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The Head of Administration Staff Strategy in Student Administration Management at Islamic Senior High School

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Abstract:

This research aimed at analyzing the strategies implemented by the head of school administration staff in student administration management at Islamic Senior High School of Khairul Ummah Air Molek. Student administration is one of the important aspects in supporting the success of education, especially in managing student data, archiving documents, and servicing administration effectively. The head of administration staff had a strategic role in ensuring the continuity of the orderly, efficient, and educational standard-compliant administration process. Qualitative approach was used in this research with descriptive method. Interview, observation, and documentation were the techniques of collecting data. The research findings showed that the head of administration staff at Islamic Senior High School of Khairul Ummah implemented various strategies, such as using of information technology for student data management, improving administration. services, and improving internal communication systems. However, there were several challenges faced, including the distance of students homes from schools, the lack of staff skills in digital data management, and ineffective communication between the administration staff and students. Improvement efforts were made by integrating digital technology into the school administration system and improving coordination between related parties.

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi yang diterapkan oleh kepala staf administrasi sekolah dalam manajemen administrasi siswa di SMA Islam Khairul Ummah Air Molek. Administrasi kesiswaan merupakan salah satu aspek penting dalam mendukung keberhasilan pendidikan, khususnya dalam mengelola data siswa, pengarsipan dokumen, dan pelayanan administrasi secara efektif. Kepala staf administrasi memiliki peran strategis dalam memastikan kelangsungan proses administrasi yang tertib, efisien, dan sesuai standar pendidikan. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini dengan metode deskriptif. Wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi adalah teknik pengumpulan data. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala staf administrasi SMA Islam Khairul Ummah menerapkan berbagai strategi, seperti pemanfaatan teknologi informasi untuk pengelolaan data siswa, peningkatan administrasi. layanan, dan meningkatkan sistem komunikasi internal. Namun, ada beberapa

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tantangan yang dihadapi, antara lain jarak rumah siswa dari sekolah, kurangnya keterampilan staf dalam pengelolaan data digital, dan komunikasi yang tidak efektif antara staf administrasi dan siswa. Upaya perbaikan dilakukan dengan mengintegrasikan teknologi digital ke dalam sistem administrasi sekolah dan meningkatkan koordinasi antar pihak terkait.

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most important aspects in shaping the quality of human resources in a nation. To achieve educational goals effectively, it is necessary to ensure that every component within a school, including administrative management, functions optimally. Administrative management serves as the foundation that supports the academic process through systematic data recording, reporting, and coordination between teachers, students, and stakeholders. In Islamic senior high schools (Madrasah Aliyah), administrative activities are not limited to clerical tasks, but they involve comprehensive management of student information, documentation, correspondence, and services related to educational activities. According to Sagala (2013), educational administration is a systematic process of planning, organizing, directing, and supervising all activities related to achieving educational objectives. This perspective highlights that school administration is not merely a technical task but a strategic function that contributes directly to educational quality.

The Head of Administrative Staff plays a pivotal leadership role in coordinating and managing administrative operations. Their responsibilities include supervising documentation, managing student records, ensuring accurate data input, and facilitating communication among stakeholders. As stated in the Regulation of the Ministry of National Education No. 24 of 2008, administrative staff must demonstrate competence in technical, managerial, and interpersonal areas to maintain an effective and transparent administrative system. In the context of Madrasah Aliyah Khairul Ummah Air Molek, administration management has faced several challenges. These include delayed document processing due to students' long commuting distances, insufficient digital data management skills, and weak communication between students and staff. Addressing these challenges requires well-structured strategies from the head of administrative staff to optimize administrative performance and improve educational service quality. Therefore, this study investigates the strategies implemented by the Head of Administrative Staff in managing student administration, identifies supporting and inhibiting factors, and evaluates how these strategies contribute to overall administrative efficiency within the school environment.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. It was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Khairul Ummah Air Molek, Indragiri Hulu Regency. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with the head of administrative staff, school

principal, and administrative personnel, as well as direct observation and documentation. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, (Miles & Huberman 1994), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation (Gafur et al., 2022).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Essence of Strategy in Educational Management

