

## **The Leadership Role of the Principal in Increasing Early Childhood Creativity Activities at Pertiwi Kindergarten Indralaya Ogan Ilir South Sumatra**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to identify and describe: (1) The Leadership role of the principal in increasing early childhood creativity activities; (2) Steps to achieve the goal of increasing the creativity of early childhood; (3) Supporting and inhibiting factors for early childhood creativity. The method used in this research is qualitative. Data collection techniques through observation, interviews and documentation. The data analysis technique in this study is an interactive model analysis technique with data analysis procedures covering three stages, namely: data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing, and verified through data validity techniques by triangulation. The results of this study concluded that in carrying out activities to increase the creativity of early childhood in Pertiwi Indralaya Kindergarten, the leadership role of the school principal and good cooperation from teachers and student guardians cannot be separated. The inhibiting factors of creative activities are inadequate infrastructure and the curriculum used is still using curriculum 2013.

**Keywords:** Creativity, Early Childhood, Principal.

### **A. Introduction**

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is an effort to provide stimulation and guidance to early childhood from the age of 0-6 years. Early childhood education focuses on growth and development. As in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Chapter. 1, Article 1, Point 14 states that Early Childhood Education is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth to the age of 6 years which is carried out through the provision of educational stimuli to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that children have readiness to enter further education. continue with both formal and non-formal education. Education in early childhood is basically a stimulation effort by parents, teachers and adults around the child to create an environment where children can explore by observing, imitating and experimenting which takes place repeatedly and involves all potential. and child intelligence.

At an early age, children's brain development is in the Golden Age (sensitive period) because human intelligence capacity has occurred when a child is 4 years old around 50%. Then it increases again to 80% when the child is 8 years old, and reaches a culmination point of 100% when the child is 8-18 years old (Aisyah, 2014). Therefore, childhood is a fundamental phase influencing individual development.

Experts reveal that childhood is a period of active learning, children explore an object in the environment to gain experience and knowledge. Active learning (active learning) is learning that aims to integrate all aspects of development and provide opportunities for children to be able to explore their environment so that the child's learning process becomes more optimal (Masitoh, 2007).

The advancement of science and technology results in new changes and demands in all fields, including in the field of education. Such as potential human resources in facing challenges in the future. To overcome this problem, it is necessary to improve the quality of education. Improving the quality of education, especially in kindergarten, cannot be separated from the learning process activities.

The learning process in early childhood education has aspects that will be developed. Starting from the aspects of moral and religious values, physical-motor, social-emotional, language, cognitive and artistic. Every human being has creative potential. To be able to develop their creative potential, a creative effort is needed to grow optimally in comfortable and pleasant conditions.

As parents or educators need to develop and provide positive stimulation so that children can be creative. Creative children can be seen from the behavior they do, which is active in all activities, never silent and always wants to move because of their curiosity about something they have just seen, has its own characteristics in terms of talents, interests, learning styles and likes things that are challenging, inquisitive, and has very short concentrations and gets bored quickly.

In fact, it is often found that children's creativity is hampered by the limitations of the children's play environment, the lack of freedom for children to play and the lack of play facilities for children, especially nowadays the use of gadgets has become a loyal friend and dominates children's playing time so that children cannot think creatively. In addition, there are some parents who forbid their children to play, they assume that playing will result in their child's hands getting dirty and are afraid that their child will get hurt by doing activities that they are not used to doing. So that many children feel pressured to participate in school activities, because learning in Kindergarten is structured and formal, so there are fewer gaps for children to play while learning.

Even though now the government has launched a free learning program. Independent learning itself has a meaning is an approach that is taken so that students can choose subjects of interest. This is done so that students can optimize their talents and make the best contribution in working for the nation.

In an educational institution, especially in kindergarten, the role of the principal in developing early childhood creativity through various games is very important. Given their duties and functions in providing facilities and infrastructure, organizing and preparing educational teaching aids, and inviting teachers to empower recycled materials as learning tools.

