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Madrasah Principal Leadership Strategies for Graduate Quality Development

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Abstract

General Background Globalization and technological advancement require educational institutions to produce graduates with academic excellence, strong character, and relevant competencies. **Specific Background** In Islamic education, madrasah principals hold a strategic position in managing institutional programs that support graduate quality through planning, implementation, and evaluation. **Knowledge Gap** Educational institutions still face challenges related to learning quality, limited facilities, and human resource management, making principal leadership strategies important to examine in relation to graduate quality development. **Aims** This study analyzes madrasah principal leadership strategies in developing graduate quality through three main aspects: strategy planning, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation. **Results** The findings show that planning was conducted systematically and based on institutional needs, focusing on human resource quality, outcome-based intensive programs, technology-based facilities and infrastructure, student career guidance, and character strengthening through extracurricular activities. Implementation was carried out through interconnected input, process, output, and outcome approaches. Evaluation was conducted continuously through academic supervision, program audits, and participatory evaluation involving various stakeholders. The strategy supported graduate quality in academic achievement, character formation, and competitiveness for continuing education, with 84% of students accepted into state universities. **Novelty** This study presents an integrated leadership strategy model that connects needs-based planning, systematic implementation, and continuous evaluation in madrasah graduate quality development. **Implications** Madrasah leadership should prioritize sustainable program evaluation, resource development, learning innovation, and career guidance to prepare graduates for future academic and social challenges.

Highlights:

- Planning focused on human resources, facilities, careers, and character.
- Program execution followed input, process, output, and outcome stages.
- Continuous supervision and audits supported student competitiveness.

Keywords: Leadership, Head of Madrasah, Education, Graduate Quality, Islamic Education Management

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Introduction

The development of globalization and rapid technological advancement demands educational institutions to be able to produce graduates who are not only academically excellent but also possess strong character and skills relevant to the needs of the times. [1] In the context of Islamic education, madrasah as a formal educational institution has a great responsibility in shaping a generation that is not only intellectually smart but also morally virtuous.[2] Therefore, the quality of graduates becomes the main indicator of a madrasa's success in carrying out its educational function.[3]

Nevertheless, various challenges are still faced by educational institutions, such as low quality of learning, limited facilities and infrastructure, as well as suboptimal management of human resources. [4] This condition demands effective leadership from the head of the madrasa as the main policy holder in the management of the educational institution.[5] The head of the madrasah is required to be able to formulate the right strategies, implement programs effectively, and conduct continuous evaluations in order to improve the quality of graduates.

State Islamic Senior High School Sidoarjo is one of the educational institutions that shows significant development in improving the quality of its graduates.[6] This can be seen from the increasing academic achievements of students as well as the high absorption rate of graduates in higher education institutions. This phenomenon is interesting to study more deeply, especially regarding how the leadership strategy of the head of the madrasa in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs to improve the quality of graduates.

Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of school principal leadership in a real context.[7] The research location was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Sidoarjo with research subjects including the head of the madrasah, teachers, and other related parties. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews to comprehensively explore information, observations to directly see the ongoing processes in the field, and documentation to complement the data obtained. Data analysis was conducted interactively with stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. [8] The validity of the data is maintained through source and technique triangulation, so that the data obtained can be scientifically accountable.

Results and Discussion

Research results show that the strategy of the head of the madrasa in improving the quality of graduates begins with careful and needs-based planning. This planning is undertaken by taking into account various essential aspects, including enhancing the quality of human resources, developing outcome-oriented learning programs, and strengthening technology-based facilities and infrastructure.[9] In addition, planning also includes a student career mentoring program aimed at helping students recognize their potential and determine the direction of further education, as well as character development through structured extracurricular activities.[10]

The implementation of the planned strategy is carried out systematically through the management of educational input, process, output, and outcome. At the input stage, the madrasah conducts precise selection and placement of resources, both students and educators. At the process stage, learning is carried out innovatively by utilizing various methods and media that support the achievement of learning objectives. [11] Intensive study programs, such as extra tutoring and practice exams, are an important part of improving students' preparedness for academic evaluations.

At the output stage, student learning outcomes are evaluated through various forms of structured assessment, whereas at the outcome stage, the success of the strategy is measured through tangible achievements such as improvements in student performance and the absorption of graduates into higher education institutions. [12] This shows that the strategy implemented is not only process-oriented, but also focused on tangible and measurable results. Strategy evaluation is conducted continuously through academic supervision, teacher performance assessment, and program evaluation involving various parties. This evaluation serves as a basis for making improvements and developing programs continuously. [13] With systematic evaluation, the madrasah is able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each program carried out, so that more effective adjustments can be made in the future.[14]

The quality of these graduates is proven every year as 84% of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Sidoarjo students are accepted into state universities. The number of students who are able to continue their education to a higher level is not merely the result of an instant outcome, but the result of the strategy of the head of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Sidoarjo in efforts to improve the quality of student graduates.[15] Overall, the leadership strategy of the principal at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Sidoarjo demonstrates effectiveness in improving the quality of graduates. This is reflected in the increased academic quality of students, the development of positive character, and the enhanced competitiveness of graduates in continuing their education to higher levels. Nevertheless, there are still some obstacles, such as limitations in facilities and infrastructure and differences in students' abilities, which need further attention.

Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the leadership strategy of the head of the madrasah in improving the quality of graduates at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Sidoarjo has been effectively carried out through the stages of planning,

implementation, and evaluation that are interconnected. Needs-based planning, systematic implementation, and continuous evaluation are the main keys to success in improving graduate quality. This strategy not only impacts the improvement of academic achievement but also the formation of character and the readiness of students to face future challenges.

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