The strategy of the head of school administrative staff is one of the vital elements in modern educational management. To fully understand this concept, it is essential to examine its relationship with the principles of administrative management, the quality of school services, and the challenges faced in the current era of educational digitalization. Educational management, in essence, is the process of managing both human and non-human resources to achieve educational goals. According to G.R. Terry (2006), management encompasses four main functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling—known as the POAC cycle. In the school context, the head of administrative staff must be able to apply these functions within the administrative system so that every activity runs systematically and productively. Planning is the initial step that determines the direction of administrative activities. The head of administrative staff must develop a work plan based on a thorough analysis of actual needs. For example, when the number of students increases, the plan should include updating the data system and expanding archive storage capacity. According to Terry, good planning minimizes the risk of failure because every step has been carefully calculated.

Once planning is established, the organizing stage becomes essential in determining who does what, where, and when. The head of administrative staff must distribute tasks proportionally to avoid overlapping responsibilities. They must also ensure that every staff member clearly understands their duties and responsibilities. In this regard, Henry Fayol's (1916) concept of *division of labor* remains relevant, as clear task allocation increases efficiency and fosters a sense of individual accountability. The actuating stage is when plans are translated into concrete actions. The head of administrative staff must act as a leader who sets an example, motivates subordinates, and creates a positive working atmosphere. According to McGregor's *Theory X and Theory Y*, a leader's success in mobilizing subordinates is influenced by their view of human nature. If the head of administrative staff perceives staff as individuals capable of growth (*Theory Y*), they will offer trust, participation, and recognition. This approach fosters a sense of belonging and boosts work morale.

The final stage of management functions is controlling. Supervision is necessary to ensure that every administrative activity runs according to plan and meets quality standards. According to Terry, supervision is not merely about finding faults but also about identifying opportunities for improvement. The head of administrative staff must conduct periodic evaluations of filing systems, data accuracy, and student services. Such evaluations become a reflection tool for improving future strategies. These management principles indicate that the strategy of the head of administrative staff cannot be separated

from the managerial framework. An effective strategy should include well-prepared planning, systematic implementation, measurable control, and continuous evaluation (Jaya et al., 2022). In practice, the head of administrative staff serves not only as a technical executor but also as a manager who leads the entire administrative process. In addition to understanding management principles, it is also important to explore the relationship between administrative strategies and the quality of school administrative services. Quality administrative services increase public trust in schools. According to Edward Sallis (2002) in *Total Quality Management in Education*, educational quality is measured not only by student learning outcomes but also by the quality of administrative services provided by the school. Organized, fast, and transparent administration reflects the professionalism of an educational institution.

The head of administrative staff plays a key role in ensuring such service quality. When effective strategies are applied, the entire student administration process runs smoothly. For instance, in the student admission process, data can be processed quickly and accurately; in preparing report cards, results are completed on time; and in issuing certificates, students are served efficiently without long queues. All of these reflect work efficiency that leads to greater satisfaction among students and parents. The quality of administrative services also depends greatly on how the head of administrative staff manages communication. According to (Stephen P. Robbins2006), effective communication is one of the hallmarks of a healthy organization. In schools, communication among the head of administrative staff, subordinates, teachers, and students must be open, two-way, and solution-oriented. For example, when data input errors occur, the head of administrative staff should not place blame but instead identify the cause collaboratively and provide training to prevent recurrence. A good strategy must also consider the human aspect. The head of administrative staff not only manages systems but also emotions, motivation, and team trust. Hierarchy of Needs Theory, every individual has fundamental needs that must be met to achieve optimal productivity—such as security, appreciation, and self-actualization. A head of administrative staff who provides recognition for achievements, ensures job security, and offers growth opportunities will foster a loyal and creative administrative team. Besides human factors, technological advancement is an inseparable part of modern administrative strategies. Digitalization has transformed how schools manage data and information. An adaptive head of administrative staff will utilize information technology to accelerate workflows. (Kuncoro M, 97: 2007) organizations that fail to adapt to technology will lag behind and lose efficiency. In the school context, using student data applications, online attendance systems, and cloud-based document storage represents innovations that enhance administrative effectiveness. Digital transformation also changes the work culture. Administrative staff no longer work with piles of paper but with digital tools that simplify data retrieval and reduce the risk of losing records. The head of administrative staff plays a crucial role in ensuring a smooth transition, particularly through staff training and data security oversight. With a well-implemented digitalization strategy, school administration becomes faster, more accurate, and environmentally friendly. Beyond digitalization, the

