

From College to School: Sharing Insights on Leadership for Teachers in Challenging Times

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Abstract —*The contemporary educational landscape is very dynamic and fraught with challenges; thus, educators require robust leadership qualities to confront these obstacles effectively. This Community Service Activity seeks to enhance the leadership capabilities of educators at Cikal Cendekia Islamic Full Day School via a briefing program. The employed methods consist of observation, presentation, discussion, and interactive question-and-answer sessions. The findings of this activity demonstrate that community service initiatives focused on leadership have yielded substantial advantages for educators, encompassing educational, objective, accountable, and transparent dimensions. This assessment may serve as a foundation for future enhancements, encompassing modifications to materials, delivery methods, and more efficient activity management strategies, including offering guidance to children and their parents from diverse generational backgrounds.*

Keywords: Leadership, Teachers, Content Presentation, Insights, Community Service.

Abstrak —Lanskap pendidikan saat ini sangat dinamis dan penuh tantangan, untuk itu guru membutuhkan kemampuan kepemimpinan yang kuat untuk dapat menghadapi berbagai tantangan tersebut. Kegiatan Pengabdian ini bertujuan meningkatkan kapasitas kepemimpinan guru di Cikal Cendekia Islamic Full Day School melalui program pembekalan. Metode yang digunakan meliputi observasi, presentasi, diskusi, dan tanya jawab interaktif. Hasil dari kegiatan ini menunjukkan bahwa kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat dengan topik kepemimpinan telah memberikan manfaat signifikan bagi guru, mencakup aspek edukatif, objektif, akuntabel, dan transparan. Evaluasi ini dapat menjadi dasar untuk penyempurnaan di masa depan, termasuk penyesuaian materi, metode penyampaian, dan strategi pengelolaan kegiatan yang lebih efektif, seperti mengenai pembekalan mengenai kepemimpinan kepada siswa dan orang tua siswa dari latar belakang generasi yang berbeda.

Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan, Guru, Pembekalan, Pemahaman, Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, science and technology are advancing swiftly, influencing education and teacher competencies. Presently, educators are mandated to possess and excel in four competencies, in addition to other skills, namely leadership. Leadership competency is essential for contemporary educators. Leadership competency is essential for every career and people. Educators in academic institutions require leadership competencies, particularly while managing pupils in the classroom. Leadership competency is essential for guiding students to establish an organized and pleasant learning environment. In the absence of leadership competency, educators are unable to impact students. The influence in question is to elicit responses from students, including listening, executing tasks, and complying.

Comprehending and enhancing teacher leadership in challenging circumstances is crucial, as it significantly impacts student welfare, the efficacy of educational institutions, and the resilience of the education system generally. Effective teacher leadership significantly influences student achievement. In challenging circumstances, kids encounter heightened stress, ambiguity, and possible learning disabilities. Teacher leaders can offer essential support, direction, and stability, assisting students in overcoming hurdles and sustaining their

academic advancement. They can also champion resources and employ new pedagogical practices to address kids' distinct needs throughout these periods. This leadership will additionally enhance student accomplishment (Yusof *et al.*, 2018). Moreover, robust teacher leadership cultivates a constructive and supportive educational environment, especially during difficult situations. Teacher leaders may cultivate robust relationships with colleagues, promote cooperation, and nurture a collective sense of purpose. This can enhance communication, alleviate staff stress, and optimize overall school operations. This may also affect teacher performance, particularly during difficult periods (Nasim *et al.*, 2023). By cultivating and empowering teacher leaders, educational systems can enhance their resilience and adaptability to crises.

Numerous prior studies have disclosed significant insights concerning the leadership dimension for instructors. Santoso dan Wibawanta (2023) elucidated that servant leadership substantially impacts teacher self-efficacy and performance. Other studies, such as Kholidah *et al.* (2023), elucidate that leadership in educational institutions positively impacts teacher performance; nevertheless, its efficacy may be contingent upon mediating characteristics such as organizational commitment and organizational learning. Moreover, leadership emanating from the highest level exerts a positive and substantial impact on teacher performance (Taufik, 2019) with findings that closely align with the research conducted by Hasim *et al.* (2020).

The significance of leadership qualities, from principals to instructors, has been underscored by numerous research findings worldwide. The principal's leadership abilities significantly impact teacher job satisfaction, performance, and behavioral competence. The transformational leadership style positively influences job happiness and performance (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021; Karabina, 2016). Principal leadership competencies, such as decision-making, relationship cultivation, and proficient communication, are significantly associated with teacher behavioral competence (Pacis & Salvador, 2023). The calibre of instructional leadership is essential for fostering an effective educational environment and cultivating instructors (Dalal & Rani, 2013). A democratic leadership approach that emphasizes teacher well-being enhances teacher performance (Yunus *et al.*, 2020). Teacher leadership approaches in the classroom significantly impact the cultivation of student leadership skills (Chunan & Nor, 2019). Moreover, leadership significantly enhances teacher communication satisfaction, with fundamental transformational leadership behaviors, contingent incentive behaviors, and intellectual stimulation exerting the most substantial influence (Terek *et al.*, 2015). These findings underscore the need of proficient leadership in educational institutions to enhance teacher effectiveness and overall quality of education.

