

How does the principal's policy respond to professional learning during the COVID-19 pandemic?

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate the policies carried out by school principals so that learning continues professionally during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research was conducted with a phenomenological approach in a qualitative descriptive type involved 33 teachers as respondents who were interviewed in depth. This study focuses on school readiness, internal and external factors that hinder online learning, and the role of principals in junior high school. The results of this study are as follows: first, the determinants of school readiness in facing online learning in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic are student readiness, teacher readiness, infrastructure readiness and management readiness. Second, internal and external factors are obstacles for the school, but do not turn a blind eye and try to overcome them. Third, the role of the principal starts from the technology and media used, teacher empowerment, future programmes, training and collaboration with parties outside the school, where the principal's role is to maximise the abilities, including the potential of teachers to remain professional. This research can be piloted at the high school level or elementary school level.

Keywords: Policy, principal, online learning, COVID-19 pandemic, technology.

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1. Introduction

The development of the world of education today is so rapid, in line with technological advances and globalisation that changes in the world of education cannot be avoided, both in terms of curriculum, systems, and so on, and must also adapt to the times. With the demands and needs of the community, educational institutions must be able to prepare themselves by improving the quality and quantity of education (Guerriero, 2017).

Schools, as social organisations, are designed to contribute to improving the community's quality of life. Efforts to improve school quality need to be organised, regulated, managed and empowered, so that the learning process in schools runs smoothly (Hidayat, 2021; Park et al., 2019). The principal, as a leader, has an active role and is always influential in all matters relating to the school and the needs of staff, teachers and students in the school.

The presence of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 has shifted the learning system from offline to online (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Zhafira et al., 2020). This condition demands hard work and serious attention from the principal as the main person in charge of successful learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia became the winner with the main contribution to realising the quality of learning through the establishment of policies to implement restrictions on the spread of COVID-19 and also remain committed to realising the quality of education.

This written policy through Law Number 6 of 2018 concerning Health Quarantine was later confirmed by Government Regulation Number 21 of 2020 and Regulation of the Minister of Health Number 9 of 2020 concerning Large-Scale Social Restrictions. Online learning is carried out thoroughly in every educational institution in Indonesia and worldwide in an effort to break the chain of the spread of COVID-19 and maintain the security and safety of students and educators.

According to Sumadi and Ismanto (2021), the current education crisis is not completely bad for schools. It can even motivate schools to be better in the future. Currently, the demands of 21st-century learning emphasise the use of technology effectively and efficiently at every level of education, considering that the world has entered the industrial era 4.0 and will move towards 5.0 (Rifa et al., 2021).

Along with the outbreak of the pandemic, schools must carry out digital transformation by using various applications, such as facilities that can be used as online learning media, including e-learning, Zoom, Google Classroom, YouTube and social media WhatsApp (Creemers et al., 2013; Siahaan, 2020). It is in accordance with the direction of the Ministry of Education and Culture, which decided to postpone all school activities, online learning, or learning from home, as submitted through Circular Letter 4 of 2020, concerning the Implementation of Education during the Corona Virus Disease.

An important point in this circular is the cancellation of the 2020 national exam. Globally, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, schools and universities are closed and locked down. Teachers, students and lecturers are forced to conduct online learning while technological capabilities are very limited. The government has made an appeal for the learning process to be carried out from home using technology and internet media.

Simultaneous online learning begins at all levels, from kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, senior high school and vocational high school to university (Shahzad et al., 2021). Principals show less responsibility for handling the convenience and orderliness of the online learning environment. According to Firmansyah & Kardina (2020), digital facilities and infrastructure support a

sense of comfort and security for teachers, students and parents at home in responding to online learning.

The principal finally plays a role in coordinating all school activities, plus the obligation to teach, because the principal is a teacher who has an additional task to become the principal (Lazwardi, 2016). The principal is the main key to the success of the school's progress. However, the weakness of online learning is that teachers are not facilitated with technological skills through workshops, training, webinars and others. The principal has no problem sending teachers with school fees to attend training. Alternatively, teachers with their own initiative to improve professional competence consciously pay themselves to attend training (Mukhtar, 2015). On the one hand, the teacher's weakness is a lack of confidence to carry out novelties in online learning. For example, making online learning plans, online learning media in the form of PowerPoint animation and fun learning videos for students to overcome boredom during online learning, certainly felt heavily by educators and students.

