

The principal's role in improving teacher professionalism at sman 1 donorojo, jepara regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to: 1) Describe the role of the principal in planning teacher professional development, 2) Describe the role of the principal in organizing teacher professional development, 3) Describe the role of the principal in implementing teacher professional development, 4) Describe the role of the principal in supervising, evaluating, and ensuring the sustainability of teacher professional development at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The study was conducted at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency from February to August 2025. The research instrument was the researcher himself. Data collection techniques used in this study were interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis techniques consisted of data condensation, data display, and drawing conclusions and verification. The results of the study show (1) Planning: The principal's strategy in preparing a teacher professionalism development plan at SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara includes a) analysis of teacher professionalism development needs; b) preparation of programs and strategies; c) preparation of budgets; and d) Implementation of programs. (2) Organizing: The principal's implementation in developing teacher professionalism at SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara includes a) Formation of teams and division of tasks; Internal coordination; and c) Management of resources. (3) Implementation: Implementation of the principal's policies in supporting teacher professionalism development at SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara includes a) Program implementation; b) Facilitation and support; and c) Direct monitoring. (4) Supervision: The principal's efforts in evaluating and ensuring the sustainability of teacher professionalism development at SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara include a) Implementation of supervision; and b) Evaluation and follow-up.

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Introduction

Improving teacher professionalism is a crucial part of efforts to improve the quality of education. Government Regulation No. 19 of 2017 concerning Amendments to Government Regulation No. 74 of 2008 concerning Teachers explains that teachers, as professional educators, have the responsibility to optimally carry out their duties, from planning, implementing, assessing, and evaluating learning. This demand for professionalism requires teachers to possess adequate competencies, encompassing pedagogical, professional, social, and personal aspects. These competencies serve as the foundation for teachers in managing quality learning that aligns with the evolving needs of students.

As stated by Sardiman (2018), teacher professionalism reflects consistent attitudes and behaviors in mastering knowledge, skills, and competencies. Teachers are not only required to master subject matter but also to understand student characteristics, master effective learning methods and strategies, and be able to carry out appropriate learning evaluations. The ideal professional teacher is one who is highly committed to continuous self-development and adapting to changing times (Muhaimin, 2016).

Classroom supervision and observation data at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency, shows that the average teacher supervision score was 89.28, with the lowest score being 86 and the highest being 90, out of 50 supervised teachers. Classroom observations indicate that learning implementation is good, characterized by mastery of material, the use of appropriate learning media, and effective classroom management. These findings indicate that teachers at SMAN 1 Donorojo have shown improvement in professionalism, but structured and ongoing efforts are still needed to optimally develop teacher potential.

In the context of strengthening teacher professionalism, the principal plays a crucial role as a manager, supervisor, and leader within the school environment. Ministerial Regulation No. 15 of 2018 concerning Fulfillment of the Workload of Teachers, Principals, and School Supervisors emphasizes that principals are obliged to carry out managerial duties, develop entrepreneurship, and supervise teachers in order to improve the quality of education. This is reinforced by Ministerial Regulation No. 40 of 2021 concerning the Assignment of Teachers as School Principals stipulates that school principals must be able to develop teacher potential and create a conducive and collaborative work climate.

Based on initial observations, SMAN 1 Donorojo has implemented various teacher professionalism strengthening programs, including regularly scheduled learning communities, teacher involvement as resource persons in subject-specific learning communities and the District MGMP (National Teacher Leadership Forum), and the presence of eight "leader" teachers who actively act as agents of change within the school. This collaborative-based model of teacher professionalism strengthening is a unique feature rarely explored in previous research.

The uniqueness of this research lies in its in-depth examination of how the principal was able to build a system that empowers teachers to become leaders while simultaneously creating a sustainable and structured learning culture. The pattern of teacher professionalism strengthening at SMAN 1 Donorojo is an interesting model to study because it involves active collaboration, collective awareness, and teacher participation as recognized resource persons, not only at the school level but also in the District MGMP forum.

Although previous research has extensively discussed the role of principals in improving teacher professionalism, few have specifically examined how principals optimize their role to build a culture of collaboration, empower teachers, and strengthen well-planned learning communities. Therefore, this study is expected to fill this research gap and make a significant contribution to the development of principal leadership models for improving teacher professionalism.

