



JNE 4 (1) (2018) 1-12

Journal of Nonformal Education

<http://journal.unnes.ac.id/nju/index.php/jne>



The Role of Principal in Improving Competitive Advantage of Early Childhood Education Institution

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24914/pnf.v4i1.13569>

Info Articles

History Articles:

Received 25 January 2018

Approved 15 February 2018

Published 27 February 2018

Keywords:

role of principal;
competitive advantage;
ECE institution

Abstract

This study aims to identify and explain the role of principal in improving the competitive advantage of Early Childhood Education institution. The research approach used is qualitative research with multicase study design. The study was conducted at two ECE institution in Malang, namely Restu 2 and As Salam. Data collection was done by in-depth interview, observation, and documentation study, then analyzed by inductive analysis method, which includes two stages: individual site data analysis and cross-site data analysis. Key research informant is principal. Data validity checking is done through credibility test, transferability test, and confirmability test. The results of this study indicate that the role of principal in improving the competitive advantage of ECE institution is categorized in 3 roles, namely (1) as a drafter that plays a role in developing creative ideas and drafting innovative program concepts to make the institution known to the public; (2) as a liaison, which plays a role in conveying the vision of the mission to the members of the institution and establish cooperation with other parties or parents; and (3) as a controller, that is to play a role in maintaining the quality of service institutions through the activities of dividing educator tasks according to their respective expertise, building a family atmosphere, and monitoring the implementation of educator's duties.

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p-ISSN 2442-532X

e-ISSN 2528-4541

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is one form of the realization of an education for all. The existence of ECE institution has a strategic value because early childhood education is one of the efforts to lay the foundation of a child's growth. The quality of a child's growth at an early age will determine the quality of his physical, mental, emotional, social, learning, behavior, and personality skills throughout his life. Specifically early age is a critical period for the formation and fostering of qualified characters. (Nutbrown, 2006: 62).

Meanwhile, Cochran as quoted by Brown (2011: 7) is of the view that the existence of ECE institute is also intended as an institution that provides an opportunity for women to enter the labor market and keep the children left by their parents. According to Lowenstein's research as copied by Brown (2011: 7) early childhood education in America is mostly reserved for poor children from birth to 6 years of age. ECE in America is implemented in 3 types, namely (1) Child Care, conducted by the government or private for poor families; (2) Head Start / Early Head Start (EHS); and (3) State Funded Preschool (Brown, 2011: 8).

The report from UNESCO shows that the existence of ECE institution in Indonesia is no longer a foreign program for the community, because it has been done by many governments, private institutions, and social organizations. However, the quality of ECE service is still a lot of concern. The problems that are still common are the first is still limited in terms of service coverage, type of service, and the gap of children's needs.

This problem arises due to several things: (1) the quality of management is less professional; (2) limited number of organizing institutions; (3) the distribution of organizational institutions is not evenly distributed; (4) the distribution and quality of personnel is not evenly distributed; (5) inadequate service facilities; (6) the service has

not fulfilled all aspects of the child's essential needs; and (8) an understanding of the importance of holistic and integrative ECE from stakeholders is still limited (UNESCO, 2005). The second problem related to the quality of service, among them: (1) the learning process is still colored by the teaching of literacy (calistung) and not yet through play; (2) the competence of educators is still low with new educator training indicators reaching 29.32% from 402,493 people; (3) S1/ D4 degree educator qualification only reached 15.72%; (4) the number of referral ECE institutions is still around 0.3% from 114,888 institutions; and (5) the condition of ECE infrastructure is still largely apprehensive (Kemdikbud, 2013). These problems affect the public confidence in the services of early childhood institutions, so that the gross enrollment rate of early childhood is still low.

Meanwhile, ECE institutions in the community are emerging so that the level of institution competition is higher. Therefore every institution needs to think about strategic steps to improve the institution's competitive advantage. ECE institutions have a responsibility to continue to develop strategies to improve service quality. Therefore if the ECE institution managed by the existence of traditional style then it becomes ineffective. The existence of public and government demand at this time has resulted in ECE institutions can not be considered or treated solely as a social institution or service institution. Institutions need to be professionally managed to meet the needs of the wider community, so that sustainable and meaningful efforts should be developed such as the use of information and communication technology in learning, improving the quality of educators and educational staff, the procurement of various educational infrastructure facilities, and networking institutions other education or industrial world.