head of administrative staff must uphold ethics and social responsibility. Justice and moral responsibility should underpin every public policy, including administrative policies. Practically, the head of administrative staff must ensure that every service is delivered fairly without discrimination, and that all student personal information is kept confidential (Nawawi H, ,136: , 2005). This builds public trust in the institution's integrity.

Ethically grounded strategies foster a healthy work culture. Work culture refers to shared values that guide organizational behavior. The head of administrative staff plays a major role in cultivating positive work culture by instilling honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and discipline among administrative staff. A strong work culture becomes the foundation for long-term administrative success. Regarding professionalism, the head of administrative staff must also commit to continuous self-improvement. Ongoing education and training are essential to keep knowledge and skills aligned with current developments. Professionalism is measured by one's ability to renew oneself, adapt to change, and apply knowledge for organizational benefit. Therefore, the head of administrative staff should regularly attend training in management, information technology, and public communication. (Nur Kholis, 5:2014) All the above theories and perspectives converge on one central conclusion: the strategy of the head of administrative staff is not merely an administrative procedure but a process of strategic leadership. It encompasses thorough planning, human resource management, technological innovation, ethical conduct, and cultural development. Success is not only measured by the smoothness of document handling but by how well the administrative system supports the overall educational mission. By applying strategies grounded in modern management principles, ethical values, and digital innovation, the head of administrative staff can lead the school toward professional, efficient, and qualityoriented governance. Through orderly and measurable administrative management, madrasahs can earn public trust, and student administration becomes a reflection of the excellence of educational management. In the modern world of education, theories of strategic management and leadership are closely interconnected strategic management is a systematic process of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives. (Wibowo, 66:2011) Defines leadership as the process of influencing others to understand and agree on what needs to be done, and facilitating collective efforts to achieve shared goals. These two theories converge in the context of the head of school administrative staff. This role requires not only administrative management but also strategic leadership—the ability to interpret environmental changes and respond with appropriate managerial actions. The head of administrative staff must master organizational strategy, interpersonal communication, and rational decision-making skills. From an educational perspective, strategic leadership involves integrating long-term vision with practical daily actions state that effective educational leadership encompasses four key elements: building a shared vision and mission, creating a positive organizational culture, ensuring efficient management, and promoting continuous learning. This also applies to the head of administrative staff, as

the success of student administration management depends largely on their ability to align educational vision with administrative practices. As a strategic leader, the head of administrative staff must understand both the internal and external conditions of the school. Internally, they are responsible for managing staff, resources, and workflows. Externally, they must align administrative policies with government regulations, curriculum changes, and public demands for transparency and accountability. Therefore, the application of strategic management theory transforms the head of administrative staff from a mere data manager into a policy director in school administration.