Method

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach. The study was conducted at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency, from February to August 2025. The research instrument was the researcher herself. Data collection techniques used in this study included interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis techniques included data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

Result

The role of the principal in planning teacher professional development

The role of the principal of SMA Negeri 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency in preparing a teacher professional development plan includes a) analyzing teacher professional development needs; b) preparing programs and strategies; c) preparing a budget; and d) implementing the program.

The role of the principal in organizing teacher professional development

The role of the principal in organizing teacher professional development at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency includes: a) Team formation and task division; b) Internal coordination; and c) Resource management.

The role of the principal in implementing teacher professional development

The role of the principal in implementing teacher professional development at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency includes: a) Program implementation; b) Facilitation and support; and c) Direct monitoring.

The role of the principal in supervising, evaluating and ensuring the sustainability of teacher professional development

The role of the principal in supervising, evaluating and ensuring the sustainability of teacher professional development at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency, includes: a) Implementation of supervision; and b) Evaluation and follow-up.

Discussion

The role of the principal in planning teacher professional development.

The research results show that the role of the principal of SMA Negeri 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency, in planning teacher professional development includes, first, analyzing the needs for teacher professional development. Therefore, the principal conducts a needs analysis to identify the necessary trainers, identify the strengths and weaknesses of teachers, and develop strategies to reflect the digitalization of education. This analysis provides a clear picture of the desired needs for teacher professional development.

Second, program and strategy development. Program and strategy development aims to clarify when and how the program will be implemented. Program and strategy development involves all components and a team of experts, both internal to the school and the education office and agencies involved in teacher professional development. Third, setting objectives. The principal, along with the team and teachers, establishes the objectives for teacher professional development so that the activities can be aligned with the achievement of these objectives as an indicator of the success of teacher professional development at SMA Negeri 1 Donorojo. Fourth, budget preparation. Budget preparation takes place at the beginning of the school year. Budget preparation involves the school committee and the education department as a form of transparency, in addition to that, budget preparation is sourced from BOS funds and from self-help funds.

Permadi & Arifin (2017) argue that the principal plays a highly strategic role in determining the success or failure of an educational institution. Improving professionalism at the educational unit level is the direct responsibility of the principal as the school leader and manager. Therefore, the organization that guarantees the professionalism of educators within the educational unit falls directly under the principal's responsibility. In line with Banun's (2018) opinion, the principal is tasked with developing strategies and missions so they know where to go and how to reach their goals, thereby achieving the operational goals of an educational institution.

The strategic planning steps of the principal of SMA Negeri 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency, in developing a teacher professional development plan, in accordance with Maisaro's theory (2018: 51), involve several stages: observation, coordination meetings, developing work programs, program implementation, supervision, and evaluation. The primary goal of planning is to enable the organization to objectively assess internal and external conditions and thus anticipate changes in the external environment. According to Wayan (2021), strategic planning is a process of transferring organizational goals, determining strategies, policies for strategic programs needed for these goals, and determining the methods needed to ensure that strategies and policies have been implemented.

The principal of SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara's program planning can serve as a platform for developing, improving, and finding solutions to any existing problems. According to Mulyasa (2018), planning allows for risk minimization, resource optimization, and clear direction, making it crucial

for management and achieving desired results. Planning provides structured direction for achieving goals, helping to focus efforts on essential issues and avoid dead ends.

The principal of SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara is known to conduct planning through meetings (deliberations) or gatherings with the entire academic community at the school to discuss analysis of program development needs, starting with future planning. This aligns with the theory of Behori & Alamin (2018) that meetings are intended to foster communication, create plans, establish policies, make decisions, and provide motivation. Through these meetings, the principal is required to establish targets and objectives with appropriate approaches and strategies to achieve professional teacher quality.

The role of the principal in organizing teacher professional development

The results of this study indicate that the principal's role in organizing teacher professional development at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency, includes: first, team formation and task allocation. Team formation is based on the competencies of each teacher in their respective fields. Furthermore, team formation and task allocation are intended to ensure that all job descriptions for implementing teacher professional development are aligned with their primary duties and functions.

