



WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP STRATEGY IN INCREASING COMPETITIVENESS IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS SMK AL-KALAM BANI MARWAN LEBAK REGENCY

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Article History

Received : 30/01/2023

Revised : 02/02/2023

Accepted : 04/02/2023

Keywords:

Strategy, female school principal, competitiveness

Abstract. *This study describes the strategy of women's leadership in increasing competitiveness in the AL-Kalam Vocational School, Lebak Regency. Principals as leaders of educational institutions need to renew strategies in dealing with educational competitiveness. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative with a case study approach. Data collection techniques in this study are through observation, in-depth interviews and documentation. Activities in data analysis are: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The results showed that there were 9 strategies for female school principals in dealing with or increasing competitiveness, namely: pricing strategies, promotion strategies, improving school management, providing training for teachers, carrying out learning innovations, creating school character or characteristics, working with the industrial business world, hospitality and good communication.*

How to Cite: Taufiqurrahman, T., Nabilah, A., Zahrudin, Z., & Musfah, J. (2021). WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP STRATEGY IN INCREASING COMPETITIVENESS IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS SMK AL-KALAM BANI MARWAN LEBAK REGENCY. *Prima Magistra: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan*, 4(1), 92-100. <https://doi.org/10.37478/jpm.v4i1.2476>

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Publisher:

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of private educational institutions lies in how to increase competitiveness in order to be able to attract public trust. This competitiveness is demonstrated by the ability to provide quality assurance to the community, in the form of quality education and service quality. In addition to increasing the internal capabilities of schools, foundations and related institutions must develop strategies to promote their schools so that people are interested in sending their children to these schools (Muhammad et al., 2022). Visionary leaders are needed to increase competitiveness, visionary leaders will see opportunities and create new ideas, new ideas will give birth to various kinds of new strategies.

Leaders become the spearhead of an organization or educational institution, good and innovative leadership will bring superior educational institutions. Recently, many women leaders have emerged in various institutions and organizations, their presence has had a very significant impact on the organization. This needs to be appreciated because female leaders are able to compete with male leaders in general.

In a modern world that focuses on competence and performance, gender is no longer a dominant differentiating factor. This can be seen from the jobs that were previously dominated by men, now women can do very well (Fitriani, 2015). One thing that cannot be denied is that women are an integral part of society. Biologically, women are different from men, but in terms of rights and obligations as human beings they are the same. The existence of women is not just a complement to men, but equal partners in various aspects of life, both domestic ones such as households and the public (Novianti, 2008). From the above it can be concluded that women have the same opportunities as men in general in terms of leadership, it is evident that currently there are many female leaders who exist, starting from government lines to leaders of educational institutions.

Leadership capacity is not only possessed by men, but women have also proven to be successful as leaders (Hartono, 2021). The leadership of men and women is influenced by several factors that make leaders able to apply leadership effectively. These factors are emotional and social, ways of thinking, communicating, orientation, physical nature, and roles in the family (al Faruq, 2016). The factors mentioned above distinguish between the leadership styles of women and men. This proves that women have leadership that is not owned by male leaders, women usually absorb feelings and in-depth analysis when determining policies.

Strategy is an art of using the skills and resources of an organization to achieve its objectives through its effective relationship with the environment in the most favorable conditions (Banun et al., 2016). The strategy has the goal of influencing future conditions in accordance with the expectations or goals that have been set with various approaches or methods that have been planned (Juliansyah, n.d.). By having a mature strategy and clear plans, the principal and dean of the teacher will easily succeed in the school's vision and mission.

Competitive advantage is at the heart of a company's performance in a competitive market. The high business competition that occurs in this world requires every company to launch various products and services that have high competitiveness. Companies that have high competitiveness are companies that are able to launch new products quickly with a short product development period (Kuncoro, 2011). For educational institutions, efforts to increase competitiveness are important and a necessity in order to be able to carry out the implementation of education on an ongoing basis (Darmawan & Sutriyono, 2016). To increase competitiveness in educational institutions, schools must differentiate, when schools do differentiation, schools are able to survive and compete with other schools.