However, educators must be innovative in delivering material through online learning media, especially for educators. It also needs to be adjusted to the level of education in their lives. The impact will cause physical and psychological (mental) pressure (Basar, 2021). Based on the literature used, not many have studied the role of school principals in implementing online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the purpose of this research is to investigate the principal's policy in an effort to keep learning professionally.

2. Methods

Researchers use qualitative research methods with a narrative approach, which means to tell. Disclosure of the focus of qualitative research is holistic (complete and inseparable), so that qualitative research determines its research based on the social situation under study as a whole which includes aspects of places, actors and activities that interact synergistically. The implementation of this activity will start from the preparation stage and observation to the completion stage. The implementation of this activity began in October 2021 until January 2022. The research location is at the junior high school level in East Kalimantan, Indonesia.

3. Results

From the study results, 33 teachers (81.8%) agreed that the principal was quite good at managing the direction and supervision of all activities, while 18.2% strongly agreed. It shows that it is true that the principal is quite good in terms of managing the direction and supervision of all activities and planning in schools. It can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

The Role of the Principal in Carrying Out Supervision

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly disagree	0	0
2	Disagree	0	0
3	Agree	27	81.8
4	Strongly agree	6	18.2
Total		33	100

Principal's internal management in schools includes libraries, laboratories, other physical buildings, sources of funds, implementation of educational evaluations and the relationship between teachers and students can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2

Principal Management System

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly disagree	0	0
2	Disagree	1	3
3	Agree	28	84.8
4	Strongly agree	4	12.1
Total		33	100

The highest number of percentages agreed (84.8%) and 12.1% strongly agreed. It shows that it is true that the principal has good internal management in schools, including libraries, laboratories, other physical buildings, sources of funds, implementation of educational evaluations and the relationship between teachers and students, which can be seen with a total of 96.9%. Only 3% stated disagree.

Furthermore, the principal in managerial functions is well implemented externally, including relationships with parties outside the school, such as the community, education councils, education offices and other parties. During the current pandemic, schools are in contact with outside parties such as villages and health centres in vaccine procurement activities. The results of respondents' answers can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3

Principals in Managerial Functions

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly disagree	0	0
2	Disagree	0	0
3	Agree	27	81.8
4	Strongly agree	6	18.2
Total		33	100

After being classified into percentages, the authors conclude that the highest percentage (81.8%) agreed and 18.2% strongly agreed. It shows that it is true that the principal of management schools externally includes relationships with parties outside the school, such as the community, the education board, the education office and other parties.

Related to school facilities and infrastructure, the results of respondents' answers can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4

School Facilities and Infrastructure

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
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1	Strongly disagree	2	6.1
2	Disagree	3	9.1
3	Agree	25	75.8
4	Strongly agree	3	9.1
Total		33	100

Table 5

Fulfilment of Physical School Infrastructure

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly disagree	1	3
2	Disagree	0	0
3	Agree	29	87.9
4	Strongly agree	3	9.1
Total		33	100

Based on Table 5, schools fulfilled school infrastructure facilities physically, including hygiene and health equipment, sterile classrooms and according to regulations. Besides physical, the school also provides digital facilities and infrastructure. Table 6 shows the results of respondents' answers regarding the school's fulfilment of the need for digital school infrastructure for online learning.

Table 6

Fulfilment of Digital School Infrastructure

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly disagree	0	0
2	Disagree	2	6.1
3	Agree	27	81.8
4	Strongly agree	4	12.1
Total		33	100

Based on Table 6, schools meet the needs of school infrastructure digitally, such as Zoom, Google Classroom and Google Meet for online learning needs. After being classified into percentages (Table 6), the authors conclude that the highest percentage (81.8%) agreed and 12.1% strongly agreed. It shows that it is true that schools meet the needs of school infrastructure digitally, such as Zoom and Google Classroom for online learning needs (showing a very high value of 93.9%).

