da atividade e 5 (cinco) aspectos da personalidade.

Palavras-chave: liderança democrática, jardim de infância, princípio escolar, profissionalismo de professores.

1 INTRODUCTION

The principal through his leadership is the main pillar in moving educational institutions in schools to become an important component in advancing education in a school. (Qadach, Schechter, & Da'as, 2011; Cha & Cohen-Vogel, 2011). Principal leadership is critical in shaping the look of other educational components in schools, particularly instructors with excess abilities or skills possessed and personalities that teachers can emulate. (Chikoko, et. Al, 2015; Imhangbe, et.al, 2018; Wenno, 2016).

The principal is a captain in a school who is able to motivate his teachers to always be productive in providing the best educational services for their students. (Chan & Kaur, 2009). This includes the teaching profession as a dedicated job. If it is not based on a noble spirit, dedicating its knowledge to schools, school assignments will be neglected and will not benefit progress in the world of education, especially for schools which are
charitable fields for the dedication of teachers.

The current situation which is full of economic demands for its workers is one of the challenges for school principals in maintaining the mental condition of the teachers so that they remain enthusiastic about providing the best service for their students. Teachers' honorariums that are still low or welfare that is not optimal certainly affect the psychological aspects of teachers (Feng-I, 2016). Therefore it is expected that the leadership of the principal will have a positive effect on teacher performance satisfaction, sense of fairness, organizational climate, and organizational performance. (Cogaltay & Karadag, 2016).

It's normal for someone to want a good life for their future, especially since they have worked hard and put maximum effort into serving a job. Conditions like this are of particular concern to a school principal to be able to maintain the professionalism of teachers so that they continue to work hard in carrying out their daily work so that school programs can run well. A good teacher will try to be able to provide teaching to his students so that they have a bright future armed with extensive knowledge and commendable morals. (Nurkholis, 2013; Sahin, 2018; Sari, 2013; Tunisa et al, 2021).

Principal leadership is very urgent in improving teacher professionalism because the teaching profession is required to have the competence to carry out routine school assignments and educational programs so that all of them can move simultaneously in developing education in schools. (Buchari, 2001; Hamid, 2020; Prayitno, 2009; Merchant & Idrus, 2012; Surakhmad, 2009). Before teachers are required to be professional in their work, the principal must first set an example both in his actions and in his own abilities. Behind the success of a school, it turns out that there is a reliable school principal who influences his school members through a model of applying a leadership style according to the situation and conditions of the school. (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018; Devi & Subiyantoro, 20; Fitriani, 2017).

The principal of Kindergarten Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen is able to be an example of behavior both personally and professionally and is able to shape behavior and beliefs for his organizational environment. (Balyer, 2017; Yaffe & Kark, 2011; Gachter & Renner, 2018). The school principal applies an extraordinary leadership style as evidenced by the achievement of the principal being selected as the exemplary kindergarten principal in Malang Regency in 2019. The school principal was able to make Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen Kindergarten a favorite school for the Kepanjen
community because it was able to compete with Islamic kindergarten schools which is considered to be of better quality and the indicator as evidenced by the number of students this year attending Kindergarten Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen is 115 students. This school's achievement can be demonstrated by the success of its teachers who have won 1st place in poetry reading competitions, beautiful walks, and gymnastic competitions. It didn't stop there, where the school's achievements were continued by its students who succeeded in becoming champions of the district-level child police competition and champions in making happy new year greeting cards at the East Java Regional Police level.

The results of research by Yusutria et al (2022: 39) at Nikan Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta Elementary School regarding the principal's tactics for improving teacher quality and professionalism represents to motivate, encourage, and hold seminars or training for teachers on their knowledge and comprehension of the advancement of information technology science and its application on a regular basis; there are rewards and punishments for teachers. Furthermore, the school principal strives to achieve criteria for content, process, and graduation capability, infrastructure, management, funding, and education teacher standards. Thus the principal's leadership style in increasing teacher professionalism makes researchers interested in being the focus of this research. Researchers will conduct research on the democratic leadership of school principals in growing teacher professionalism.