Research on increasing women's competitiveness is still limited. In this study, researchers focused on the competitiveness strategy of female school principals. The following are some relevant studies that researchers have found from various sources as an in-depth study of the material. First, the journal "School principal strategies in improving the competitiveness" (Kuryani et al., 2021), this study describes programs to improve school quality and competitiveness at both the long and short term levels, determines the programs that have been planned, implements strategy set by the school. The difference in this article lies in the object studied, the researcher focuses on examining women's leadership. Second, the journal "Comparison of the effectiveness of the leadership of male and female school principals in Public Elementary Schools throughout Lamongan Regency" (al Faruq, 2016), this study explains that the leadership of female school principals is more effective than the leadership of male school principals. This refers to the average scores of male and female school principals, as well as the achievements of school principals, teachers and students in schools led by female principals. The difference between Saunan Al Faruq's research and this research is in the object studied, Saunan AL Faruq's research is broader, namely examining the comparison of male and female leadership in Lamongan district, while this research focuses on examining only women's leadership.

This study aims to describe the strategies used by women leaders in increasing competitiveness in educational institutions at SMK Al-Kalam Bani Marwan, Lebak Regency. This research is also expected to be a reference for educational institutions, especially female leaders in developing and increasing competitiveness.

METHODS

This study describes the leadership strategy of women in increasing competitiveness in educational institutions at SMK AL-Kalam Bani Marwan Kab. Lebak. The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is research that does not use numbers. This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach. According to Eri Barlian, the purpose of this qualitative research is to understand the condition of a context by directing it to a detailed and in-depth description of the portrait of the condition in a natural context (natural setting), about what actually happened according to what was in the field of study (Barlian, 2016).



In this study, data analysis techniques used the Miles and Huberman model, that the activities in qualitative data analysis were carried out interactively and continued continuously until complete, so that the data was saturated. Activities in data analysis are: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction (*data reduction*) is defined as a selection process, focusing on simplification, abstraction, and transformation of 'rough' data that emerges from written records from the field (Sugiyono, 2013). Presentation of data (*data display*) can be done in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories and the like. Through the presentation of data, data is organized, arranged in a relationship pattern, so that it will be easier to understand (Sugiyono, 2013). Conclusion Drawing (*Verification*) The initial conclusions put forward are still temporary, and will change if strong evidence is not found to support the next stage of data collection. However, if the conclusions put forward in the early stages are supported by valid and consistent evidence when researchers collect data, then the conclusions put forward are credible conclusions (Sugiyono, 2013).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Al-kalam Bani Marwan Vocational High School is a vocational high school located in Badur Village, Cirinten District, Lebak Regency. Bani Marwan Vocational School is led by the headmaster of the school, namely Mrs. Desti Utami Sundari, Mrs. Desti Utami Sundari has been the principal since 2018. Al-kalam Bani Marwan School has experienced many progress and changes since being led by Mrs. Desti Utami Sundari.

Based on the observations made by researchers, female leaders have a major influence on school change and progress. Today's female leaders cannot be underestimated. In leading, women have the advantage of fully protecting educators and education staff. Mrs. Desti also has strategies, innovations and ideas that are proven to be able to bring schools to be able to compete with other schools, especially being able to compete with government schools.

By using strategic management appropriately, schools will be able to achieve the expected quality of education. The application of strategic management in education is of course with the aim of improving the quality of education which will be a special characteristic for the school. Quality improvement is related to determining competitive strategy, so that these advantages are not easily imitated by other institutions (Husni & Wahyudiati, 2022). Therefore, schools need to have new programs to improve the quality of education that are different from other schools.

Competitive advantage can only be achieved if school principals and teachers are willing to work together in advancing the school. As stated by the school principal Ibu Desti Utami Sundari: the leadership of an educational institution will not run smoothly and successfully without the full cooperation and awareness of all parties. therefore, cooperation is the initial key to success in increasing competitiveness in educational institutions.

Based on the results of an interview with the principal of Al-Kalam Bani Marwan Vocational High School regarding how to deal with and improve school competitiveness, it is stated as follows: How do school principals develop strategies in an effort to increase school competitiveness, and what strategies are carried out by school principals.