Teachers who often have permission to teach will also affect the learning process. The results of respondents' answers regarding this can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7

Teachers' Inactivity

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly disagree	0	0
2	Disagree	1	3
3	Agree	28	84.8

4	Strongly agree	4	12.1
Total		33	100

After being classified into percentages, the authors conclude that the highest percentage (84.8%) agreed and 12.1% strongly agreed. It shows that it is true that the inactivity of teachers who often permit affects the learning process much as 96.9%. It shows that the activeness of the teacher greatly affects the smooth running of learning activities to the fullest.

In addition to the teachers' inactivity in learning activities, the lack of mastery of online media also affected the online learning process. Respondents' answers can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8

Mastery of Online Media by Teachers.

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly disagree	0	0
2	Disagree	0	0
3	Agree	28	84.8
4	Strongly agree	5	15.2
Total		33	100

After being classified in percentages, the authors conclude that the highest percentage (84.8%) agreed and 15.2% strongly agreed. It shows that the mastery of online media by the teacher will affect the online learning process. In addition to mastering the material, understanding the material taught by the teacher will also affect students' enthusiasm to participate in learning. Respondents' answers regarding this can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9

Understanding of the Material Taught by the Teacher

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly disagree	0	0
2	Disagree	2	6.1
3	Agree	25	75.8
4	Strongly agree	6	18.2
Total		33	100

After being classified into percentages, the authors conclude that the highest percentage (75.8%) agreed and 18.2% strongly agreed. It shows that it is true that not understanding the learning material causes a lack of enthusiasm in participating in online learning, which is very high, as much as 94%, and this greatly affects the students in terms of absorbing the learning material provided by the teacher.

Another thing that affects online learning is the availability of Internet networks in the area where students live. Most students live in areas where there is no internet connection. In this regard, respondents' answers can be seen in Table 10.

Table 10

Internet Network Conditions in Student Areas

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly disagree	0	0
2	Disagree	0	0
3	Agree	28	84.4
4	Strongly agree	5	15.6
Total		33	100

After being classified into percentages, the authors conclude that the highest percentage (84.4%) agreed and 15.6% strongly agreed. It shows that it is true that some students are in areas where there is no Internet signal, and if they add up, it is 100%.

Coordinating parents with the school will also affect the online learning process. Respondents' answers to this can be seen in Table 11.

Table 11

Coordination of Parents with the School Regarding the Online Learning Process

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly disagree	0	0
2	Disagree	0	0
3	Agree	28	84.4
4	Strongly agree	5	15.6
Total		33	100

After being classified into percentages, the authors conclude that the highest percentage is the agree option (81.8%) and the lowest is strongly agree (12.1%). It shows that the lack of coordination between parents and the school affects online learning. However, 3% of the respondents disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed.

3.1. School readiness indicators

The below points can be discussed based on the research results above, particularly those relating to school readiness indicators. The authors divide school readiness indicators into five focuses, namely student readiness, teacher readiness, infrastructure readiness, management and facilities and infrastructure.

3.1.1 Student readiness

Readiness is an important point in implementing the teaching and learning process, where students are required to be ready and not ready to face online learning, especially during a pandemic like today.

Table 12

Students' Readiness to Face Changes in the Online Learning Process

No.	Answer	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Very unprepared	3	9.0
2	Not ready	7	21.2

3	Ready	23	78.8
4	Very ready	0	0
Total		33	100

Students' readiness to face changes in the online learning process reached 78.8% and not ready reached 21.2%. It is an obstacle, but with the habituation that has been done successfully, problems can be faced and controlled safely by supporting the readiness of teachers to adapt gradually and preparing for learning well by utilising media and technology.

Improving the quality of learning during the pandemic can also be done if school facilities and infrastructure are properly met, such as non-physical infrastructure such as the use of cell phones, WhatsApp groups, Google Form and Google Classroom, and this is related to the readiness of good school management from the principal. Readiness is the overall condition of a person that makes him ready to respond in a certain way to a situation. The willingness to respond or react, which arises from within a person and is also related to maturity, needs to be considered in the learning process because if students learn and are ready, the learning outcomes will be better (Jamal, 2020). The same thing was conveyed by Handayani et al. (2020): students need technological readiness, physical readiness, the readiness of learning resources, the readiness to access the internet and the readiness to manage study time at home. When compared with research conducted by researchers, of the 21.2% of participants who were not ready to go to school, they tried their best to help students who were not ready with assistance in the form of mobile phones, data packages for all students, vaccine assistance and habituation, to prepare students for learning programmes.