2 THEORITICAL REFERENCE
2.1 DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a trait that is inherent in someone who leads. It is defined as the ability that someone has both formal requirements as a leader, competency possessed, duties, authorities, responsibilities attached to him, someone who has a vision and mission as a leader, and aspirations to achieve common goals. A leader does not necessarily become a leader because he has to go through a selection and task journey so that he actually meets the criteria and has a lot of experience so that he is suitable to be chosen as a leader. A reliable school principal does not happen in an instant because he must have the right requirements as a school principal. The success of the principal as a leader can be seen from the existence of the school when facing competition from other schools of the same level. If in the new school year the number of students admitted is quite high or even
exceeds the capacity of the school, it can be said that the school is the favorite school for parents to send their children to. This condition creates great trust from users of education services that the principal and his teachers can manage the school well, so that it becomes the main goal for parents to send their children there. Of course, this achievement cannot be separated from the leadership carried out by the principal, who is truly diligent in dedicating himself to advancing the name of the school. (Yang, 2014). Leadership in education in schools is very crucial because the leadership of the principal has a great influence on improving the quality of education. The last study states that the leadership ability of school principals is very effective in encouraging school progress. Of course, it is very real that the role of the school principal in leading is awaited for his work to improve the quality of education. (Moorosi & Bantwini, 2016). One of the leadership styles practiced by the principal is the democratic leadership style. This leadership style is seen by many as very suitable for leaders, especially for school principals who use a democratic leadership style in advancing their schools. (Samino, 2015). But unfortunately in Indonesia this leadership style cannot be used properly by school principals in developing their schools so a guide is needed for activities carried out by school principals so that they can optimally carry out their leadership functions. (Sofo, Fritzgerald, & Jawas, 2012).

2.2 TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

In addition to the leadership of the school principal, no less important is the presence of professional teachers in overseeing the smooth running of student education at school. All students must admit that one of the factors for successful learning at school is having a teacher who works well. The teacher can be said to be the front guard in the school who plays an active role in the implementation of effective teaching and learning activities. (Risdiany & Herlambang, 2021). Professional teachers are of course supported by innovative teachers in planning lessons, encouraging student achievement, and in the end the quality of education will increase. (Marselinus, 2003). Professional teachers are formed from the basic abilities possessed by teachers both academically and personally so that they can become role models for their students. The results of research (Ahmad & Siregar, 2015) state that professional teachers are teachers who have broad thinking, have good teaching skills, master teaching material, and can mingle with parents and the community. This is also supported by (Arifin, 2000) that professional teachers have the requirements of a strong scientific foundation, mastery of professional skills, and the
development of professional competencies. It is interesting to study through this research, the democratic leadership of school principals as a guide for school principals. Moreover, this leadership is very much in line with the culture of Indonesian society which is based on Pancasila in daily interactions on the fourth precept of Pancasila democracy, which is led by wisdom in deliberations and representation so that This precept spirit is used as the basis for school principals in leading schools where the domino effect will produce teachers who work professionally because of the encouragement of their leaders and will ultimately give birth to outstanding students who are virtuous and make their schools proud.

3 METHODOLOGY

The research approach used is a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. Qualitative research methods put more emphasis on aspects of understanding in depth on a problem. Because qualitative approaches think that the nature of one problem will differ from the nature of other problems, this method chooses to employ in-depth analysis procedures, meaning studying problems on a case-by-case basis. Qualitative research uses an emic perspective more. Researchers in this case collect information in a format of detailed stories from informants and disclose it as it is according to the language and views of the informants. (Fadli, 2021; Siyoto & Sodik, 2015). This study employs a descriptive qualitative technique, with data collected in the form of spoken or written statements from people as well as observable behavior. This approach views the context and the individual holistically or as a whole, rather than isolating people or groups into variables or hypotheses (Moleong, 2019). A descriptive case study is used in this investigation by observing and interviewing informants in a natural setting. (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Walidin, Saifullah, & Tabrani, 2015). The evidence in the case study method is taken from interviews, participant observation, and documents. (Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Nur’aini, 2020).