Second, internal coordination. The next step in organizing is internal coordination, which is carried out between teachers, within a team specializing in specific activities, and with the principal, the Deputy Head of Facilities and Infrastructure, and the Deputy Head of Curriculum. This coordination is intended to ensure internal structural connections within the school, enabling the working connections of each position. Third, resource management. The results of this research meeting include budgetary resource management, human resource management, and infrastructure and facilities management at SMAN 1 Donorojo. This resource management is intended to encourage the success of sustainable teacher professional development, thereby impacting quality improvement.

Based on the findings above, it shows that the principal of SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara organized the management of teacher professional development by dividing tasks based on the teachers' capacity, professionalism, and educational qualifications. This is in line with the theory of Buford & Bedeian, which states that: "Organizing is the grouping of activities necessary to achieve established objectives." Organizing is the grouping of activities necessary to achieve predetermined goals.

"Organizing" comes from the word "organize," which means creating a structure with parts integrated in such a way that their relationships are bound by a relationship to the whole (Fariz & Agustini, 2020). Organization is defined as depicting patterns, schemes, and charts that show lines of command, employee positions, existing relationships, and so on. Organization is a social entity linked to a specific structure and coordination to achieve specific goals. The principal or supervisor carries out the organizing process, resulting in a static organization.

It is crucial for the principal to organize the organization and allocate members to various roles. These responsibilities guide them in carrying out organizational operations, and each individual should be assigned responsibilities based on their abilities. The division of labor must be structured within a cohesive framework with clear working relationships so that each can complement the other in achieving goals. All stakeholders are involved in the division of labor by mutual agreement (Tamaji, 2018).

In addition to being responsible for the division of tasks, the principal plays a crucial role in determining the quality of human resources. In efforts to improve the quality of human resources in education, teachers are the most important component of human resources to be continuously nurtured and developed. In achieving human resource goals, the principal is the driving force, determining the direction of school policies, which will determine how the goals of the school and education in general are realized (Mulyasa, 2018).

The principal also has the task of internal coordination, such as managing and aligning all components within the school, such as teachers, administrative staff, and students, to achieve

effective and efficient educational goals. This includes developing work programs, managing resources, facilitating communication, fostering a conducive learning environment, and conducting supervision and evaluation to ensure programs run according to plan and achieve optimal results (Sagala, 2016).

The role of the principal in implementing teacher professional development

The research findings indicate that the principal's role in implementing teacher professional development at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency, includes: First, program implementation. Program implementation is carried out in stages, considering that teachers also have the task of teaching. Program implementation adapts to conditions, such as learning communities such as teacher working groups (KKG). Furthermore, program implementation requires permission from the principal as part of the principal's analysis and monitoring of the program.

Second, facilitation and support; the school provides facilities, including space and a computer lab, as well as permission for certain school facilities to support teacher professional development. The principal's support also includes attendance at activities, providing financial support, and providing time for teachers to develop their professionalism and competencies. Third, direct monitoring. Direct monitoring is conducted through observation, class visits, and attendance at the opening of activities. Direct monitoring of teacher professional development activities at SMAN 1 Donorojo is part of the principal's role and support.

Implementation or actuation is the most significant management function and drives the management process more than any other. Implementation cannot be separated from the manager's role as leader in its implementation. According to research by Ritonga, Sulasmi, & Dongoran (2023), implementation (actuating) includes inspiring, leading, creating correlations, coordinating communication, and developing or improving implementers (developing people). George R. Terry (2019) states that actuating is the effort to motivate group members so that they desire and strive to achieve various goals.

The efforts made by the principal of SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara in implementing policies are interpreted as the actions of leaders within the organization to organize, unite, and align existing interests and occur during the policy implementation process, resulting in positive interactions between all components. Therefore, implementation means motivating people to work independently or with collective awareness to effectively achieve desired goals.

The implementation of the SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara principal's policy to support teacher professional development involves facilitating and motivating all personnel (in this case, teachers) in every educational activity to continuously improve their performance. Through various directions and motivations, each teacher can optimally carry out activities in accordance with their roles, duties, and responsibilities.

Furthermore, the principal's task is to implement existing programs. In line with Usman's (2020) statement, similar to teachers, the principal, as an educator, in carrying out their duties needs to develop learning programs, implement them, and evaluate the learning process and outcomes. This effort is evident in the principal's ability to communicate the school's vision, mission, goals, objectives, and strategic programs to all teachers and staff.

Similarly, Wahjosumidjo (2020) argued that the principal's responsibility is to possess the ability to effectively carry out their leadership duties, which is manifested in the ability to develop school programs, organize personnel, empower educational staff, and optimally utilize school resources.