3.1.2. Teacher readiness

The readiness of teachers in the teaching and learning process, especially in the online learning process, is fundamental because it affects not only the quality of the lessons provided but also student behaviour. Good teaching preparation will help direct student behaviour by responding to the teaching materials provided and the ongoing learning atmosphere.

Based on the results of research that has been obtained regarding indicators of student readiness from the results of interviews and questionnaires that have been distributed to respondents, researchers conducted observations and interviews with resource persons and informants at different times. The authors conclude that teachers are in the early phase of a pandemic. Of course, they are surprised, but teachers prepare for online learning with a gradual adjustment process, and by preparing for learning well, the teacher can apply existing technology and media through refraction and practice.

The actions taken by the teacher in the learning process are, of course, based on the directions and policies taken from the meeting and followed up together according to the policy results of the meeting. Online learning requires readiness in terms of human resources, both teachers and students (Prabowo et al., 2020). Wote and Sabarua (2020) explain that teachers' readiness in the teaching and learning process, especially in the online learning process, is fundamental because it affects not only the quality of the lessons given but also student behaviour. Good teaching preparation will help direct student behaviour by responding to the teaching materials provided and the ongoing learning atmosphere.

3.1.3. Infrastructure readiness

Infrastructure readiness is the readiness of schools to provide support for learning activities such as buildings, tables, chairs, blackboards, laboratories, field libraries etc. Based on the results of the

research that has been obtained, junior high schools' needs for non-physical infrastructures such as buildings, tables, chairs, blackboards, laboratories, field libraries and others can be said to have been fulfilled. Moreover, in the use of non-physical infrastructures such as the use of mobile phones, our group, Google Form and Google Classroom have also prepared 75% of the total number of students. Because in the use of non-physical infrastructure there are external obstacles such as not all students having mobile devices, network problems and the location of houses in areas with no signal.

Improving the quality of schools can only be carried out if school infrastructure is properly fulfilled as mandated by Government Regulation Number 13 of 2015 concerning National Education Standards. In the implementation of online learning in the COVID-19 era, the need for school physical infrastructure is less needed because online learning uses non-physical infrastructure, as stated by Priyono et al. (2013) that one of the factors for facilities and infrastructure in online learning is the Internet, which is accompanied by the ownership of supporting information technology devices in the form of computers and laptops.

The data package becomes the main weapon if learning uses mobile media to facilitate communication through the WhatsApp group, Google Form and Google Classroom. Improving the quality of schools can only be done if school infrastructure is properly fulfilled as mandated in Government Regulation Number 13 of 2015 concerning National Education Standards.

In efforts to overcome the obstacles that exist in the application of online learning, the junior high school has implemented a solution to overcome them by providing mobile phone assistance to economically disadvantaged children and providing quota assistance for all students. Recently, the school has allowed face-to-face meetings for students whose homes are in areas where there is no signal. Moreover, face-to-face meetings are conducted using sessions and the number of participants is limited.

3.1.4. Management

Management is the act of managing school activities that are carried out effectively and efficiently to improve school performance in achieving educational goals, in this case, the goal of creating online learning and learning activities in the COVID-19 pandemic era. Based on the results of the research that researchers have obtained, it can be seen that during the COVID-19 pandemic, school principals are ready in terms of school management. The principal plays an important role in the school's internal and external management.

The principal is always responsible for showing school performance to achieve educational goals, such as in school internal management. During the COVID-19 pandemic, school principals made improvements in rehabilitating classrooms, repairing libraries and reading rooms, and turning warehouses into computer laboratories. In external management, the principal has a relationship with the parents of students and has a relationship with outside parties such as villages, health centres in vaccine planning and so on.

It is important to implement school management and be responsible for implementing education for the community. Schools, as educational institutions, must be able to show the quality of their services and educational outcomes to the community. It is so that the community gives hope and trust to schools to send their sons and daughters to school and is ready to finance their educational operations.

Educational management cannot be separated from process management to achieve organisational goals by carrying out activities from four main functions: planning, organising, mobilising and

controlling. Management is needed everywhere people work together to achieve goals. As one component of the organisation, managers occupy positions that are responsible for organisational behaviour and have a very important and decisive role; even the success of an organisation is very dependent on managers making decisions (Pohan, 2018).

