



# The Importance of Instructional Leadership in Schools

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**Abstract:** Learning leadership is very important because it contributes greatly significant impact on increasing student learning achievement, able to provide encouragement towards the school community to improve student learning achievement, focus the activities of its citizens toward achieving the school's vision, mission goals, building a learning community for its citizens and even being able to create a school as a learning school. Ironically, only 16% of the 856 school principals were found carry out the role of learning leadership. Instructional leadership is strategically used to improve the quality of learning. This leadership style is leadership oriented to improve the quality of learning, instructional leadership policy becomes the parameters of the school in improving the quality of learners' learning outcomes. It can be concluded that instructional leadership is effective in improving the quality of learning.

**Keywords:** Effectiveness; Instructional Leadership; Organization; School.

## Introduction

Humans when born into this world have the talent to become leaders, leadership can be done for themselves or others (Kusuma et al., 2023). Every aspect of life is always closely related to the foundation of leadership. If humans can lead themselves well and correctly, then they can be said to be responsible at that time, do not focus leadership on things that complicate yourself or others. However, to become a leader can also be through a formation.

Leadership discusses how leadership makes the organization effective. The effectiveness of achieving organizational goals is very dependent on the quality of assistance or cooperation created and developed by leaders, both individually and in groups inside or outside the organization. To achieve the effectiveness of the organization's goals, leadership theories and leadership styles are needed (Rahman, 2017).

The success or failure of an organization can be seen from the methods and performance of leaders at each level who have their own leadership styles. The movement, methods and development of an organization require good decisions and require leadership. Leadership is also a reason to form a reliable

team. With a good team and leadership, all forms of challenges in an organization will be easy to overcome together.

An effective leadership style can provide motivation to work productively and achieve previously designed and determined targets. A great team comes from a great leader (Hajjali et al., 2022). One leadership style that refers to relevant data to deeply understand the direction of an organization is analytical leadership. Analytical leadership is a leadership style that involves a data-based approach in every aspect of leadership. Leaders who use this approach focus on a deep understanding of data and matrices to determine the direction of the organization.

An effective leadership style is essential in motivating the team to work productively and achieve the set targets. Instructional leadership style, which focuses on providing clear direction and guidance, can play an important role in this context.

## Method

This study focuses on exploring how instructional leadership impacts various aspects of schools, such as teacher performance, student achievement, and school

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culture. Qualitative research provides in-depth understanding through direct perspectives from stakeholders, such as principals, teachers, and staff.

**Research Approach:** Phenomenological study, which aims to understand the subjective experiences and perceptions of individuals towards instructional leadership. **Reason for Choosing Qualitative:** To explore in-depth experiences, views, and perceptions, which are difficult to measure quantitatively.

## Result and Discussion

Historically, instructional leadership, also known as instructional leadership, has been known by many terms, including educational leadership, school leadership, and supervision (Bellibaş et al., 2021). Beginning in the 1960s, principals conducted classroom observations to improve the quality of learning.

When England, Australia, and North America implemented the learning inspection system in the 1970s and early 1980s, the role of the principal was very important. Educational administration textbooks in the 1970s and early 1980s focused on supervision. According to some literature, supervision can improve the quality of learning in the classroom. One of the people most responsible for curriculum development and instructional leadership is the principal (Gurr & Drysdale, 2008). Since the 1970s, the exact definition of instructional leadership has continued to be a problem. In the 1980s, instructional leadership became popular in North America. The focus of leadership is the role of the principal in learning leadership (Raharjo & Nafisah, 2006).

In 2010, the Directorate of Education Personnel of the Directorate General of Improving the Quality of Education and Education Personnel began training school principals with the use of instructional leadership. The English term "instructional" comes from the root word "instructional", which means 'teach'. As a result, "instructional" means "teaching" or the process of teaching something". This refers to a process, way, or way something is conveyed to others. The word "teaching" refers to a form of direction, showing how, explaining, verbally or in writing, so that others can understand it. In other words, instructional directs how teaching is done.

Instructional leadership, also known as learning leadership, is leadership that is centered on learning. This includes curriculum, teaching and learning processes, Assessment (assessment of learning outcomes), teacher assessment and development, excellent learning services, and building a learning community in schools (Daryanto, 2013). Because teachers are involved in activities that directly affect student growth, instructional leadership must address

teacher behavior (Akhtar, 2023). Neumerski (2013) reiterated that instructional leadership can occur directly (direct instructional leadership) or indirectly. In working with teachers and other staff to improve student learning, the principal serves as a direct instructional leader. The principal is directly responsible for instruction by doing things such as planning instruction, observing teachers, holding meetings with teachers, or selecting instructional materials.

On the other hand, the principal can also act as an indirect instructional leadership by providing convenience for the leadership of others by building conditions that support the implementation of teaching, helping to compile standards for determining subject matter, selecting teachers, and managing the internal and external environment of the school. On the other hand, Pambudi & Gunawan (2019) stated that "instructional leadership is a strong concern for teaching and learning, including professional learning by teachers according to student development.

So from the expert opinion above, it can be concluded that instructional leadership is a process of leadership carried out by someone in this case the principal through teachers to students. The process in question consists of the learning process, teaching process, teacher behavior, and curriculum. In other words, instructional leadership is leadership that focuses on improving the quality of student learning through teachers.