Teacher leaders have numerous hurdles during challenging periods, affecting their capacity to adequately serve students, colleagues, and the school community. Confronting these problems necessitates a comprehensive strategy, encompassing the provision of sufficient resources and support for teacher leaders, the cultivation of a collaborative and communicative culture, and the prioritization of the well-being of all school community members. Comprehending the factors that affect alertness is essential for enhancing performance, just as recognizing the challenges encountered by teacher leaders is vital for developing more supportive and effective educational systems, thereby fostering stronger schools and more resilient educational frameworks. Consequently, it is essential to comprehend diverse facets of leadership for educators during hard periods, which can be facilitated by exposure and engagement via discourse.

METHODS

The community service activity occurred on August 10, 2024. The collaborators of this initiative were educators from Cikal Cendekia Islamic Full Day School located in Cileungsi, Bogor, West Java. The selection of partners was predicated on the requirements of the educators at the institution. This community service initiative emphasizes the dissemination of knowledge and perspectives from educators in response to identified needs (Christian, Japri, *et al.*, 2022; Silalahi *et al.*, 2021, 2022; Villaluz *et al.*, 2018; Yoedo & Puspitasari, 2023). Several field observation methods were conducted with the partners to address the participants' demands, as seen in Figure 1. Initially, a needs assessment of the school was conducted through observation and interviews with relevant stakeholders from the partners. This technique seeks to assess the proficiency and expertise of educators in sales and marketing. The outcomes of this phase will serve as the foundation for formulating a suitable methodological approach. Secondly, ascertain the subject that will be addressed during the activity. This is crucial to address the requirements of the participants. The subsequent steps involve identifying the activity approach and the resource individual who will deliver the previously established topic.



Figure 1. Preparation Observation Steps.

The activity will be conducted online via ZOOM. In addition to facilitating direct face-to-face community service briefing activities, it can also be conducted online via supporting media (Christian, Wibowo, *et al.*, 2022). This activity's design encompasses content presentation sessions, discussions, and interactive Q&A, as illustrated in Figure 2. Engaging methods and dialogues can enhance comprehension and utilization of skills related to the assigned topics. Moreover, the implementation of this technique might facilitate collaborative learning, hence enhancing the efficacy of activities. Regular assessments will be conducted to track progress and pinpoint areas necessitating more focus. This strategy aims for the teachers of Cikal Cendikia Islamic Full Day School participating in this program to successfully implement leadership principles during challenging periods in their professional duties.

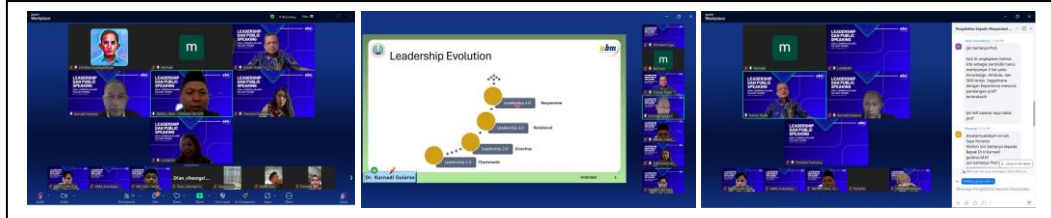


Figure 2. Content presentation sessions, discussions, and interactive Q&A.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The participants in this exercise were educators from Cikal Cendekia Islamic Full Day School, representing diverse profiles as illustrated in Table 1. Thirty-one teachers participated in this activity, predominantly female, comprising about 75%, while male teachers accounted for less than 26%. Moreover, regarding educational qualifications, over 81% of the participating teachers held a Diploma 4 (D4) or bachelor's degree (S1), while those with a Diploma 3 (D3) or master's degree (S2) constituted less than 4%.

Tabel 1. Profile of activity participants.

Profile	Frequency	%
Gender		
Female	23	74.19%
Male	8	25.81%
Education background		
High school	4	12.90%
Diploma 3 (D3)	1	3.23%
Diploma 4 / bachelor's degree (S1)	25	80.65%
Master's degree (S2)	1	3.23%

Feedback regarding the outcomes of this activity's implementation was gathered through a questionnaire comprising four items: the utility of the activity in addressing participants' needs (educational), the relevance of the material to participants' issues (objective), the comprehensibility of the material for participants (accountable), and the active engagement of participants in the activity (transparent). The feedback items in this activity are measured on a four-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Table 2 displays the outcomes of the feedback collected from the participants of the exercise.