"The method is to carry out an internal environmental analysis and external environmental analysis (SWOT) first, then prepare a 5-year long-term plan and a 1-year short-term plan, after planning in detail based on the school's vision and mission then the next step is the implementation of the programs that have been implemented. compiled, the final step is evaluation".

From the results of these interviews it was found that the principal of SMK Al-kalam Bani Marwan in planning strategic management using the David Hunger & Thomas L. Wheelen model strategy there were four steps, namely analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation (Hunger & Wheelen, 2013). In terms of evaluation the school principal conducts evaluations divided into two, the first evaluation every month and the second evaluation at the end of the semester. Evaluation is carried out in order to control what programs are not successful so that solutions can be found for programs that are not successful.



The strategy used by the principal of SMK Al-Kalam Bani Marwan, namely Mrs. Desti Utami Sundari in dealing with and increasing competitiveness, is as follows:

1. Pricing strategy

The price of education is a consideration for every student's parents when they want to choose a school, every student's parents must choose an affordable price and good quality in choosing a school. The price strategy is carried out by the principal to attract the attention of parents of students. In her policy, Mrs. Desti Utami Sundari, as the school principal, reduced the tuition fees for education at Al-Kalam Bani Marwan Vocational High School. This policy was carried out by the school principal in the hope that many students would attend SMK Al-Kalam Bani Marwan so that they would be able to compete with surrounding schools. The principal stated:

"We do this pricing strategy in an effort to attract consumer interest, in this case students and parents, we don't attract big money. The analogy is that if the number of students is large, the income will be large. We also provide scholarships to outstanding students, waiving all fees for outstanding students"

Based on the results of observations and interviews, the researchers found that the strategy adopted by Mrs. Desti as the school principal was very effective in increasing school competence.

2. Promotion Strategy

Schools as an institution that offers products from educational services need to set targets for their promotion strategy to achieve predetermined goals, marketers or school promotions and parties related to marketing or promotion need to determine targets or targets, namely customer groups to be directed (Andreas, 2021).

The promotion strategy is an activity carried out by educational institutions to attract the interest of parents of students in a way that captivates the hearts of parents of students. In luring the parents of the students, the Al-Kalam Vocational High School head waived the costs of batik uniforms, sports shirts and LKS books (*student worksheets*) for new students when they entered the new academic year. The principal also utilizes the mass media as a promotional medium. As explained by the principal as follows:

"In promoting our school we utilize social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp groups, Instagram and other social media, but in using social media we focus more on one type of media that is often widely used by the environment around the school, namely Instagram and WhatsApp groups. Evidenced by the strategy used by the principal was able to increase the number of students at SMK AL-Kalam Bani Marwan"

The results of the interviews and observations that the researchers carried out the most effective strategy was to use mass media, the school principal assigned one teacher to focus on managing mass media as a promotional medium.

3. Improved school management

School management can be interpreted as everything related to the management of the educational process to achieve the goals set, both short term, medium and long term goals (Nur et al., 2016). The principal as a leader in education has a very heavy but noble task, the principal's duties include managing human resources, carrying out effective teaching and learning activities and creating harmonious relationships between teachers and students. School success is determined by the leadership of the principal in managing education, in other words, the success and success of the school is in the hands of the principal.

In improving the quality of education, the principal of Al-Kalam Bani Marwan Vocational High School always continues to improve school management by empowering existing human resources in the educational environment, both students, educators and education staff. The principal of the school, Ms. Desti, conveyed the following:

"Improvement of school management continues to be carried out through internal school improvements, school internal improvements through meetings, evaluations and soliciting suggestions and input from the teacher council and foundations. The school principal also makes long-term plans and short-term plans, these plans are made"



together with educators through the SWOT analysis method. Evaluation of the performance of teaching and educational staff is carried out every week with the aim of examining what obstacles exist in the learning process and finding solutions together”

Efforts made by the principal in this case are to make improvements to school management, all good schools must have good management, with a good system and management the school will continue to run even though the leadership has changed.