The data were obtained from interviews with informants and then through a review of relevant documents in the form of photographs and archives of school activities. (Fitrah & Lutfiyah, 2017). The main techniques for collecting data participatory observation and in-depth interviews are examples of qualititative research methods, and supplemented by document review that aims not just to collect data but also to unearth the meaning embedded in the research setting (Djaelani, 2013).
Data analysis techniques according to Miles and Huberman in Sugiyono (2017) stated that data analysis techniques were carried out by 1. Data reduction, namely summarizing, choosing the main things, focusing on the important things, and looking for themes or patterns. 2. Presentation of data in qualitative research that is often used is presenting data with narrative text or with words that are easy to understand. 3. Conclusions or data verification where the researcher draws conclusions giving rise to new findings (novelty) so that previously unclear objects become clear (Barret & Twycros, 2018) based on the data obtained and verified.

4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The leadership style presented by the principal of Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kindergarten, Kepanjen District, Malang Regency shows that the principal in his work prioritizes a professional attitude but family relationships are still upheld. (Sanjani, 2018). This unique leadership style creates a pattern of personal relationships with one another and co-teachers such as a large family so that most of the school programs that are run do not encounter significant obstacles. The research findings at Kemala Bhayangkari Kindergarten 13, Kepanjen District, Malang Regency can be described as follows: 1. The school principal uses a democratic leadership style as seen from 6 (six) aspects of activity, namely:

a. Planning a program is a process or activity carried out by someone to make efforts effectively and efficiently by empowering existing resources in order to accomplish common goals. The principle serves as the leader of one of his duties is to plan school programs that are tailored to school goals such as planning learning programs that are embedded with the Character Education Program as a flagship program at Kemala Bhayangkari Kindergarten 13, Kepanjen District, Malang Regency. It is hoped that this will improve the professional quality of teachers and the morale of their students. The determination of this school program involves teachers jointly realizing activities that support the success of activities in schools. As stated by Hasibuan (2010) that employee improvement programs should be prepared carefully and based on scientific methods and guided by the skills needed by companies today and in the future. The school principal's program planning to foster teacher professionalism is quite good, but there needs to be innovation in the implementation of the activities carried out so that
interesting and varied learning will emerge, especially when learning the character of Bhayangkaraan. The findings of this study are consistent with visionary and team/group leadership styles. This indication can be seen that the school principal before making the program will be adjusted to the vision and mission of the school. The principal will present a vision and mission at the start of the new school year involving teachers and committees to achieve school goals in the future. In accordance with the theory of visionary leadership, it contains leaders’ capacity to formulate and communicate ideal thoughts from themselves or the results of social interaction with members of the organization which are thought to be future ideals that must be realized with a shared commitment. (Komaria & Triatna, 2005). The school principal's leadership after establishing the vision and mission will plan the program to be achieved because the program made must be in tune with the school's vision and mission. According to Northouse (2013) that the act of internal task leadership involves the skills to form a structure for results by planning, estimating, explaining roles and delegating tasks clearly. Program planning is very important for a school principal because he has a function as a manager so that life at school has clear direction and goals;

b. Making a decision is a process of formulating several alternative actions from various situations and conditions encountered to determine the right choice among several alternative solutions to existing problems after assessing the efficiency of different approaches in accomplishing objectives. (Indra, Purwanto, 2019). According to Maxfield et al (2009) that effective principals promote collaboration and shared decision-making through the development of professional learning communities that are supported by encouraging staff to participate. The principal in making decisions invites all teachers to jointly discuss a program to be discussed and then decisions are made so that decisions are made jointly between superiors and subordinates. The study's findings suggest the principal's leadership in making decisions is in accordance with the participatory leadership style. According to Indra et al (2016) a participatory leadership style is a leader who always involves employees in making decisions, encourages participation, and delegates authority by using feedback as an opportunity to train employees;