To overcome the above, Indralaya Ogan Ilir Kindergarten Pertiwi provides various learning media to help develop the creativity of early childhood according to the principle of playing while learning and learning while playing. The function of play for early childhood can be used as capital which, if properly implemented, will help develop aspects of child development, both social-emotional, cognitive, language and artistic development, and can develop children's creativity.

### **The Principal's Leadership Role**

Wahjosumidjo (2013) quotes a statement from Tannembaum, Weshler & Massarik leadership is interpersonal influence in a situation, and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal which means that leadership is interpersonal influence carried out in a situation, and direction, through the communication process, towards achieving certain goals or objectives.

In relation to the educational mission, leadership can be interpreted as the principal's efforts to lead, influence, and provide guidance to educational personnel as subordinates so that educational and teaching objectives can be achieved through a series of planned activities. Leadership is the behavior of an individual who leads the activities of a group to a goal to be achieved together (shared goal). The functions of leaders in schools include: helping groups formulate educational goals to be achieved which serve as guidelines for determining the activities to be carried out. Several leadership functions in organizations including: motivation and appreciation, honesty and integrity as models/exemplars, coordination in an atmosphere of participatory leadership, conflict management, decision making.

The ability to lead educational institutions is influenced by various factors, including having leadership qualities, good vision and mission going forward, communication skills, intellectual abilities, honesty, a great sense of responsibility towards the institution they lead. Thus, educational institutions need effective leadership that is

able to direct and foster organizational and administrative behavior (Noruzy et al., 2013).

The leader's task is to make sure that the group he leads can realize the goals as well as possible in productive cooperation and in whatever circumstances the group faces (McMullen, & Adobor, 2011). From the definition of leadership above, it can be concluded that leadership is an art or the ability of a leader to manage, foster and direct and be able to influence his subordinates so that the planned goals are achieved. The role of the school principal as explained by Ediger (2014) includes the following:

1. The Role of the Principal as an Educator. The principal plays a role in character building which is based on educator values including: (1) The ability to teach/guidance students; (2) Ability to guide teachers; (3) Ability to develop teachers; and (4) Ability to follow developments in the field of education.
2. The Role of the Principal as a Manager. The school principal plays a role in managing resources to achieve institutional goals effectively and efficiently, namely: (1) Ability to develop programs; (2) Ability to organize school organizations; (3) Ability to mobilize teachers; (4) Ability to optimize educational facilities.
3. The Role of the Principal as an Administrator. The school principal plays a role in managing resources to achieve institutional goals effectively and efficiently, namely: (1) Ability to develop programs; (2) Ability to organize school organizations; (3) Ability to mobilize teachers; (4) Ability to optimize educational facilities.
4. The Role of the Principal as a Supervisor. The principal plays a role in efforts to help develop the professionalism of teachers and other education personnel which includes; (1) Ability to develop educational supervision programs; (2) Ability to carry out supervision programs; and (3) the ability to utilize the results of supervision.
5. The Role of the Principal as a Leader. The Principal plays a role in influencing people to work together in achieving a common vision and goals, which include: (1) having a strong personality; (2) Ability to provide clean, transparent and professional services; and (3) Understanding the conditions of the school community.
6. The Role of the Principal as an Innovator. The principal is a dynamic and creative person who is not stuck in a routine. Ability to implement the latest policies in the field of education.
7. The Role of the Principal as a Motivator. The principal must be able to provide encouragement so that all components of education can develop professionally through: (1) Ability to regulate the (physical) work environment; (2) the ability to regulate the work/study atmosphere; (3) The ability to make decisions for school members

8. The Role of the Principal as an Entrepreneur. The principal's role is to see opportunities and take advantage of opportunities for the benefit of the school through: (1) The ability to create innovations that are useful for school development; (2) Ability to work hard to achieve effective results; and (3) Strong motivating ability to achieve success in carrying out main tasks and functions.