4. Provide training to teachers

One of the most essential things in the educational environment is human resources. In an educational institution organization, the teacher is the main human resource in seeing the role of the teacher which is very important for the nation's generation, the teaching profession is a professional profession with the task of educating students (Hardiyanti et al., 2019). A teacher has an obligation to update the skills he has in learning, as technology develops and the progress of information, a teacher is required to go hand in hand with the progress of information. The development of skills, the way of teaching a teacher determines the quality possessed by students, creative and skilled teachers will produce skilled students as well. When interviewed regarding teacher competency, the school principal explained the following:

“We and the foundation continue to strive to improve the quality of teachers by involving teachers in training activities related to increasing teacher competence, we send teachers to attend training both training held by the government, the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the private sector”

In improving teacher skills in teaching, the principal provides special training to teachers in the Al-Kalam Bani Marwan Vocational School, both government and independent training. In training held by the government, in this case the Ministry of Education and Culture, school principals always send several competent teachers to take part in training, thus the principal hopes to have superior quality teachers and create an effective learning process so that the quality of students is able to compete with other schools.

Improving the quality of teachers has become a requirement for schools when they want to become superior schools, superior schools must have very good quality teachers. Therefore, teachers and schools must collaborate to realize the school's vision and mission by means of schools preparing competency improvement training and teachers consciously want to develop their own competencies.

5. Carry out learning innovations

The teacher is the spearhead of creating effective learning, the role of the teacher as an educator cannot be replaced by technology. Teachers who have unique strategies in learning will make students comfortable in class and easily receive information. Therefore, a teacher must update himself by making new innovations in the learning process.

In this case M Faqih Seknum explained that the strategy was prepared to achieve certain goals, meaning here that the direction of all strategy formulation decisions is to achieve goals, so that the preparation of learning steps, the use of various facilities and learning resources are all directed towards achieving goals (Seknum, 2013). Teacher skills and personality affect or relate to the quality of student learning outcomes to develop individual and community personalities (Zunidar, 2019). As expressed by the class XI teacher as follows:

“At Al-kalam Bani Marwan Vocational School, we, the teacher council, are demanded by the principal to do new things in learning in the classroom. This effort was carried out by the principal by providing training and providing strategy books and learning models in the teacher's room. The principal also evaluates our learning at the end of each month”

The results of interviews with the teacher council researchers found an evaluation carried out by the principal of the teacher council learning in the class through a questionnaire given to students, the results of the questionnaire became material for evaluating the teacher's learning process.

6. Creating the character or characteristics of the school

In order to be widely known by the community, school principals need to develop educational institutions in various ways, one of which is that schools must have their own



characteristics that distinguish them from other schools, one of which distinguishes schools from other schools is the flagship program. Schools need to make excellent programs that have their own charm for students.

Featured Program is a series of steps carried out in a certain sequence to achieve excellence in educational output. Excellence in the intended output includes basic qualities (mind, conscience, and physical power) and mastery of knowledge, both soft (economics, politics, sociology and so on) including its application, namely technology (construction, manufacturing, communication and so on) (Zarkasyi, 2016). Today's society has more interest in schools that can combine all three aspects (the value of intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, and spiritual intelligence), because as time goes on the demands for the quality of an individual will become increasingly complex and high (Hayudiyani et al., 2020).

Seeing the phenomenon of youth that is happening at this time, especially in the public school environment, which incidentally is not a religious school, is a concern for teachers and parents. At present, there are more students who like to play games and hang out with their colleagues than there are fewer students who are diligent in reading and fulfilling their religious obligations. This is also a consideration for Mrs. Desti Utami Sundari as the head of the Bani Marwan Al-kalam Vocational School to launch a superior program that is spiritual and literacy in nature. This was expressed by the principal as follows:

“We and the teacher council created a program with the aim of increasing student competence and building school characteristics, among the programs to increase student competence, namely: literacy, recitation of the Koran before learning, and congregational prayers. This program was held starting from our anxiety towards students who lack literacy and lack of fulfilling their obligations to God”

Based on the results of observations and interviews the flagship program at Al-kalam Bani Marwan Vocational High School, namely: *Literacy Program*, the literacy program is a program that requires students to read books, students are required to read books in every two weeks one book, to support this success the school provides books -books in the library, both novel genres, knowledge, and so on. *The Tadarus Quran program*, the Quran tadarus program aims to make students accustomed to and able to read the holy book which is a guide in their lives, this Quran recitation is carried out every day before the learning process begins accompanied by the teacher. *Congregational Prayer Program*, prayer is an obligation for Muslims, to make students aware of the obligation to religion and to get used to praying the principal requires students to pray midday prayers in congregation after the learning process is complete, students are required to bring prayer tools from home every day.