c. Managing school resources is an activity that aims to manage existing
resources in schools by empowering existing resources seamlessly and effectively to accomplish best results while remaining in pleasant surroundings. (Aprilianto, et.al, 2021; Sutrisno&Nasucha, 2022). According to the conclusions of this investigation, in managing teacher resources by the principal as a leader, he provides opportunities for his staff to develop initiatives and ideas. In the concept of belief in the ability to achieve, there are solutions for staff who have the ability but within the scope of guidance, encouragement and supervision, then it is included. within the scope of the leader so that this is in accordance with the delegative leadership style. (Nurbaya et al, 2015; Yusnadi, 2016).

d. Communication and cooperation is a very important thing to do by a school principal where a school principal who can communicate well will increase teacher motivation in working. The principal always greets the teacher by asking about the situation and pays attention to the teacher's needs and coordinates learning activities before learning begins so that the teachers can carry out their duties properly so that close relationships are established with each other. After communicating with the teacher, it will be easy for the principal to collaborate with the surrounding environment both internally and externally. (Yumnah et al, 2023). This collaboration itself is an excellent vehicle for bringing together diverse talents and can provide innovative solutions from an established approach. (Amirullah, 2015). This is done to support the ongoing school program. The findings of this study indicate that school principals try to build good communication and collaboration internally with teachers, for example conducting briefings before teaching besides inviting them to eat together to foster chemistry with each other. by checking the health condition of children on a regular basis. The activities carried out by the school principal are in accordance with the democratic leadership style where it appears that the principal maintains good relations by meeting teachers directly to hear and treat personnel fairly so that harmonization appears. (Mizal & Dewi, 2021).

e. Managing conflict is a condition that is carried out to find compatibility between different views as a cause of conflict between parties. (Owen 1987). This conflict can occur because one party has thoughts that are not the same as the other party so that something that is not conducive to school occurs, both conflict, commotion, deviation, and other negative things. The findings of this study
indicate that the conflict that has occurred in schools is between teachers and parents of students and the steps taken by the school principal are to identify the cause and then confirm to the conflicting parties and then provide a stimulus to alleviate the conflict and this is in accordance with the transformational leadership style as a form of solutions to conflicts and counterproductive performance that employees might make. (Astuti & Harsono, 2019).

f. Giving awards is a form of appreciation from schools to teachers for their dedication in teaching at school. Giving awards is expected to be able to foster teacher morale so that they work better and encourage a positive attitude of teachers in increasing work productivity. (Santi & Fitrilia, 2021). The research findings show that school principals always pay attention to their teachers who excel both in dedication and in winning competitions by buying new uniforms or new shoes so that they are more motivated to work. This shows that the school principal adopts a participatory leadership style where this leadership will provide rewards for employee performance which has a significant effect where awarding has a positive effect on improving employee performance. (Citra Dwi, 2020).

The choice of this leadership style is inseparable from the personality of the principal on a daily basis when interacting at school both with teachers, students, and student guardians as well as other people who have met directly with the principal as a leader. (Fisher & Carlyon, 2015). The results of this study indicate that the personality aspects of the Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen Kindergarten principal have characteristics towards a democratic leader where this can be seen from the behavior shown by the principal including:

4.1 PROTECT

The principal of Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen Kindergarten has the trait of nurturing his subordinates and this is felt by the teachers themselves who feel that one of the prominent characteristics of the principal is nurturing by often paying attention to teachers regarding the needs needed by the teacher. This characteristic is consistent with the findings of Utu & Sintasari (2021) regarding the democratic leadership of a madrasah principal who uses an approach to teachers, staff, and students to guide and protect them so that they carry out their duties and obligations;
4.2 PROFESSIONAL