Principals are required to be optimal in carrying out their role as school leaders. The obstacle that causes the management of learning services to be not optimal during this pandemic is the aspect of the principal's leadership in managing teachers and education personnel and similarly aspects of teacher leadership in managing online learning services.

3.1.5. Facilities and infrastructure

Facilities and infrastructure are all components that directly and indirectly support the passage of an educational process and the achievement of education's goals. Infrastructure is an indirect tool to achieve goals in education. In the research results that have been obtained regarding indicators of student readiness from the results of interviews and questionnaires that have been distributed to respondents, researchers conducted observations and interviews with resource persons and informants at the right time.

The junior high school facilities and infrastructure are adequate, so the components and tools needed to support the educational process, especially the educational process during the COVID-19 pandemic, are sufficient, according to the results of the questionnaire distributed, reaching a high percentage of 93.9%. Face-to-face learning facilities and infrastructure use facilities including hygiene and health equipment, sterile classrooms and, according to regulations, personal lockers and special shoe racks, school health facilities and online platforms, while non-physical schools use physical facilities such as cell phones, software tools in the form of WhatsApp, and special flat rooms and school websites, as well as WhatsApp and Zoom.

With the existence of complete facilities and infrastructure as well as adequate human resources, by utilising good facilities and infrastructure, the school will become the school that the community dreams of. It is in line with the statement of Rahayu and Sutama (2016), which states that the management of educational facilities or infrastructure is to regulate and maintain educational facilities and infrastructure in order to make an optimal contribution, and the course of the educational process is expected to produce good activities.

Facilities and infrastructure are very important supporting factors in the world of education and the lives of teaching staff. Education will never run well without adequate facilities and infrastructure. Facilities and infrastructure will not be fulfilled without management carried out in related educational institutions, and with the management of educational facilities and infrastructure, they will be empowered for the learning process (Nasrudin & Maryadi, 2019).

The educational process does require facilities or equipment, according to interests. The activity carried out to monitor school infrastructure is evaluation, according to a statement from Manurung et al. (2020), which states that the process of evaluating facilities and infrastructure is the process of collecting and presenting information for consideration in making decisions on the facilities and infrastructure used. So it can be concluded that analysing educational facilities and infrastructure is the best step to analyse and evaluate problems in order to fulfil the needs of school facilities and infrastructure.

3.2. Factors inhibiting online learning

3.2.1. *Internal factors*

Internal factors are factors from within that affect a person's performance in achieving processes and results. Based on field observations and the results of interviews with respondents, internal factors are also very influential on the smoothness of online learning. Based on the results of research that has been obtained regarding indicators of internal inhibiting factors from interviews and questionnaires that have been distributed to respondents, researchers conducted observations and interviews with resource persons and informants at different times. The authors conclude that teachers and staff internal factors that hinder online learning are based on age, skills and media mastery, and some old teachers are technology stutterers who are not used to using electronic devices such as cell phones and laptops.

Some factors hinder the smooth running of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic at junior high school. Ramanta and Widayanti (2020) state that a person's health greatly affects his learning outcomes. A person's learning process will be disrupted if his health is disturbed. Being healthy means the whole body and its parts are in good condition and free from disease. A person's learning process will be disrupted when he gets tired quickly, lacks enthusiasm, becomes easily dizzy and often feels sleepy. These can affect learning achievement.

In general, students assume that the internal factor that hinders online learning is that they are not used to doing online learning, resulting in a lack of enthusiasm and lack of understanding the material and network problems. These impacts also affect the processes and plans that schools have prepared to achieve national education goals.

As a form of overcoming this, the school held training for teachers, staff and school administrative staff, as well as for students who are currently studying at the junior high school level, starting with a joint deliberation to discuss preparation for online learning. Then a meeting was held and followed up by giving training, workshops, coaching and guidance. Habituation is also applied to adapt to becoming more familiar with online learning.

