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High-Performing and Low-Performing Schools in Makassar Indonesia

Hasmirati¹, Ishak Sin², Abdul Latif Kassim³

¹Universitas Islam Makassar, Indonesia

²Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah Darul Aman, Malaysia

³Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah Darul Aman, Malaysia

Email: irahasmirati@yahoo.com

Abstract

Although the Education Department of South Sulawesi Province reported that the performance of Secondary Schools in Makassar is at unsatisfactory level, but there were some schools achieved high performance level. The varying performance of the schools has prompted the researcher to conduct a multi-site case study to identify whether leadership styles of principals have any relationship with high-performing and low-performing schools in Makassar. In order to achieve the objective of this study, a qualitative approach, using multi-case study research design was utilized. Semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis were used to collect data. The sample consisted of two high performing and two low-performing secondary schools in the city of Makassar. Four school principals and 12 teachers of the schools were purposely chosen as respondents of the study. Data were analysed using theme analysis technique. This study found that principals in high-performing schools and low-performing schools were used the different styles of leadership. High-performing schools' principals emphasized more on teaching and learning, controlling students' discipline, ensuring teachers' understanding the school's vision, and conducting staff developmental programs. This study has contributed to the development of knowledge in the field of high-performing schools in Indonesia. This study suggests that if a school wants to achieve high-performing level, principals must ensure that the teachers teach and students learn.

Keywords: *High-performing schools, low-performing schools, leadership of school principals.*

Introduction

The superiority of a country is determined by highly educated human resources (Pidarta, 2010). Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which are parts of Japan, were once destroyed by atomic bombs. Later, Hiroshima and Nagasaki have emerged as a major hub of the world economy due to concentration more on education (Rorty, 1998). In addition, England has emerged as a developed country because of education (Wandr & Brown, 1987).

For the Republic of Indonesia, the promotion of the importance of education has been given attention since independence in 1945. However, as reported by Pidarta (2010) and UNESCO (2011) the quality of Indonesian education is still at a low level. UNESCO

(2011) has reported that Indonesia's education position is at the 69th place out of 127 countries. In addition, the PISA 2012 Report shows that Indonesia's education is behind Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam (OECD, 2012).

Why is this happening? One of the reasons why education in Indonesia is so low is because of the leadership of the principals. Usman, Syaikh, Akhmadi and Suryadarma (2007), Weston (2008), OECD/Asian Development Bank(2015) mentioned that the cause of the problem of education in Indonesia is due to the head of schools that do not play the role as school leaders. In addition, teachers are not committed (Sutarto Hadi, 2002; The World Bank, 2010; Suryadarma, Suryahadi, Sumarto & Rogers, 2006, Guruvala, 2011; McKenzie, Nugroho, Ozolins, McMillan, Sumarto, Toyama, Febriany, Sodo, Bima, & Sim, 2014; OECD / Asian Development Bank, 2015). Sukarmin (2010) in his study has found that the commitment of teachers in Indonesia is only at a moderate level. According to Jazzar and Algozzine (2006) only highly committed teachers will produce excellent products in educational organization.

To overcome the low quality of education in Indonesia, the government passed the educational law that was recognized under the National Education System Act Number 20 in the year of 2003. In this law, it is stated that education in Indonesia should be based on the Pancasila Philosophy, which aims to develop the potential of students to become people who believe and faith to God Almighty and are knowledgeable as propounded in the law of the national education system that is: "... the development of potential learners to be a human being who believes and cautious to God Almighty, noble, healthy, qualified, creative, independent, and democratic citizens and responsible citizens"(Republic of Indonesia, SISDIKNAS Act, 2003: 43). To achieve this philosophy, the Indonesian Ministry of National Education stipulates that every national education development program should be emphasized on the quality of education and educational management (Anwar Arifin, 2005).

Although Indonesia's education level is still at the lowest level compared to neighbouring countries, namely Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam (OECD, 2012), there are also some excellent schools that can be categorized as high-performing schools. A recent National Exam Result Report shows that there are some high schools that have achieved 49-60 points, and categorized as high-performing schools (Ministry of National Education, 2012). This decision suggests that there are as many as five schools that achieve a score between 49-60 points. Table 1.1 shows the achievement of some secondary schools in Makassar in the year of 2011 and 2012.