Another thing that needs to be done as a key to success in facing education competition is to create innovative educational services

socialization activities and develop greater school expectations (Wijaya, 2012: 2). ECE institution need to be proactive in competing to provide educational services to education service users. Mihaela (2011) through research on organizational development in kindergarten institutes suggests that a kindergarten or preschool education administrator needs to use strategic planning based on the vision and mission of the organization because without a vision of mission, an organization is bound to stagnate. In line with these findings, research Khoiriyah (2008) also proves that to improve the quality of services or the implementation of education required a strategy.

Some experience from the corporate world also shows that an institutional management strategy is a very effective effort to improve the competitiveness and superiority of an institution. Companies that are able to build strategies by offering high value products to consumers can prove to increase their level of competition and can generate above-average earnings. As experienced by Kodak company founded by George Eastman, Eastman's strategic management is able to make the company one of the top 25 companies in the United States. Likewise, the Sony company that succeeded in becoming a pioneer in the field of electronics, so that Sony products almost always color electronic equipment in every home (Kotler, 2006: 22).

The experience shows it would be invaluable if applied in the world of education that is currently in a very high competition situation. ECE institutions need to learn and develop strategies in order to improve the satisfaction of education service users. Institutions should not be passive and wait for the presence of learners, but the time to be proactive pick up the ball, offering excellence and uniqueness to the users of education services.

The socialization of educational services aimed at enhancing the competitiveness and the strategic value of services is important for priority activities. Institutions need to continue

to make creative and innovative efforts to explore the uniqueness and competitive advantages of institutions, to be more recognized and in demand by the users of education services. Institutions also need to develop promotional strategies for both external strategies through exhibits and visits, as well as internal strategies through the development of staff or employee competencies (Haryanto, 2012). The principal as the head of the institution has an important role in the effort to create the excellence of this institution. As already done by two ECE institutions in Malang, ECE Restu 2 and As Salam.

ECE Restu 2 is an early childhood institution that is managed by a private sector that gets A's accreditation and has quite a lot of competitors, because the position of the institution is in the middle of other early childhood institutions. As stated by the principal of Restu 2 school that "the school is in the golden track and the competition line, where Restu 2 is among other ECE institutions such as Kindergarten Laboratorium, Pembina, Samuphahita, Mustaqbal, BSS, and Sang Timur (W/01/KS/AY/201113)."

The level of competition is so tight that currently the students who want to enter ECE Restu 2 must book the place first. As stated by the headmaster of Restu 2, "the last two years Restu 2 is not looking for new students anymore, because children who graduated from TPA and KB already meet the quota kindergarten". The existence of excellence possessed by ECE Restu 2, hence this institution is often used as a place of research, apprenticeship and observation for students of State and Private Universities in Malang or institution of study purpose of appeal from other early childhood institute from inside town or outside city.

As ECE Restu 2, ECE As Salam institution which has the full name of ECE Integrated As Salam is a private ECE institution managed by As Salam Foundation and has A's accreditation. This institution is

located in Jasa Tirta housing complex at Jalan Damungan Riam Kanan Kelurahan Summersari Kecamatan Lowokwaru away from the highway. This institution is known as a character school because ECE As Salam has a flagship program of child character building through the prophet's shirah. Many achievements have been achieved by educators and learners As Salam, including the third winner of learning innovation contest for ECE educators, the first winner of short letter recitation of Kindergarten level B in Lowokwaru Subdistrict, the first winner of the contest in Lowokwaru Subdistrict, third winner of robotic race at Malang City, and the third winner of regular English contest.

Coaching activities for parents are also carried out routinely every month through committee activities. Cooperation activities with outsiders are often conducted by ECE As Salam, such as in cooperation with Matahati Care Foundation in positive character building program, cooperation with Bank Muamalat in saving movement program, and with UMMI Foundation in program development of Al Qur'an reading method. ECE As Salam is also often used as a place of internship, research, and observation for students of State University of Malang, Brawijaya, and University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth study on how the role of principals of ECE institutions to realize the schools that are known and desirable for the community. So far, there has not been much research that examines in depth about ECE management especially about marketing or enhancing institutional competitive advantage. This is because the phenomenon and practice of early childhood education has not been prominent in the world of education. So this study is intended to identify the strategic role that the principal undertakes to make the institution led into an institution that has a competitive advantage or high competitive ability in the community.