The statement above is in line with the opinion of Yanti and Sumianto (2021) that in the distance learning system, students become less active in expressing their aspirations and thoughts, thus triggering boredom in learning. Students who experience boredom while learning will make progress in their learning outcomes. Ramanta and Widayanti (2020) state that to overcome boredom, a mover is needed to move students so that they are enthusiastic about learning and that they can have learning achievements. Students are also given direction and guidance in participating in online learning by their homeroom teachers. Habituation and motivation in online learning activities are also given so that students get used to it even though there are some obstacles.

3.2.2. *External factors*

External factors are factors that come from outside. These factors can come from the surrounding environment, including the closest people. The external factors that trigger the emergence of problems in online learning in junior high schools such as location factors, economic factors, environmental factors, network factors, quota factors and electronic media.

Based on the results of research that has been obtained regarding indicators of external inhibiting factors from the results of interviews and questionnaires that have been distributed to respondents, researchers conducted observations and interviews with resource persons and informants at different times, and the author conclude that the problems that arise from the external factors above are the location factor.

Some students are in areas where there is no signal; from an economic point of view, there are some students whose families are economically unable to buy mobile phones for online learning, from the environmental factor of the school being in hilly areas and far from housing, the data package quota factor and networks that appear are often lost. It hampers the smoothness of online learning at junior high schools, and it can be said that online learning activities are less efficient because they do not cover all students (Bandura, 1997; Elmore, 2002).

External factors are also an obstacle for students carrying out the online learning process. The role of parents is very important because, while at home, parents play a role in monitoring student activities. Therefore, parents must know the activities of students at home during the online learning process. In addition, learning facilities also affect the online learning process, especially online learning using Internet facilities and quotas (Ramanta & Widayanti, 2020; Van Gasse et al., 2020).

Responding to the obstacles that occur, the school adapts and tries to overcome various obstacles that become challenges. Especially for students who are in the blank spot area, the school facilitates the form of offline assignments that require students to come to school to take assignments and materials to the picket teacher who is on guard, and then do it at home, while students who do not have cell phones and are economically disadvantaged are given help.

Assistance in the form of school cell phones is a form of school attention for students in this emergency. Network problems that often cause school disruptions act to provide data package assistance to all students. Through the attention of schools to overcome the problem of online learning, it is a mandatory action that must be taken during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.

3.3. The role of the principal in carrying out online learning

3.3.1. The role of the principal in the use of technology and media in online learning

Utilisation of technology and media in online learning in junior high school students is by mobile phones, laptops and computers generally, while teachers use laptops. Meanwhile, school computers are used by students who do not have cell phones and whose homes are in areas where there is no signal, so sometimes they come to school and use computers in the computer lab.

Based on the results of research that has been obtained regarding indicators of school principal readiness from the results of interviews and questionnaires that have been distributed to respondents, researchers conducted observations and interviews with resource persons and informants at different times, and the authors conclude that the use of computers is also often used for children. Conduct online exams and school computers used in the 2021 National ASSMEN online exams. The exams are held in turns and sessions.

The role of learning media in the teaching and learning process is an integral part that cannot be separated from the world of education. Learning media is anything that can be used to channel the sender's message to the recipient so that it can stimulate students' thoughts, feelings, concerns and interests to learn (Tafonao, 2018).

Achieving the goals that have been set in the learning process depends on the delivery strategy and use of media (Putra, 2013). The implementation of learning must be well planned in order to provide the right service for students. One of the components supporting the achievement of learning objectives is the use of learning media. Meanwhile, according to Budiyo (2020), educators' assumptions about the media determine their attitude towards using media for learning.

Learning media becomes useful if used appropriately by teachers when the implementation of learning begins with accuracy in planning, using media and evaluating. The technological revolution in junior high schools is also taking place rapidly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which requires studying from home. Many teachers are not accustomed to using technology or media and are not updated about the function of the media itself, but the use of technology and media is increasing due to habituation and training that continues to be carried out by school principals.

3.3.2. *Empowerment*

Principals have a very important role in guiding and empowering teachers and staff. Based on the results of research that has been obtained regarding indicators of principal readiness from interviews and questionnaires that have been distributed to respondents, researchers conducted observations and interviews with resource persons and informants at different times, and the authors concluded that the principal was ready. In terms of empowering subordinates by responding to online learning, initial preparation begins with holding meetings and arranging schedules, followed up with future agendas.