According to Bhengu & Mkhize (2013), effective instructional leadership has five main characteristics, namely: Organizing learning programs; Emphasizing achievement; Regularly evaluating student progress; Creating a good learning environment; and Creating learning strategies. The model of instructional leadership with four sets of forces that have the potential to influence student learning outcomes. Improving student learning outcomes is the primary goal of leadership. However, a more immediate goal is improving teaching and learning activities (Davies & Thomas, 1989; Gorton & Schneider, 1991).

Instructional leadership is the primary goal of school improvement. School improvement primarily includes improving teacher skills, better curriculum systems, improving organizational structures, and involving parents and other citizens in collaboration with the school and community. Therefore, the goal of instructional leadership can help all students develop the basic and instrumental qualities they need to face an uncertain and challenging future.

According to Scott (2016), there is a positive correlation between student achievement and instructional leadership. Scott (2016) defines five main components of instructional leadership: including setting school goals and defining the mission;

overseeing curriculum and instruction is an important part of teacher planning, implementing learning, and assessing the right approach; providing appropriate professional development; supervising and supporting teaching; and emphasizing what teachers can do to support student learning.

#### *The Role of Instructional Leadership*

The role of instructional leadership in improving teacher professionalism has long been recognized as an important factor in school organizations, especially related to its responsibility in improving the quality of learning in schools (Gorton & Schneider, 1991; Hallinger, 2003).

According to several studies on school effectiveness, effective schools require strong instructional leadership, as well as a school climate that is conducive to teaching and learning activities, high expectations for student achievement, and continuous monitoring of teacher and student progress (Rossow, 1990; Smith & Piele, 1989).

The instructional leadership is a principal who is able to play his role as: Teacher performance monitor, the principal must monitor teachers in carrying out their duties and functions; Teacher performance assessor, one of the roles of the principal who is objective and careful in evaluating the performance of implementing teachers and arranging mentoring and coaching, the role of the principal in supervising; Planning for the development of teacher professional sustainability, the role of the principal in improving teacher professionalism continuously; Coordinating teamwork, the principal coordinates the school team; and Coordinating effective learning, the principal as a learning leader in the school strives for teachers to be able to carry out effective learning.

Meanwhile, according to Hallinger (2003), effective instructional leadership includes the following: defining the school vision through exchanging opinions with the school community and ensuring that the school's vision and mission thrive in its implementation; and the principal involves all stakeholders in school management (participatory management) and provides support to students.

#### *The Importance of Instructional Leadership*

The principal has many roles that must be played together, such as educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, motivator, entrepreneur, and leader. However, the role of the principal as an educational leader is less considered. Principals are too busy with daily administrative work, meetings, and other non-academic activities. As a result, they do not have time to study curriculum updates, the teaching and learning process, and student learning outcome assessments. In

fact, the last three things are very closely related to improving the quality of the teaching and learning process, the quality of the teaching and learning process greatly influences the strengthening of student quality and the quality of the school as a whole. For this reason, it is appropriate that the role of learning leadership gets a larger portion of time compared to other roles. Other roles are not unimportant, but the role of learning leadership must be more important.

Leadership is one of the competencies that must be possessed by a principal. There are many leadership models that can be adopted and applied in various organizations/institutions, both profit and non-profit, but the most suitable leadership model to be applied in schools is instructional leadership (instructional leadership or leadership for improved learning).

Instructional leadership is very suitable to be applied in schools because the main mission of the school is to educate all students and provide them with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become successful adults in facing an unknown future and with very turbulent challenges. This mission then demands that schools as organizations must focus on learning, which includes curriculum, teaching and learning processes, and assessment of learning outcomes.

Successful instructional leadership improves teacher professionalism. High-quality students will be produced by experienced teachers. Instructional leadership is very important to be applied in schools because it contributes significantly to improving student learning achievement. Instructional leadership is also able to focus the activities of school residents to achieve the school's vision, mission, and goals by providing encouragement and direction to improve student achievement.

#### *Instructional Leadership Strategy*

Below, the author offers the implementation of instructional leadership that must be carried out by the principal, including the following: the principal plays a facilitator role, namely providing facilities. Facility providers not only provide facilities for teachers, but also help teachers improve their professional skills. In this case, the facility provider makes a schedule, plan, or facility for teacher meetings that discuss learning problems (planning, problem solving, decision making, or in-service training), providing opportunities for teachers to do training; providing a good example of preparation, implementation, and assessment of learning, including teachers must be involved in learning design to develop and implement school learning goals and objectives, learning design that is carried out together must refer to the curriculum that has been set by the government or education system when

developing learning programs; creating a culture in schools. Cultural behavior or behavior, also called "cultural behavior", refers to the cultural elements of leadership. Principals identify themselves with the values and beliefs of the school that make the school unique in their role as cultural leaders; becoming a motivator. As a motivator, the principal must have the right strategy to provide motivation to teachers; conducting supervision of teachers. One of the principal's duties is to be a supervisor, namely supervising the work carried out by educational staff. Supervision is a process specifically designed to help teachers and supervisors learn the daily tasks at school, so that they can use their knowledge and abilities to provide better services to parents of students and schools, and strive to make schools more effective learning communities; managing classes well; involving stakeholders in school management in this case the education council and school committee; and dialogue and discuss with teachers about learning quality problems and efforts to resolve them.

## Conclusions

Instructional leadership is very important to be implemented in schools because it contributes significantly to improving student learning achievement, has the ability to focus the activities of its citizens to achieve the vision, mission, and goals of the school, provides encouragement and direction to improve student achievement, and builds a learning community of its citizens. The study above shows that principals must carry out instructional leadership tasks according to their abilities.

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