METHODS

The appropriate research approach for the purpose of this study is qualitative research which, according to Williams, as quoted by Faisal (1990: 21) in qualitative research informants construct and convey the reality. Furthermore, researchers try to understand and express it in writing and describe the behavior and actions of informants in accordance with the perspective of informants. Qualitative research is a naturalistic study and as a process of finding meaning based on inductive analysis and not merely a generalization process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Faisal, 2006; and Creswell, 2009). Qualitative research is also a method of inductive theoretical development by way of observation, then looking for patterns that can show on relatively universal principles (Glaser & Strauss, 1980).

The research design chosen is multicase research design. This design is used to reveal the meaning that is built from the phenomenon of the principal's role in increasing the competitive advantage of ECE institution in Malang. The research was conducted in two institutions of ECE Institute, namely Restu 2 and As Salam. Both institutions are selected based on the level of homogeneity or similarity characteristics of institutions, which are considered to have many similarities, both in terms of organizers, location, leadership, standing time, learning methods, and institutional performance.

The strategy of the researcher's presence in this research is to come directly to the research site, enter into the research community and conduct in-depth interviews on the informants. The researcher was not fully involved with the process that occurred to keep the intervention in the research subjects (Bogdan & Biklen (1998), Yin (2001) .The researcher was present at the research site to collect the data by clearly communicating the intent and purpose of the study to the principal selected as informants This is in accordance with the suggestion Bogdan & Biklen (1998)

and Creswell (2009) who said that the openness and honesty of the researcher to the research informants is the ethics in qualitative research that must be considered. Key informant of this research is the Head of School Restu 2 and As The data analysis techniques used are inductive analysis techniques which include two types of analysis, ie site analysis and cross-site analysis. In-site analysis is done through data reduction, presentation data, and conclusions (Miles, 1992).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Role of Principal in Improving Competitive Advantage of ECE Institution Restu 2

The principal of ECE Institution Restu 2 has an important role in disseminating the vision of the institution's mission. For Restu 2 the existence of vision and mission is not just a slogan or slogan institution. Vision and mission is an activity that must be done by an institution to realize the desired goals. Thus the vision and mission must be known by all members of the institutional community, such as the following explanation, "the vision of the mission must be understood by all from buguru to society. So I do not want the vision of the mission just simply taped "(W/01/KS/AY/150114). Awareness of the importance of mission vision make Restu 2 make efforts to socialize mission vision maximally. The process of socializing mission vision is carried out by the principal to teachers and employees through monthly meetings, posting mission vision in front of the school entrance so that everyone who comes to school can learn about school vision and mission. The principal has an important role in drafting the vision and mission of the institution, as follows.

Vision and mission actually existed since the establishment of this institution. But we periodically need to change the vision of this mission according to the times. So in terms of mission vision change I must prepare

the concept first, then I consult the foundation, then submitted to the teacher (W/01/K/AY/200114).

Every beginning of the new school year the institution always holds a meeting with the guardian. In this meeting discussed various programs and financial budget to be implemented during the school year. The principal has a role to draw up the concepts of the program and the budget, so that when the meeting is something discussed, the following explanation goes, "When there is a meeting I always draw up the concept of what to discuss in the meeting. This I do for the discussion in the meeting run smoothly and focus so as to provide maximum results (W/01/KS/AY/150114). The principal also gave many ideas to bring innovative programs such as congregational prayer and charity activity program, which is a program to familiarize the sense of social sensitivity of children, through the activities of compensation to the poor or orphans.

Restu 2 principal assigns all educators and employees equally in accordance with their respective abilities. The division of tasks is done with the intention that all work associated with the development of institutions and the development of learning programs can be done well. This has been done by the principal of Restu 2, as follows.

To divide the tasks that are here, I do not do carelessly. I really see each other's expertise, because every teacher has different potential. I always see this buguru fit where, so they do it with pleasure, not forced and also not feel heavy because it can not afford (W/01/KS/AY/240114).