Then, teacher capacity-building is carried out through workshops and training seminars. Workshops and seminars are held so that teachers and staff can improve their ability to use learning media during the online learning period in the COVID-19 era, implementation of online learning in the current pandemic era, as stated by Zulfah and Sholeh (2021), to carry out its role and function as a manager.

Principals must have the right strategy to empower education personnel through collaboration, provide opportunities for education personnel to improve their profession and encourage the involvement of all education personnel. One of the efforts to increase school teachers' ability is to conduct training. The forms of training are making learning videos, editing videos with quality-free applications, uploading videos on YouTube and utilising videos that have been made into teaching materials for students from home.

There are additional training materials such as video conference with Zoom and Google Meet for learning (Hatip et al., 2021). Teacher empowerment programmes must be directed at efforts that enable teachers to provide reliable expert services and receive recognition and appreciation from the community. Steady abilities will enable teachers to carry out their duties professionally, have high confidence in carrying out their duties and find alternative solutions when facing problems so that they really feel they have authority as teachers (Wardani, 1999).

After receiving the training, it is hoped that the teachers will be able to teach well and not be constrained by the fact that they do not know how to use mobile media anymore. Because in the 4.0 era, the use of technology is growing rapidly, schools must also make improvements and keep up with the times so as not to lose ground and fall behind.

3.3.3. *Programme*

Schools, as educational institutions, must have plans and programmes that will be implemented to achieve educational goals. Junior high schools also have plans and programmes that have been scheduled, both those that have been implemented, have not been implemented, or are still in the form of plans. Based on the research results, the authors conclude that the principal is ready to prepare the programme, especially the programme. In online learning, junior high schools implementing the programme have three stages: short term, medium term and long term.

From short-term school planning to vaccinate teachers, staff and school administrative personnel, then proceed to vaccinate all students from grades 7 to 9 first intermediate. During the pandemic, schools rehabilitate library classrooms and computer laboratories so that later, when face-to-face facilities are met, the health of teachers, staff, school administrative staff and students can be guaranteed.

Then, in the medium term, there are socialisation activities, learning media workshops, extracurricular arts and environmentalists and the creation of podcast channels for the long term, namely training teachers and equipping school facilities and infrastructure sustainably. According to Akbar (2017), school involvement is very important in implementing a programme to develop a quality school culture.

Strategy is the first step a leader takes in running a programme. It means that a leader must have the right leadership strategy in carrying out the planned programme of activities. Organisations with a strategy will be stronger because they have better planning, knowledge and experience in meeting needs and dealing with unexpected conditions and situations, and handling unexpected conditions and situations (Khodijah & Haq, 2021).

School principals' efforts to improve teacher performance can be seen in several ways, ranging from planning learning programmes, classroom management, use of learning media, learning methods, evaluation/assessment of learning, discipline and communication, as well as interactions and principals ready to prepare programmes, especially programmes in online learning.

3.3.4. Training

To improve the ability and competence of teachers, especially in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, school principals held training for teachers in the form of workshops and seminars based on the results of field observations and activities that researchers participated in during field research. According to the study findings, the principal was prepared with several training activities being carried out, including the socialisation of learning media workshops, art extracurriculars and environmentalists in its implementation by inviting outstanding teachers and movers from outside the school to teach their knowledge to the teacher council without patronising existing senior teachers.

These teachers are above the age of 40 and are not yet very active in the digital world, so they need to be given training in the implementation of online learning, especially in the use of simple media such as user groups on social media like WhatsApp, Telegram, Zoom and Google Classroom (Azizah, 2020). Training activities, seminars and workshops are regularly held to improve teacher competence.

Likewise, online learning is increasing along with the increase in learning activities. When self-habitation has been established, it will also affect the implementation of achieving the teacher's professional targets in teaching. As expressed by Andriani et al. (2021), the formulation of the objectives of the training and the preparation of the training programme are to meet the needs of teachers and serve as a vehicle for teacher self-development as a form of teacher professionalism as well as a challenge to be able to create innovative work by creating productive learning scenarios.

It is especially needed when learning online in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic. The process of training activities that the school principal had carried out went smoothly, and the participants gave good responses and felt that this kind of training is very useful. With the habituation and training carried out by the teachers, they can implement it into the learning process in the pandemic era.