The main function of the principal as an educational leader is to create a teaching and learning situation so that teachers can teach and students can learn well (Chirichello, 2010). In schools, discipline is widely used to control students' desired behavior so that school tasks can run optimally (Juniarni, 2020). Smith & Squires (2016) states that the leadership role of the school principal is a very important factor in an organization because most of the success and failure of an organization is determined by leadership in the organization.

Furthermore, Mariyanah et al (2021) explains that the ability of the principal through his role in carrying out tasks is to convince and move others to want to work together under his leadership as a team to achieve a certain goal. Furthermore Zaini & Syafaruddin (2020) that the role of school principals in improving the quality of education has a positive impact in an organization. Whether the role played by the principal is good or bad will have an impact on the educational order in the school he leads.

This is confirmed by Kotter (2017) that in carrying out the duties of the principal acts as a good leader, able to carry out an activity in guiding a group in such a way that that goal is achieved. Based on the description above, the role of the principal in carrying out his duties as a school leader is part of the principal's supervision which must be carried out in accordance with the school's vision and mission.

### **Early Childhood Creativity**

Motivation for Early Childhood Education is the most appropriate time to develop creativity. Therefore, it is necessary to have game and learning programs that can nurture and develop children's creative potential. The term creativity itself comes from English, namely from the basic word "to create". Creative means creating or creating something new that has never been made or created by someone else.

Creativity is an experience in expressing and actualizing individual identity in an integrated form between oneself, nature and other people. Creativity is the ability to create something new.

Creativity is a stage of thinking that is at the highest level. Creativity has special stages of thinking and requires support so that it can develop optimally. Creativity

has an important role in the progress of human civilization because creativity provides solutions to problems in human life (Listyowati, 2021). Implicitly the teacher's work motivation appears through: responsibility in doing work, achievements achieved, self-development, independence in acting. The role of a teacher in designing or compiling teaching materials greatly determines the success of the learning and learning process through a teaching material (Juniarni, 2022).

Furthermore, Benedek et al, (2012) explains the notion of creativity is an ability that reflects fluency, flexibility, and originality in thinking and the ability to elaborate on an idea. Furthermore, creativity can occur when individuals have interactions with their surroundings. An environment that makes individuals interact actively in an effort to solve the problems faced by the individual himself.

The explanation above implies that creativity is a person's ability to find answers to a problem from the available information. In addition to creativity viewed as a product that is the result of the interaction of the individual and the environment, it can also be viewed from a personal (personal) perspective, as stated by Soemarjan (1987) who argued that: a creative person begins with the ability of the individual himself to create something new. Usually, a creative individual has an independent attitude. He is not bound by the values or general norms that apply in his field of expertise (Soemarjan, 1987).

This understanding illustrates that when viewed from a personal perspective, creativity must have an independent attitude so that it is able to create something new without being bound by the values or norms that apply according to its area of expertise. One of the efforts to develop children's creativity is to provide a good and appropriate stimulus, namely learning by playing or learning while playing where every material that will be given must be packaged in the form of a game. The ability of children to determine and master roles and styles and patterns of thought has several levels, namely, children who like to research and are always curious, play, and be creative. Some things that need to be considered in teaching children to be creative children are: (Abdussalam, 2005)

1. Creative people have their own style or way of being creative. Like using the senses as a method of collecting work steps. So that it will depend on him the sharpness of feeling that will tell him about things that are appropriate and not suitable in dealing with certain conditions.
2. The senses are the first means held by children and humans in general in knowing various processes and relationships between creative work.
3. Must open oneself to the outside world in order to feel part of it. It can make children closer to the things that surround them.

4. Must open oneself to the internal world. It can make children respect or consider events in the past, present, and future in a regular way and without being burdensome. Indirectly it can also make children more energetic which opens opportunities for them to discover something more.
5. Must align himself with something bigger, love and marry him, so that he is able to play a role as actual behavior in life.
6. A child should have the determination to work with all his strength and confidence.