The principal does not just let the work of the educator, but the principal always reminds, guides, and monitors the execution of the task. The principal is responsible for the workings and success of the educators in carrying out their duties. The principal also gives a warning and guidance.

In an effort to create a conducive working environment, the headmaster of Restu 2 creates a family atmosphere among

members of the institution, which is to create a comfortable school environment filled with kinship, there is cooperation and cohesion between one person and another. So as to create family relationships, as conveyed by the principal as follows.

Here our relationship is like a family relationship. Everything we consider as family. If there are problems that interfere with the relationship, I always take action to reconcile for the relationship back to be good. I always advise the mothers of the teachers so they do not like *ngrasani* colleagues in the back (W/01/KS/AY/ 200114).

Institutions always strive for no distance between the principal or between senior and junior teachers. Thus established a harmonious atmosphere as well as a family. This is understood by all educators, as Ratna's mother explained, "we at this school are like family, between teachers, employees, and principals, all working together and helping each other" (W/01/PD/Ry/120114).

The principal is the school representative who is responsible for building the network with outsiders for institutional progress. This role has been done by the headmaster of ECE Restu 2. In order to introduce the institution to the wider community and as an effort to develop the learning program, the headmaster has opened the way of cooperation with various parties such as the tourism office, the transportation agency, the agricultural service and other early childhood institutions, the following statement.

Peak activity theme is one of the activities that need to involve outsiders. I have to look for opportunities about which side we can work with. Because at every top activity theme, our children take it out, sometimes to the farm hall, sometimes to East Java Park depending on the theme. So I have to try to find an institution that can accept us. As for introducing children to traffic signs, I worked with TK Pembina yesterday, because there are complete equipment to simulate traffic signs,

the place is also wide (W/01/KS/AY/201213).

The statement indicates that a school principal should be able to seek cooperation opportunities with others to gain support for the implementation of the planned program. This is justified by parents, such as Ibu Rahman's statement, "here children are often invited out, cooperation with many institutions, such as invited to Bamboo. His parents also participate (W/01/WM/RH/140114).

Role of Principal in Improving Competitive Advantage of ECE Institution As Salam

The process of socializing the vision of the mission to all teachers can help teachers to understand the vision of the institution's mission, as described by the principal of ECE As Salam as follows.

... and in this way the teacher is very understanding and understanding. For example taqwa children can implement the Islamic values according to the Qur'an and sunnah so that formed the generation of Islamic noble character. Intelligently here we are carrying out an educational mission that develops all potential of children intelligence. We organize an active, innovative, creative, and fun educational atmosphere. All learning is done with PAKEMI. Mandiri is to provide guidance to the child in order to help themselves, discipline and responsible (k`125262,`MK, 1q

The principal advises every educator to always teach the songs and yells associated with the institution's mission vision. As one educator said as follows.

Every day the children are invited to chant yell-loaded about the vision vision of As Salam mission. The principal always reminds us that it aims to convey the vision of As Salam mission to the children. For educators, the principal also often reminds us of our mission vision during teacher meetings. (W/02/PD/ DA/180314).

The principal also plays a role in the preparation of the vision of the school mission. This is acknowledged by the principal, as follows.

Well what we did yesterday after I formulated the vision of the mission, then we socialize it to the teacher as the implementer of mission vision. We discuss all, then we discuss what we do with this vision? This mission? After all the teachers understand and agree on the vision vision of the mission, then we continue to socialize to the foundation. Then to the school committee, socialization to the parents, and to the children (W/02/KS/NK/160214).

The headmaster's explanation means that the process of preparing the mission vision begins with a draft formulation prepared by the principal. This is also acknowledged by educators, as the following information.

Back when the old headmaster, we used the old mission vision, but since the headmaster has been replaced, we have a meeting to change the vision of the mission, we educators are always included. First the principal drafted the draft, then the teachers were given the opportunity to give input (W/02/PD/ DA/ 150414).

The principal has a role in drafting the work program, to be discussed in a meeting as follows: "The principal first drafts and then divides the teacher together to be added and subtracted. When the headmaster without a draft will not produce anything when the meeting blank "blank" (without concept) "(W/02/KS/NK/150214).