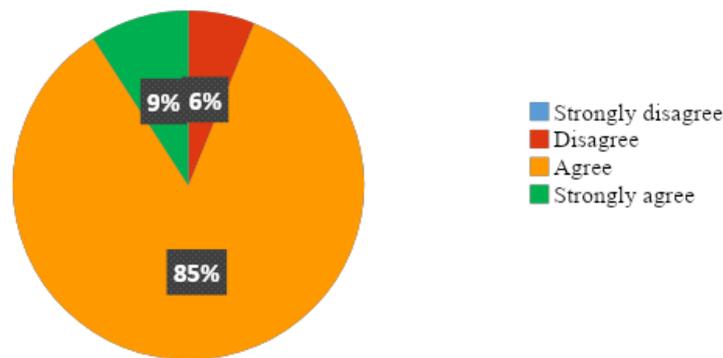
3.3.5. Cooperation with external parties

Cooperation with parties outside the school is a relationship that exists based on the needs of each other and establishes reciprocal relationships in order to achieve common goals and interests that can be achieved together. In junior high school, in implementing the programme to be implemented, establish relationships and cooperation with parties outside the school. Schools cooperate with villages and healthcare centres to achieve the same goal, namely achieving public health status and group immunity against the coronavirus in the short-term planning of schools carrying out vaccine activities.

Through medium and long-term planning, schools process libraries to meet online facilities for classroom rehabilitation funds and then plan other tools to support learning. It should be considered that construction also costs a lot of money. As a principal, he always maintains good relations with external parties both vertically and horizontally.

Through collaboration with parties outside the school, they get support to organise training, seminars and workshops to improve teacher competence. The world of education must synergise with mutual understanding and support each other to achieve the goal, namely the formation of the mental development of students according to their potential. Collaboration must be done to make realising the school's vision and mission easier.

Graph 1 shows students' responses to the application of online learning, namely how much students agree to make habitual changes and learn to adapt to the online learning process.



Graph 1

Students' Responses to the Implementation of Online Learning.

Students' responses in online learning are from the highest percentage, namely the agree option (85%) and the strongly agree option (9%), so that in the online learning process, unfamiliar students can get used to it.

Schools always innovate in responding to unexpected conditions. Technological advances are a major force for schools in the globalisation stage of education. The important role of the principal is needed as the root cause of more advanced changes, along with the fulfilment of infrastructure facilities and the quality of human resources, both teachers and education staff. A well-managed school will be directly proportional to the quality of students and professional teachers.

The principal has a very important role in the smooth running of a learning activity, especially during online learning during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Then it is known that quality educational institutions are achieved with effective and responsible principal leadership. In carrying out his role in junior high school, the principal who acts as a leader must be able to motivate his personnel to have a work ethic.

Efforts to achieve the expected optimal, for example, the role of school principals in utilising technology and media in online learning for empowerment, creating programmes and future plans, conducting training, and collaborating with external parties – all of which are interrelated to improve school progress – enables them to empower teachers and school staff effectively.

To the maximum extent possible, and to guide teachers through programmes prepared later to assist schools in carrying out their duties and roles, the principal collaborates with parties outside the school, such as health centres and villages. Junior high school principals also carry out various other activities to empower school teachers and staff to achieve school goals. The community will also benefit from the support of innovations in the education world. Efforts to inspire teachers led the principal and his team to create a YouTube podcast, presenting scientists and thinkers who can dictate the progress of learning.

Efforts to maximise the role of online learning require creative and innovative principles in integrating social media and educational technology to support the quality of learning.

4. Conclusion

The readiness of teachers to engage in online learning affects the readiness of students to participate in the learning process, including the fulfilment of facilities and infrastructure. Internal inhibiting factors, such as age, skills, mastery of media and some old teachers who are technology stutterers, are not used to using electronic devices such as cell phones and laptops. While externally, some students are in the blank spot area, from an economic point of view, they cannot afford to buy a cell phone. Another form of innovation carried out in an effort to overcome obstacles, schools provide guidance to teachers, staff, and school administrative staff, as well as students and teachers through training, workshops, coaching and guidance. Habituation is also applied to adjust to being more familiar with online learning. The principal provides students further assistance in the form of data package assistance and mobile phone assistance.

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