Table 1.1
High School Achievement in Makassar

No	Name of School	Score in the Final National Examination and Position			
		2011		2012	
		Score	Position	Score	Position
1	SMA - 1	51.08	2	52.43	1
2	SMA - 2	48.01	6	50,90	2
3	SMA - 3	50.52	3	50.34	3
4	SMA - 4	49.93	4	50.34	4
5	SMA - 5	52.20	1	49.35	5
6	SMA - 6	44.53	21	45.48	17
7	SMA - 7	46.09	15	45.12	18
8	SMA - 8	45.24	19	44.59	19
9	SMA - 9	46.13	14	44.44	20
10	SMA -10	42.38	22	44.08	22

Source: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional (2012)

Data in Table 1.1 shows that the difference between the high-performing school category and the low-performing school category is the achievement in the national examination. This examination results raised the issue, why some schools perform and the others not perform? Initially, the facilities provided by the government, including the provision of teachers, training and salaries of teachers as well as the subject matter are the same between one school and the other school, but produce the different result. Based on the input-output theory, if the input were the same, the output would be the same (Hoy & Miskel, 2011). However, the output shown in Table 1.1 shows the difference between schools.

Objectives of the Research

Based on the statement of the above problem, this study aims to:

- Analyse the characteristics of the principals' leadership in secondary school.
- Analyse attitudes and behaviour of teachers in high school.
- Make a comparison of the physical state and convenience between schools.

Literature Review

High-performing schools are defined as schools that achieve or exceed the target set. This definition is in line with the definition of effective school provided by Mortimore (1991) as well as Hoy and Miskel (2005). In parallel with this definition, in this paper, researchers made an in-depth review of the concept of high-performing schools, principals' leadership in high-performing schools, teachers' attitudes and behaviours in high-performing schools, and school culture at high-performing schools.

The basic theory, which was employed as a reference in this study is the school as a social system. In this theory, the school is considered as a formal education organization system, and a social organization that is set up to achieve educational goals. School is a unique social system that consists of different individuals and cultures. Therefore, the school cannot be separated from the beliefs and values of the surrounding community (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). In addition, effective school studies, leadership theories, attitude theory and behaviour of teachers and school culture theory were also referred to as additional theories to support the findings of this study.

In this study high-performing school concepts are similar to the concept of effective school as argued by Shannon and Bylsma (2007). From the various definitions presented by educational experts, such as Edmonds (1979), Lezotte (1985), Mortimore (1991) and Hoy and Miskel (2005), it is concluded that effective schools are schools with a system that encompasses many aspects, covering inputs, processes, outputs or outcomes as well as existing arrangements within the school, where various aspects exist supporting each other to achieve school vision and mission. In an effective school, all students can have a high level of ability and develop themselves even though the students of an effective school have the common basic ability, but they are still able to develop themselves in comparison with the initial conditions when they are just entering effective school. In short, effective schools are schools that are able to optimize all inputs and processes to achieve education output, which is considered as a school performance, especially student performance.

The discussions on the development of high-performing schools in this study are based on reports from researchers, such as Weber (1971), Austin (1978), Brookeover and Lezotte (1979), Edmonds and Frederickson (1979), Rutter (1979) Mortimore et al. (1988). Teddlie and Stringfield (1993) made a study to deny Coleman et al. (1966) and Jencks et al. (1972) reports, and identified school factors that could contribute to improve student performance. Most of their studies chose low education samples, and their findings did not support Coleman et al. (1966) and Jencks et al (1972).

The results of effective schools study show that school factors are important to the development of students, considering the characteristics of the school. MacBeath and Mortimore (2001), Rutter et al. (1979) Hallinger and Murphy (1986) Sammons et al. (1995), Reynolds (1995), Abdul Karim (1989), Levine and Lezotte (1990), Teddlie and Reynolds, (2000), Townsend (1997). In addition, according to Nor Asikin (2008), Milam et al. (2010), Hofman and Hofman (2011), Shannon and Bylsma (2007), Wang, Walters & Thum (2013), Yurdagul and Nukhet (2016), Wang et al. (2013), summarized that effective school features are the combination of the principals' leadership styles, attitude and behaviour of teachers and school culture.

The first aspect relates to the leadership style of principals, practiced by high-performing school principals, researchers outlining leadership theories, such as Ohio State University's behavioural theories (Halpin, 1966), transactional and transformational leadership theories (Bass, 1985), instructional leadership theory (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985), and leadership theory for learning (Hallinger, 2011).

The second aspect of school effectiveness studies is teacher behaviour, such as commitment, motivation and efficacy of the teachers. One of the concepts that determine the effectiveness of employees is the level of their commitment. According to Mowday et al. (1982), commitments are given special attention as these factors are said to be responsible for various acts within the organization, and they are absenteeism, staff turnover, and their adherence to the organization; committed employees will stay long in the organization and always strive towards achieving the goal of the organization. Likewise, motivation and efficacy factors have considerable influence on making a school categorized as high achievers (Bandura, 1994).