Dividing or delegating tasks is one of the tasks of the principal. Therefore a principal needs to have the ability to recognize and analyze the abilities of each educator. This is done by the principal of As Salam, as follows.

experience with some teachers, the teacher has its own advantages, have their respective shortcomings so, now we see the potential of each, which can diamanahi for big jobs, which for small jobs. Because indeed we may not be big event (eg open house) we give

sing "rodo *kleler-kleler*", slow in all activities, usually we are looking for fast, precisely who have high ghiroh, also high spirit. Indeed the nature of different teachers there are kalem there are fast. So it is indeed when making this event there are 3 of our big event there is the release of open house, art performances and exhibitions. That amanalah must on the buguru fast. If other activities we rolling, all can, indeed we are still buguru and educational staff that we amanahi. Our TU employees are financially secure (W/02/KS/NK/ 240314).

The principal also has an obligation to monitor the performance of each teacher. The principal always reminds, guides, and monitors the tasks performed by the educator. Here's the principal's statement about it.

The role of headmaster to monitor, first reminds me, for example mothers later role in the open house please be prepared 12 days earlier please this form ... this ... then he has a concept, we get it. So we're more on control in planning, reminding the same later what to evaluate today especially the issue of the financial section tailored to the school program. Yes this is an evaluation control of what has been planned/ programmed (W/02/KS/NK/240314).

The role of reminding and guiding is done by the principal in order to realize the activities that have been designed and programmed. Educators also feel that the work done is always monitored and directed by the principal. This activity is done by the principal simultaneously while doing supervision, then the results are given to each educator as follows Ms. Indra's statement.

Each semester of our assignment is always rated by the principal. If there are deficiencies in our assignment, the principal always keeps a record of the supervisory format. So we know which ones to fix, and which ones to keep. So in addition to assessing, the principal also provides a record of suggestions or suggestions for improvement so that teachers can better its performance (W/02/PD/ NI/180214).

In this case the principal has a duty to motivate educators to have a passion for doing their job well, not just being an ordinary educator but a great educator. Here's the principal's statement on this.

I asked for buguru, try not to let mother when the mother becomes a teacher it is just a process of routine that is not meaningful. Make every year there is a lesson process that you can get. When the beginning of the year we learn how to lead children in the classroom, how to study in As Salam. In the second year of learning more on the curriculum, in the 3rd year learn about how to deal with troubled children. The next year maybe the mother will become a writer. So any what mothers do is always written (W/02/KS/NK/240314).

Principals always encourage and motivate educators to move forward. The principal expects that teachers come to school not just a routine but there is something meaningful and can be learned by the educator, as the headmaster expressed, "I do not want the teacher to come to school just a routine budhal pokoke" (W/02/KS/NK/240314). The principal also expects that educators in As Salam always learn continuously while doing daily teaching work. The principal always asks educators to continue learning while teaching. As the principal explains, "I am glad when a teacher asks for a preparatory center, it may be researching, so that when he conducts activities in the preparatory center is not aimless, there is something to be learned (W/02/KS/ NK/240314).

Togetherness and kinship are the working characteristics of all educators,

employees, and principals in As Salam. This is an implication of the motto applied in this school is "educate with heart and exemplary", as well as the consequences of the flagship program of institutions who want to highlight Islamic morals. Therefore ukhuwah Islamiyah is always applied in this institution. The principal has a big role in building an atmosphere of togetherness based on the principle of ukhuwah Islamiyah. Efforts made by the principal is, invite all elements in ECE institutions ranging from educators to security guards to conduct instropeksi on a regular basis. The principal has built a container for the purpose through the liqo 'program which is held monthly.

As Salam is an institution that often works with outsiders. Some of the parties that have been invited by As Salam are various print media such as Newspaper Education, Malang Post and Surya Daily, as well as various related agencies such as tourism office, transportation agency, education office, hospital, city library and various NGOs such as UMMI Foundation, YDSF, Bank Syariah Mandiri and Matahati Care Center. (D/02/180214). In conducting such cooperation the principal has a big role in opening the way of cooperation because it must conduct an analysis to determine the appropriate institutions to be invited to cooperate and then take the decision to determine whether or not to do cooperation.

Based on the exposure of the data can be drawn conclusions about the role of principals in increasing competitive advantage of early childhood institutions is as follows table.