Comparison Between Traditional and Digital Strategies of the Head of Administrative Staff

The development of information technology has brought significant changes to school administrative systems. Whereas administrative processes were once carried out manually using physical documents, most activities are now conducted digitally. The head of administrative staff plays a central role in this transformation. Traditional strategies emphasize physical recordkeeping, manual documentation, and direct communication through letters and face-to-face meetings. These strategies have advantages in terms of accuracy and social engagement due to stronger interpersonal interaction. (Agustinus, Sri Wahyuni, 17: 1996) Rraditional strategies are often inefficient as they require significant time, cost, and are prone to data loss. Conversely, digital strategies focus on time efficiency and information accuracy. Through digital systems, administrative processes such as student registration, attendance, grade reporting, and archiving can be completed quickly and automatically. Argues that organizations that successfully integrate information technology into their systems gain a high competitive advantage, as information becomes the core asset of modern organizations. In the school context, the head of administrative staff must serve as the driving force of this transformation. They must ensure that every administrative staff member can effectively use technology. Digital training has become a crucial component of administrative leadership strategies today (Shobri & Huda, 2024). For example, the head of administrative staff may organize training sessions on using student management applications, QR code-based attendance systems, or cloud-based document archiving. Nevertheless, digital strategies also face challenges. Issues such as limited technological infrastructure, low digital literacy among staff, and risks of data breaches must be anticipated with strong security policies. The head of administrative staff must understand key principles of data security, including encryption, password management, and system access control. With proper management, digital strategies can enhance efficiency while strengthening public trust in the professionalism of educational institutions.

Conceptual Model of Strategy-Based Student Administration Management

Based on the theories of strategic management and educational administration discussed earlier, a conceptual model can be developed to illustrate the relationship between the head of administrative staff's strategy and the effectiveness of student administration management. This model begins with the understanding that the strategy of the head of administrative staff consists of three main components: strategic planning,

coordinative implementation, and continuous evaluation. These components directly influence the effectiveness of student administration, which can be measured by indicators such as work efficiency, data organization, service speed, and student satisfaction. In this model, *strategic planning* involves formulating an administrative vision and objectives aligned with the school's mission. *Coordinative implementation* reflects the head's ability to mobilize staff, assign tasks, and foster effective communication (Shobri, 2025). Meanwhile, *continuous evaluation* represents the head's awareness of the need to review and improve administrative systems in accordance with technological developments and institutional needs. Supporting factors such as the principal's support, infrastructure availability, and staff training strengthen the success of the strategy. Conversely, inhibiting factors such as limited human resources, resistance to change, and lack of technological facilities can reduce its effectiveness. Thus, this conceptual model demonstrates that the success of student administration management results from a dynamic interaction between leadership strategy, supporting factors, and the innovations implemented by the head of administrative staff

The Strategic Role of the Head of Administrative Staff in the Era of Educational Transformation

The current era of educational transformation demands a shift in how the role of the head of administrative staff is perceived. They are no longer seen merely as administrative executors, but as *strategic leaders* who contribute to key decision-making processes in schools. (Urip Yahya, 22:2013) Educational leaders of the 21st century must act as both leaders of learning and leaders of organization. This means the head of administrative staff must also understand the school's learning vision, not just its technical administrative operations. The head of administrative staff is responsible for ensuring that every administrative activity supports effective teaching and learning. For example, managing schedules, archiving learning outcomes, and providing timely student services help teachers and students focus more on academic activities. Moreover, efficient administrative strategies enhance institutional transparency and accountability in the eyes of the public. In the context of Madrasah Aliyah, the head of administrative staff must also incorporate Islamic values into every policy. Principles such as amanah (trustworthiness), *ihsan* (excellence), and *maslahah* (public good) should guide moral and professional conduct. Strategies should not be pursued solely for efficiency but also to uphold honesty and responsibility. This aligns with Al-Ghazali's view in *Ihya Ulumuddin* that every task performed with sincere intention and sound system carries spiritual merit before Allah. Therefore, the head of administrative staff leads not only through managerial logic but also through spiritual ethics. The integration of professionalism and moral values creates administrative governance that is both efficient and socially and spiritually meaningful.