The third aspect is the physical condition of the school and the classroom equipment. This aspect is claimed to have an effect on the attainment and attitudes of students (Fraser, 1998). This is because the conduciveness of physical conditions will promote intellectual activity, promote friendship, cooperation and support as well as promote learning, growth and development of students. The fourth aspect of parental involvement in learning at school is closely related to the student's academic achievement. Chris and Rosemary (2004) found that participation and parental support help in improving learning ability among students. The fifth aspect, the school culture is believed to provide a significant role to the performance of a school as it affects the students' academic performance as that is seen in various studies. In the current study, researchers refer to Schoen and Teddlie (2008) theory, by describing the four dimensions of school culture: (1) Professional orientation, (2) Organizational structure, (3) Learning environment, and (4) Student as Focus.

However, the general features found in those studies are leadership of school principals, teacher attitudes and behaviours, and school culture. However, specifically, the actions that the principals undertake are not consistent. In addition, these studies do not relate specifically to the characteristics of effective teachers. Apart from that, although there are many school culture studies that are effective, but the findings vary. This suggests that there is no superior factor that determines the successful school; thus, this aspect encourages researchers to identify the factors contribute to effective and ineffective school in the city of Makassar.

Methodology

This study attempts to identify the leadership style of principals, attitudes and behaviours of teachers as well as the culture of the school that are practiced in the secondary schools in Makassar. This study was conducted at four state schools, two high-performing schools and two low-performing schools in Makassar City. This study used a case study approach. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and official documents. The participants of this study consist of four principals and twelve teachers. The validity of the

data was done by extending observation time, continuous observation, and triangulation, peer debriefing and peer review. Data was analysed manually by researcher.

Results of the Study

Based on observation, interviews and documents analyses, this study found that in the aspect of leadership style of school principals, the high-performing school principals emphasizes on the teachers teach and students learn by; (1) supervising teachers teaching and monitoring students learning, (2) controlling student discipline. In this regard, principals in these schools have tried to ensure that teachers teach and students learn through regular supervision and monitoring in the classrooms. However, the low-performing school principals did not practice the leadership style that emphasized on teaching and learning. Additionally, high-performing school principals ensure that the vision and mission are fully understood and practised by teachers; on the other hand, teachers of low-performing schools did not aware the vision and mission that they were supposed to practise. In the aspect of the teaching and learning process, the principals at high-performing schools focused on how the academic process should take place, the teaching and learning activities that would be implemented, and the student activities that would lead to self-development. However, in low-performing schools, it was found that principals did not emphasize on the process of teaching and learning, and they focused more on the school building and facilities. In terms of human resource management, this study found that in high-performing schools, teachers' development programmes were done frequently while low-performing schools, the teachers' development programmes were not frequently done.

In terms of attitudes and behaviour of teachers, his study found that teachers in high-performing school were highly committed. They were on time entering the class and were committed to all assignments provided. On the other hand, in low-performing schools, it was found that the teachers were not professional in carrying out their duties, and not all teachers followed the predetermined learning guidelines. In addition, they did not comply with the schedule. Similarly, the results of the current study show that the desire to serve in the schools of teachers in high-performing schools was higher than in low-performing schools as they were willing to move to better schools if any opportunity was given to them. Besides that, teachers in high-performing schools had high motivation because they had high motivation to carry out their duties due to their awareness and responsibility compared to the teachers of low-performing schools. Apart from that, the study also found that teachers at high-performing schools are efficacious and had high teaching skills despite they were dealt with problematic students. However, teachers at low-performing schools did not efficacious and often they blamed the students. Regarding to the attitudes, the findings of the current study shows that teachers teaching at high-performing schools were delightful to students while teachers teaching at low-performing schools were always boring to the pupils.

The findings of the current study demonstrate that in terms of school culture in all four sample schools, it was found that generally high-performing schools focused on education and continuous assessment as a day-to-day practice either to teachers or pupils. On the other hand, low-performing schools did not have that practice as such.

Discussion

The current study found that high-performing school principals adopted a leadership style that emphasized on the task of the concept of teachers teach, students learn, and strict on controlling students' discipline as daily practice.

The findings of this study support the organizational control theory, which stated that monitoring is one of the elements in the control aspect that should be done by the head of the organization (Mintzberg, 1973). Studies have found that lack of control has high relationship with the failure of an organization to achieve its goals (Mintzberg, 1973). This finding of the study supports the Ohio State University leadership behavioural theory, which stated that if the organization wishes to achieve the desired performance, the leader should emphasize on ensuring that the task is carried out as efficiently as possible (Halpin, 1966). In addition, the results of the study support the instructional leadership theory that encourages principals to monitor the teaching of pupils and learners and to control teaching time so as not to be used for matters other than the academic process (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

The findings of the current research are also in line with the supervisory theory in education stated that the supervision by principals or by their representatives will cause teachers to carry out tasks efficiently according to the specified and planned daily lesson plan books, which will enable pupils to focus on the goals that are to be achieved (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2007). As a result, students would focus more on the learning process in the classroom. This greater focus will affect their academic performance (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Blasé & Blasé, 1998). Similarly, Jahanian and Ebrahimi (2013) stated that the supervision of education was one of the educational activities that would lead to the growth and development of teachers' professionalism, and ultimately could increase the quality of education.