Creativity in children needs to be nurtured and developed. Because with creativity they can become creative individuals (Juniarni, 2019). The creative process will only occur if it is raised through problems that spur five kinds of creative behavior as follows:

1. Fluency, namely the ability to express similar ideas to solve a problem.
2. Flexibility, namely the ability to generate various kinds of ideas to solve a problem outside the usual categories.
3. Originality, namely the ability to provide a unique or extraordinary response.
4. Elaboration (detail), namely the ability to state the direction of ideas in detail to make the idea a reality.
5. Sensitivity, namely the sensitivity to catch and produce problems in response to a situation.

From the several definitions of creativity above, it can be concluded that creativity is a way of creating new ideas or ideas. Especially for early childhood who are curious and always create something according to their wishes and imagination for solving problems.

## **B. Methods**

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach through the perspective of education science with participatory observation to describe, describe, explore and describe the leadership role of school principals in increasing the creativity of early childhood.

The data obtained is in the form of primary and secondary data. Researchers used several methods in collecting data including: a. observation method, Observation is as experience and systematic recording of the symptoms that appear on the object of research. Observations and records are made of objects where events occur or are taking place so that the observer is with the object being investigated (Hadi and Haryono, 2005). This method is the first step that researchers take by observing directly to research locations regarding the role of school principal leadership in increasing early childhood creativity; b. interview method, Interview is a meeting of

two people to exchange information and ideas through question and answer, so that meaning can be constructed in a particular topic (Sugiyono, 2013).

The interview method in this study aims to obtain various information about the leadership role of school principals in increasing early childhood creativity; and c. documentation method, this method is a way of collecting data that produces important records related to the problem under study, so that data will be complete, valid and not based on estimates (Basrowi & Suwandi, 2008). Research results will also be more credible if they are supported by photographs or existing academic and artistic writings (Sugiyono, 2013). Therefore, to obtain written data optimally, the authors use this documentation method with the aim of collecting written data about the leadership role of school principals in increasing early childhood creativity.

Data analysis is a series of activities for studying, classifying, systematizing, interpreting and verifying data so that a phenomenon has social, academic and scientific value. Data analysis for qualitative research begins already in the field (Suprayogo & Tobroni, 2003). The data analysis used in this study is the Miles and Huberman model. The data were analyzed through several stages, as stated by Miles & Huberman (1992) that the activities in data analysis, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/ verification (Sugiyono, 2013).

### **C. Results and Discussion**

Based on the results of the research that has been done, it can be concluded that the leadership role of the school principal in increasing the creativity of early childhood is as follows: The principal has played a role in increasing the creativity of early childhood in Pertiwi Kindergarten by motivating teachers to always innovate using used materials and natural materials to make APE (Educative Game Tools), and motivate teachers in teaching and learning activities using child-centered learning methods namely PAIKEM learning (Active, Innovative, Creative, Effective and Fun Learning).

The role of the school principal in determining steps to increase early childhood creativity is facilitating teachers to take part in workshops, seminars and training activities as a deepening of early childhood knowledge and holding parenting for parents of students with the aim of broadening horizons and establishing collaboration in educating children.

Factors supporting school principals in increasing early childhood creativity are the teacher qualifications of Pertiwi Indralaya Kindergarten teachers, S1 PGPAUD, so that introducing learning methods is not too difficult. The next supporting factor is that large classrooms allow children to learn more freely and play both individually

and in groups. While the inhibiting factor for creative activities is inadequate infrastructure. Many APE (Educative Game Tools) have been damaged and reduced and the curriculum used still uses Curriculum 13 and does not use the independent learning curriculum.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The results of this study concluded that in carrying out activities to increase the creativity of early childhood in Pertiwi Indralaya Kindergarten, the leadership role of the school principal and good cooperation from teachers and student guardians cannot be separated. The inhibing factors of creative activities are inadequate infrastructure and the curriculum used is still using curriculum 2013.

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