Table 1. Final Research Findings

Category of Interim	Findings While Case I	Findings While Case II	Final Findings
Role of School Principal	Socialize vision and mission Develop concepts and ideas Sets the division of	Describe and disseminate the vision of the mission Develop a working program concept	There are 3 roles performed by the principal, namely: 1. As a drafter • Develop creative ideas

tasks	Analyze ability and	• Develop an innovative program concept
Guiding and modeling	divide tasks	
Build a family atmosphere	Guiding and monitoring the performance of educators	2. As a Linker
Seeking cooperation opportunities	Giving motivation and direction	• Socializing the vision of the mission
	Build togetherness	• Cooperate with other parties / parents
	Building cooperation with other parties	3. As Controller
		• Manage the division of tasks
		• Build a family atmosphere
		• Monitor educator tasks

From the results of this study can be said that the role of school principals in a school institution holds a very big influence, as the results of research conducted by Zembat (2010) about the relationship of school effectiveness with leadership style of the principal. Based on Zembat's research, it is concluded that the effectiveness and success of a group institution will be greatly influenced by the managerial ability and leadership style of the principal. An important role that must be done by a principal in order to increase the value of agency services is to structuring the internal condition of the institution.

The first thing the principal must do is to understand the mission vision of the institution, to operationalize and socialize the vision of the mission so that it can be easily understood by all members of the school. In addition to translating and disseminating the institution's mission vision, the principal plays a major role in drafting concepts and developing ideas to bring out creative and innovative programs. The idea constructed by the principal was then drafted in a draft program and subsequently deliberated in an institutional meeting.

The principal has a great responsibility in terms of character building of educators. Principals play a role in mentoring and motivating educators to be good characters. Building awareness of educators and fostering a positive morale becomes an important thing done by the principal. So it can be said that the

principal in this case acts as a motivator of educators (Hunsaker, 2002: 19). In the case of character building the principal educator also has a role in conveying the organization's core values to all personnel of the institution including educators. Principal do not only do guidance by command or guidance alone but the most important is through giving examples or give exemplary.

The principal instills awareness to educators and employees in order to have the spirit, aspirations, and values of the institution such as excellent service, innovation, teamwork, respect for others, honesty and fair value, and social benefits (Jasfar 2009: 234). Neugebauer (1985) identifies four models of leadership in early childhood, namely (1) task mastery is a leadership model that emphasizes the task or results; (2) friendship emphasizes relationships and morals; (3) the motivator emphasizes task and relationship; and (4) not the leader who does not emphasize the task or the relationship. But research often proves that the leadership model in early childhood is a motivational leadership that pays attention to interpersonal and involvement of educators in decision making.

According to Geoghehan (2003) ECE leadership is said to be a leadership that bases on multigaya leadership and not leadership based on one style of leadership. Monitoring the performance and development of the character of the educator is routinely done by the principal, so that when there is a character

deviation then the principal can immediately take action. If there is a conflict between educators then the principal acts as a (resolver of conflict) to solve the problem (Hunsaker, 2002: 19). To build good performance from the principal educators and employees, the role of delegator (Hunsaker, 2012: 19) is to divide the task and role to the personnel of the institution.

The role of the principal in organizing the internal institution, which includes the activities of describing the vision of the mission, fostering and mobilizing educators, improving facilities and infrastructure facilities is a role associated with internal marketing strategy. The role is in accordance with Permendiknas No. 13 of 2007 on Principal Standards which explains that a principal as a leader of an educational institution should have entrepreneurial competence, which includes the ability to create innovations that are useful for school development, the ability to work hard to achieve school success, strong to succeed in carrying out the main task and function as a school leader, and never give up and always find the best solution in facing obstacles faced by school.

Efforts to increase the institution's competitive advantage are strongly supported by the role of principals in promoting institutions through various means and media. Among them the principal seeks opportunities for cooperation with outsiders or third parties who have the value of profits to be invited to cooperation. The principal's effort to work with outsiders is intended as a concrete step in making changes in schools. In this case the principal acts as a linker or source link. Relationships with outsiders are necessary when an institution wants the existence of the institution to be recognized and recognized by the public. The principal is the responsible party to seek cooperation opportunities and design the follow-up efforts of the cooperation. As a liaison with the parties invited to cooperation, the principal needs to have the competence to determine the strategic parties to be invited to cooperate. Interwoven

cooperation built by the institution can as well as a media campaign for the institution.