In addition, the findings of the current research supports the study conducted by Glickman et al. (1995), who stated that supervision would provide an opportunity to promote teacher competence, abstract thinking, and reflection on the teacher's own teaching methodology, which subsequently improved the efficacy of teachers. Other studies that were conducted by Glatthorn (1990), Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998), Beach and Reinhartz (2000), Nor Asikin (2008) found that supervision by principals on teacher teaching had an indirect effect on student achievement. This situation occurs because frequent monitoring will cause teachers to be more prepared to teach (Davis & Thomas, 1989). Preparatory preparation by teachers will cause pupils to focus more on learning and not wasting time. As a result, pupils' learning would be more effective, and that would in turn enhance the academic performance of the students.

Apart from that, neat preparation by the teachers before conducting teaching will make teachers more effective in their teaching, and the lessons would eventually not be boring to pupils because of the various technique of teaching were used in the classroom (Blasé & Blasé, 1998). When teachers use many techniques of teaching, pupils' interest increases, that would further increase the interest that affects pupils' academic performance and improve school performance (Glickman et al., 2001). Day et al. (2011) reported that effective school principals could enhance student learning through frequent monitoring strategies in the classrooms. Previously, Robinson et al. (2009) and Green (2010) stated

that in the context of effective schools, school principals did not play the role of an organizational leader, but the school principal was expected to serve as a teaching leader. One of the principals' responsibilities as a teaching leader includes monitoring and evaluating teachers to ensure achievement in the core business of the school, namely the teaching and learning in the classroom (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Robinson et al., 2009). In addition, Zepeda (2007) stated that the school principals' role in monitoring teaching was an important part because teaching and learning were the main function of the school. Lee et al. (2012) found that instructional leadership that had an impact on student performance improvement was due to the involvement of students with learning activities in school. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1989) stressed that the supervision of teacher teaching was one of the functions of the educational institution aimed at improving teaching and learning, and professional development of teachers. Supervision of teachers would increase the ability and degree of professionalism of teachers. This was increased in capability and professionalism, which was due to monitoring that was one form of formative evaluation aimed at maximizing the growth of teacher and teacher professional value (Weisberg et al., 2010). Formative monitoring is linked to the role of school principals as instructional leaders (Robinson, 2007). According to Zepeda (2006), continuous supervision is essential to transform the school into a learning community.

In conducting monitoring, school principals should devise lessons on teaching supervision, and the lessons would include assessment on the aspects of knowledge, teaching methods, beliefs and humanitarian values, which could serve as guidelines to principals when they would provide feedback to teachers after supervision of teaching (Neville & Garman 1999; Zepeda 2007). In addition, discussion activities after supervising the teaching of principals with supervised teachers are important so that teachers can reflect on and consider the suggestions made by principals, and consequently the results of this supervisory activity can improve the ability and competence of teachers (MacBeath, 2004).

In addition, past studies have found that monitoring is one of the effective interventions for improving teacher's competency, which in turn would benefit students and eventually help to improve student academic performance (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1989). This has been pointed out by earlier researchers, such as Purkey and Smith (1983), Hallinger and Murphy (1985), Tedlie and Stringfield (1993), Sammons et al. (1995) and Townsend (1997) Wang, et al. (2013), Yurdagul and Nukhet (2016) who summarized that supervision indirectly affected the school performance. Therefore, it is not surprising that the principals of the high-performing schools, who hold the principles of teaching emphasized that a student's learning takes place due to the regular supervision. In this regard, if a school wants to double the performance of its pupils and schools, the school principals should ensure that teachers teach and the students learn, and simultaneously conduct frequent monitoring of teacher teaching to ensure that the teachers teach the learners.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study concludes that high-performing schools adopt a leadership style that is emphasized on the principles of teacher teach and students learn through exercising supervision and developing teachers' to be more efficacious, committed, and

motivated in conducting teaching, and monitoring students' learning and their behaviours. Through this kind of management and leadership approach, the culture of teaching and learning for excellence will be emerged in the school environment, and consequently it will be benefitted the stakeholders and customers. Thus, in order to create high-performing school, the school principal should regularly supervise teachers teaching, monitoring pupils' learning, develop teachers' efficacy, commitment, motivation, and create a culture that is conducive for teaching and learning.

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