Tabel 2. Feedback results.

No	Item	Average score
1.	Educative	3.45
2.	Objective	3.47
3.	Accountable	3.52
4.	Transparent	3.39

Feedback analysis can be conducted on the executed actions based on the average evaluation of each item. The response indicates that this exercise is evaluated positively in terms of its educational value. Participants regarded the activity as offering substantial insight and information pertaining to the subject of leadership. In this context, educators can impact their peers through both formal and informal methods, highlighting the importance of connections, teamwork, and trust (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015). In this scenario, educators possessing specialized experience can conduct professional development workshops for their peers, systematically imparting their knowledge and abilities in an organized environment. Effective leaders in difficult environments prioritize establishing elevated expectations, enhancing teacher morale, and fostering a unified vision (Ahumada *et al.*, 2016). Effective leadership during difficult periods necessitates adaptation, inventiveness, and a collaborative

approach to problem-solving (Bufalino, 2021). This positions teachers as authorities in their fields and fosters collaboration among peers.

Moreover, favorable outcomes on the objective criteria demonstrate that this activity has effectively communicated information clearly and immediately. Participants believed that the activity's objectives were well met, and the provided content aligned with their expectations. This demonstrates the efficacy of the activity's implementation in meeting the established learning objectives. Challenging circumstances frequently necessitate that educators swiftly adjust and acquire new competencies. Materials directed by experts can offer evidence-based solutions for addressing difficulties, including crisis management, stress management, and effective communication. This pertains to the notion of targeted professional growth. Providing educators with the requisite knowledge and abilities to confront obstacles can enhance their confidence and resilience, so enabling them to more effectively promote student development. This aligns with the perspective that effective leadership techniques encompass fostering strong connections, empowering individuals, and delegating leadership tasks (Chapman, 2004; Harris, 2002).

In the accountable item, actions that receive high ratings signify that the methodology and execution of the activity are verifiable. These foster trust among participants that the activity is conducted with honesty and in alignment with the set plan. The resource individual in this instance is deemed proficient in offering techniques and optimal practices to educators for addressing intricate problems, alleviating tension, and promoting student welfare. The resource person's presentation can equip teachers with essential leadership skills, enhance resilience, and facilitate effective change management, eventually benefiting both educators and kids. This pertains to the want for continuous, adaptable, and responsive assistance for leaders (Earley, 2020). Furthermore, continuous professional growth in evaluation methodologies is crucial for enhancing the quality of student learning (Arta, 2024).

The result about the final item, openness, indicates that this action is seen effective in delivering information clearly and honestly. Participants perceived that all aspects of the activity, including materials, procedures, and objectives, were communicated with clarity. Nonetheless, there exists a chance to enhance this aspect more. Facilitating chances for educators to offer feedback on the content and its presentation guarantees that professional development is pertinent, engaging, and aligned with their requirements. Moreover, it is essential to acknowledge and appreciate the expertise present within the teaching community. Facilitating avenues for educators to exchange knowledge and engage in the professional development process enhances transparency and accountability. This underscores the significance of teacher professionalism, which should be acknowledged and bolstered in professional development programs (Soim et al., 2020). In conclusion, the feedback indicates that the community service activities centered on leadership have yielded substantial advantages for participants, encompassing educational, objective, accountable, and transparent dimensions. This assessment can serve as a foundation for future enhancements, encompassing modifications to content, delivery methods, and more efficient activity management systems.

CONCLUSION

The execution of community service demonstrates the enhancement of teacher leadership competencies at Cikal Cendekia Islamic Full Day School. This accomplishment not only yields direct advantages for the school by enhancing competitiveness but also equips teachers with relevant information. This service enhances educational resources through a pragmatic approach, empowers industrial collaborators, and bolsters the capabilities of human resources in navigating the challenges of the educational landscape. Educators acquire a profound comprehension of leadership, encompassing both foundational and strategic aspects. It is anticipated that by disseminating this comprehension, educators will adopt a leadership mentality, enhance performance, and maximize the overall efficacy of the educational institution. Furthermore, the presentation provides educators with an understanding of the significance of leadership abilities in promoting the sustainability of schools, particularly within the education sector. It is anticipated that educators will assimilate these principles into the corporate culture, foster synergy between teachers and students, and enhance collaborative efforts within the team. The cultivation of these talents is anticipated to enhance both individual and team performance, hence facilitating the attainment of overall school performance. Consequently, this activity yields advantages for both individual teachers and the institution as a collective body. Recommendations for the future topic such as persist in updating materials to reflect contemporary trends and enhance engagement in the application of best practices, including offering leadership training to kids and their parents from diverse generational backgrounds.

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