The next role the principal undertakes is to maintain the quality of agency services. Keeping the characteristic or image that has been owned by the institution can still exist and the institution is still considered different from the competitors (Jasfar, 2009: 239). The concrete role of the institution to maintain the quality of services of the ECE Institution is to build an atmosphere of *kebersamaan*. This method is done by the principal so that every member of the institution both educators and employees can work well and work together to realize the goals of the institution. The atmosphere of togetherness can be established if the principal is able to move the heart of heart (encouraging the heart) and the spirit of all members of the institution to give the best to the institution (Jasfar, 2009: 239). This is often done by the principal is always giving awareness to all educators and employees in order to work seriously and not just doing routine activities only.

The principal motivates all educators and employees to work innovatively for school change and progress. This role is done by the principal as a professional person as Marjorry Ebbeck's opinion constantly encourages all members to do the same to achieve the goals of the institution (Hunsaker, 2002: 20). Furthermore, ECE school principals also carry out the role of a controller to ensure that each program can run as planned and every individual in the institution has performed its role well. The things that can be done to realize the role is by reminding, asking, guiding and directing. The principal always reminds all educators and employees about the task to be done. The role of the principal of the ECE School is included in the leadership behaviors that are oriented towards the relationship between people, that is leadership that is more concerned with leader behavior that leads to a relationship of trust, mutual trust, mutual respect, and full of warmth of relationship between leadership and staff

Meltzers, 2018; Etzioni, 1964; Cartwright and Zander, 1953; Hoy and Miskel, 1982).

The various roles performed show that the principal in turn has done the job as a manager and manager, as Law and Glover (2002: 13) argue that both terms tend to be used interchangeably. The principal as the leader of ECE institution is a person who has a big role in managing the dynamics of early childhood education services. To run a strategy established by the institution, the principals must work in a system that is in the strategic planning process (Brown, 2011: 3-8).

The findings on the role of principal complement the theory offered by Kotler (1995: 126) about the five principal roles in promoting educational services that include improving the quality of a more vigorous or deft performance, improving service quality, adding equipment, creating new services, and make more effective management. The role of the principal as the head of the institution becomes another thing that also has a strategic value in an effort to increase the strategic value of agency services. The role of the leader as well as the manager presented by the principal in this study brings implications for the need for competence and qualifications and the adequate character of a principal. Head of ECE institutions are required to have the qualifications and competencies that qualify to become a leader. Not only educational background is appropriate in the field of early childhood education, but a ECE head office should be a person who has the ability to create and innovate in preparing the appropriate program and the public interest.

The most important thing is that a ECE headmaster should be able to portray himself as a change agent in a led institution. Boardman (2003) suggests that early childhood leaders face diverse and complex challenges, so headmasters should have extensive experience and knowledge to create a vision that will inspire staff support. Further Brock (2013) states that the principal is one of the determinants of the professionalism of an early childhood institution.

CONCLUSION

The role of school principals in increasing the competitive advantage of ECE institutions is categorized into three major roles, namely (1) as a drafter that plays a role in drafting the concept of innovative learning program or menu so that the institution has a unique and easily recognized in the community. The principal also plays a role in developing creative ideas in terms of guidance of educators to foster parents' beliefs, develop the concept of organizational setting, fulfillment of infrastructure to create comfort, and develop the concept of easy and affordable financing by parents; (2) as a linker, which plays a role in conveying the vision of the mission to all members of the institution in order to be understood and implemented properly.

Principals play a role in developing cooperation networks with other parties/ parents to assist in the development of the character of educators, the fulfillment of infrastructure facilities, and the extracting of financing sources; and (3) as a controller, which is to play a role in maintaining the quality of service of the institution through the activity of dividing the task of educators according to their respective expertise so that every educator is able to work well in handling the child so that the parents have trust to the institution.

The principal also plays a role in building an atmosphere of kinship among educators to build a conducive working environment, and constantly guide and monitor the implementation of the tasks of educators. As a person who has a role as a drafter, a ECE headmaster has the responsibility to offer and socialize development ideas for the led institution. Therefore, in the effort of recruiting candidate head of ECE institution, creativity aspect and social skill of a candidate head of institution need to be priority.

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