Theoretical Reflection: Integrating Strategy, Leadership, and Educational Service

The theoretical reflection from all discussions above reveals that the strategy of the head of administrative staff is an integrative process combining management, leadership, and public service. These three elements complement one another, forming a cycle of administrative success in schools. Management provides direction and structure, leadership provides motivation and role modeling, while educational service gives meaning and social value to every administrative action. If one of these aspects is weak, the entire administrative system will fail to function optimally. (As Peter Drucker: 2007) emphasizes, organizational success is not determined by the size of its resources but by the management's ability to direct them effectively. In the school context, the head of administrative staff must act as a driving force, optimizing the potential of staff, facilities, and time so that all administrative activities support educational goals. Therefore, the strategy of the head of administrative staff should be dynamic, participatory, and innovation-based. *Dynamic* means adaptable to environmental changes; *participatory* means involving all staff in the decision-making process; and *innovation-based* means continuously seeking new methods to enhance work effectiveness. When all these elements function harmoniously, student administration management will not merely serve bureaucratic purposes but will become a means to improve educational quality and deliver services that are humane, transparent, and just.

CONCLUSION

Student administration is one of the most important aspects of school management because it deals directly with students—from the admission process, data management, guidance, to graduation. In practice, many schools still face challenges such as disorganized student data, inefficient administrative services, and low utilization of information technology. The head of administrative staff plays a strategic role in addressing these issues. He or she is not merely an executor of administrative tasks but also a leader who must be able to plan, organize, direct, and evaluate administrative activities so that they run effectively and in line with the school's vision. This research was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Khairul Ummah Air Molek, Indragiri Hulu (INHU), aiming to identify how the head of administrative staff implements strategies in managing student administration, what supporting and inhibiting factors exist, and how effective these strategies are in improving administrative performance. The main problem addressed is how the head of administrative staff formulates and implements strategies to ensure that all administrative activities run orderly, transparently, and efficiently. This research is grounded in theories of strategic management and educational leadership, emphasizing the importance of vision, coordination, and evaluation in school administration processes. The research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of educational management science and practical benefits for schools in enhancing the quality of student administration management. Strategy is defined as a systematic and planned effort to achieve organizational goals. Strategy involves setting long-term objectives and allocating resources to achieve them. In the school context, the strategy of the head of administrative staff refers to a series of managerial actions aimed at ensuring that administrative management runs in an orderly and efficient manner.

The head of administrative staff is a key figure responsible for all administrative activities within the school. They must possess personal, social, technical, and managerial

competencies (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). In practice, the head of administrative staff must perform management functions as proposed (Terry:2006): planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling. Student administration itself includes all activities related to managing students from admission to graduation (Purwanto, 2009). Its purpose is to support the learning process through systematic, accurate, and accountable data management. An effective strategy must also consider supporting factors such as the principal's support, adequate facilities, and staff collaboration, while anticipating barriers such as limited digital skills, weak coordination, and limited human resources.

This chapter also explores the relationship between strategic management and educational leadership. Strategic management is the process of formulating, implementing, and evaluating organizational policies to achieve objectives, defines leadership as the ability to influence others to work toward a common goal. The head of administrative staff integrates both concepts within the administrative context. Moreover, the discussion highlights the shift from traditional to digital strategies. Traditional strategies rely on physical documents and manual communication, whereas digital strategies use computerized systems, data management applications, and cloud-based technology. A visionary head of administrative staff must integrate technology to make administration more efficient, transparent, and fast. Emphasize that organizations failing to adapt to technological advancements will be left behind. Therefore, the head of administrative staff must ensure digital training for staff and implement robust data security systems. In conclusion, the strategy of the head of administrative staff in the modern era is not only technical but also ethical and spiritual. They must instill values of trustworthiness, honesty, and responsibility in administrative services, reflecting Islamic principles of *ihsan* (doing one's best) and *maslahah* (providing benefit to others).

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