An equally important task for the principal of SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara is direct monitoring of all school activities. As an educational leader, the principal must be fully responsible for the smooth implementation of education and learning at the school. The principal's role as direct monitor can include recording teacher classroom observations, reviewing learning documents such as lesson plans and syllabi, evaluating school program activities, and conducting direct discussions with educators to provide guidance and follow-up on the supervision carried out.

This is in accordance with Andriyani's research (2023) that the supervision carried out by the principal is by directly observing the learning process in the classroom, especially in the

selection and use of learning methods and student involvement in the learning process. In addition, by the principal observing learning activities directly, the principal can also find out the development of teacher competence and professionalism in teaching.

The role of the principal in supervising, evaluating and ensuring the sustainability of teacher professional development

The research findings regarding the principal's role in supervising, evaluating, and ensuring the sustainability of teacher professional development at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency, include: First, implementation of supervision. Supervision is carried out through supervision activities and classroom visits. Furthermore, supervision involves all components, including the principal, supervisors, and the school committee, as a form of openness to the teacher professional development program. Supervision is carried out in stages, or through direct supervision through attendance at the activity.

Second, follow-up evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation are used as a basis for improving future learning activities. The information obtained from these reports will serve as a reference for the school to improve the quality of learning, enhance teacher competency, and enhance existing components.

Based on the author's findings, the principal of SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara conducts routine supervision of the continuity of teacher professional development. This aims to anticipate potential negligence in carrying out duties and to monitor teacher performance by assessing the level of discipline in carrying out the tasks and responsibilities assigned to them. This is done to prevent misappropriation of teacher performance at the school. The principal continuously strives to ensure that his subordinates carry out their duties and obligations and are directed in accordance with established targets, particularly in terms of improving the competence and quality of learning at SMAN 1 Donorojo Jepara.

Within the context of management functions, supervision is carried out by a manager to ensure program implementation by comparing expected results with actual results, then taking corrective action if any discrepancies occur. With the help of supervision, deviations in various aspects can be avoided so that objectives are achieved. Plans are implemented precisely in accordance with the results of reflection, and the use of material resources supports the achievement of organizational goals.

A properly conducted evaluation by the principal can help identify areas that need improvement. Through a thorough evaluation process, the principal can identify the strengths and weaknesses of teacher professional development, such as ineffective teaching methods. From this evaluation, teachers can gain crucial information about areas that require improvement, and management can design better policies based on the resulting data (Sulaeman & Aminatuj Zuhriyyah, 2023).

Through evaluation, teachers will better understand how well they have performed their duties and where they need to improve. The feedback provided through evaluation can encourage educators to continue developing themselves, whether through training or other professional development. In line with Huljannah's (2021) opinion, evaluation can improve educators' classroom management competencies, including selecting learning methods, media, teaching materials, and other tools that can motivate students to learn. In this context, evaluation is not only a tool for assessing teacher professional performance but also a tool to encourage educators to improve.

Furthermore, through evaluation, principals can encourage teachers to self-reflect on their teaching practices to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Through reflection on teaching practices, teachers can assess the effectiveness of the strategies used, identify personal strengths and weaknesses, and design improvements to enhance the quality of learning (Tasdemir & Gumusok, 2023). Self-evaluation provides teachers with the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of their teaching experiences and adapt their learning approaches to the actual needs of their students. Through self-evaluation, teachers can determine appropriate teaching strategies and select the most appropriate evaluation methods.

Conclusion

Based on the results of research and discussion on the role of the principal in improving teacher professionalism at SMAN 1 Donorojo, Jepara Regency, it can be concluded that the planning program in the aspect of preparing the principal's budget does not actively involve the school committee and the private sector in determining funding sources and program collaboration. At the organizational stage that has been carried out by the principal has been running well. However, in the aspect of internal coordination, the principal is less actively involved, so that internal coordination is sometimes unclear regarding job descriptions and the mechanics of the work flow that will be carried out. In addition, the principal has implemented the teacher professional development program well, the stages and forms of support and facilities have been provided, in addition the principal also conducts direct monitoring. In the aspect of supervision that has been carried out, it has been good and no shortcomings were found. Supervision through supervision, class visits, end-of-year program evaluations and teacher performance assessments have all been carried out well.

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