7. Collaboration with business and industry

Educational institutions, especially vocational schools, are required to further develop their potential through collaboration with stakeholders. Cooperation is needed in an effort to grow networks in order to increase the ability to use resources and master science and technology Cooperation is a basic requirement for vocational schools to follow up on productive aspects of learning as a characteristic of vocational schools (Arifin, 2010).

To increase the competitiveness of Al-kalam Bani Marwan Vocational High School graduates in collaboration with industry in the Lebak Regency area. This was expressed by the school principal Mrs. Desti Utami Sundari as follows:

“In order to expand our network and absorb graduates, we collaborate (memorandum of understanding) with several businesses and industries. With the school and industry cooperation agreement, the parents of students have full trust in the school and are not worried about their children after they finish studying from our school. When we have worked with PT. Ethics Jayadi Makmur, PT. Primadelta Starlestari Post Gunungkencana, PT. Pelita Nata De Coco and several government agencies”

Collaboration with the world of industry and business is something that cannot be abandoned because each student will experience Field Work Practices. This street vendor will later become a place for students to implement the knowledge they get while in class.



8. Gathering

Hospitality is a meeting activity carried out by someone, hospitality is highly recommended in Islam. There are so many benefits of doing hospitality which will create a harmonious relationship between people. Harmonious relationships will be the reason for creating harmony and beauty in society, harmonious relationships will not be created without intense friendship that is carried out continuously. This was done by the Head of SMK Al-Kalam Bani Marwan in facing competition in educational institutions..

“We and the board of teachers of AL-Kalam Bani Marwan Vocational School establish intense friendship with the surrounding community both in visiting in person and through activities that are meeting through Islamic holidays and national holidays. We also visited community leaders who have a big influence on their environment “

Through consistent friendship, it is hoped that there will be good relations between the institution and the community so that it becomes a dance point for parents of students to send their children to SMK AL-Kalam Bani Marwan. With silaturahmi, you will be able to change a tenuous relationship to become even tighter, so that a harmonious relationship will be realized (Istianah, 2016).

9. Good communication

The school principal in the process of communicating with the community can improve the performance of teachers and education staff having two activities, namely at the human resource planning stage and also the school work program (Umar, 2017). Communication is the key to success in creating good relations between schools and parents of students, communication can also be interpreted as transferring messages or information from the school to parents of students with specific goals and objectives. Through in-depth interviews the principal explained as follows:

“In order to establish a good relationship with parents of students, we and the board of teachers of SMK AL-Kalam Bani Marwan communicate in two ways, namely oral communication and written communication. Oral communication is carried out through direct meetings, direct meetings are conducted by me as the principal of the school and parents of students at the beginning of each month in the school hall to discuss the development of students accompanied by the homeroom teacher. Written communication is carried out by the school through correspondence issued by the principal when there is something to be conveyed”

Good communication is one of the creation of a harmonious relationship between parents and the school, therefore, as a leader the principal must have a good strategy and have good rhetoric. Good rhetoric will affect the mindset of those who listen. The communication that was carried out by Mrs. Desti proved to be able to make parents trust the school and was able to increase the competitiveness of the school.

CONCLUSIONSAND SUGGESTIONS

The results of the study showed that female school principals had their own advantages in leading educational institutions, the strategies applied by school principals were proven to be able to increase the day power of Al-Kalam Bani Marwan Vocational High School. In implementing the strategy, there are nine strategies for female school principals in dealing with or increasing competitiveness, namely: price strategy, promotion strategy, improving school management, providing training for teachers, carrying out learning innovations, creating school character or characteristics, working with the industrial business world, friendship and good communication.

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