The principal is very concerned about carrying out the teacher's duties, especially learning matters where the principal sees educators or teachers as professionals, of course the teachers already know their duties and functions as a teacher. The principal always discusses how to produce good quality graduates. The principal opens the widest possible space to encourage teachers to develop themselves through training. This characteristic is conveyed by Hakim & Yahya (2014) that one of the democratic leadership styles of school principals is that the principal plays a role in increasing teacher professionalism in order to produce quality education in schools. (Husaini&Fitria, 2019);

4.3 OPEN

The Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen Kindergarten principal has an open attitude towards his subordinates where he will always be open to receiving suggestions and opinions from his subordinates. Like the results of Wempi et al (2021) research that school principals are open in communication, there is a two-way relationship which causes subordinates to feel stiff and afraid to convey aspirations, input, and suggestions for the good of the school;

4.4 RESPONSIBILITY

The principal of Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen Kindergarten has the characteristic of being responsible for the work done by him and the teachers. (Mustadi et al, 2016; Septrisi et al, 2020). This is felt by teachers themselves who feel that the principal is the person who is responsible for decisions and all matters relating to his work at school. This characteristic is in accordance with the statement of Mukminin & Karwanto (2021) that the school principal does not only choose the right leadership style, but the school principal is also responsible for everything that happens in school. The principal is responsible for planning, directing, coordinating and evaluating the various jobs carried out by his teachers;

4.5 DISCIPLINE

The principal of Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen Kindergarten has a disciplined nature and this is the hallmark of a school belonging to the Polri foundation. The nature of the discipline possessed by the school principal is by complying with applicable rules
in obeying the hours of entering and leaving the office, wearing uniform according to the day, and not violating school rules. (Riwana, et al, 2021). This is in line with the results of Sodikun's research (2022) that in the school environment, a school principal who has the attitude of a democratic leader will be wise, open, nurturing, and disciplined by obeying the rules made and accepting the consequences if he commits a violation. The principal has shown his commitment to the teacher where teachers who violate discipline will be reprimanded by the principal either directly or indirectly, for example through the WhatsApp application.

5 CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, the conclusion of this study is that the principal of the Kemala Bhayangkari 13 Kepanjen Kindergarten uses a democratic leadership style where the relationship between the principal and subordinates does not appear rigid or tense but the relationship with the teacher runs intimately like even a big family so that it can foster teacher professionalism. This assessment of the democratic leadership of the school principal includes 6 (six) aspects of the activity, namely the principal is able to plan learning programs properly in conformity with the vision and objective of the school; the principal in making decisions collaborates with his teachers so that decisions taken are made by deliberation in the interest of the common good; school principals are able to manage school resources thoroughly and effectively to accomplish best results while remaining in pleasant surroundings; school principals are able to build good communication and collaboration internally and externally so that harmonization appears; the school principal manages conflict well so that the school atmosphere remains solid; the principal gives awards to teachers to encourage enthusiasm for work so as to increase productivity.

Furthermore, the democratic leadership style can be seen from aspects of the principal's personality on a daily basis while at school including: nurturing nature by giving attention to subordinates; professionalism by encouraging teachers to take part in training to improve their abilities; being open in accepting suggestions from subordinates so that the relationship is good; the nature of responsibility for decisions and all matters related to the work of their subordinates, which creates a sense of calm for the teachers; the nature of discipline towards rules and regulations so as to reduce the occurrence of violations of discipline at school.
Based on some of the results of the analyzes that have been carried out along with successful conclusions, it is suggested to school principals together with the Malang District Education Office to always involve teachers in participating in workshops, seminars and capacity training so that teacher professionalism will increase. So that the chairman of the Malang Branch Bhayangkari foundation in teacher recruitment is adjusted to the linear education level, namely early childhood education so that the knowledge possessed by teachers is truly beneficial to students.
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