



## The Role of the Principal in Implementing Data-Based Education Planning at Kindergarten

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**Abstract:** This research aims to describe and analyze the principal's experiences implementing data-based educational planning at TK Negeri Sunter Agung, North Jakarta. Data-based education planning is a strategic approach that uses objective data from the Education Report to analyze work programs, annual activity plans, and school activity and budget plans. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study methodology. Interviews, observations, and document analysis are the data collection techniques used. Data sources consist of primary data (school principal, teachers, school operator, and school committees) and secondary data (educational reports, annual activity plans, school activity and budget plans, curriculum, school profiles, etc.). Research findings indicate that the principal plays a crucial role as a driver of data collection, a leader in implementing data-based educational planning, an empowerer of teachers and academic staff, a collaborator, and an executor of monitoring and evaluation activities.

**Abstrak:** Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menggambarkan dan menganalisis pengalaman kepala sekolah dalam menerapkan perencanaan pendidikan berbasis data di TK Negeri Sunter Agung, Jakarta Utara. Perencanaan pendidikan berbasis data adalah pendekatan strategis yang menggunakan data objektif dari Rapor Pendidikan sebagai dasar untuk menganalisis program kerja, rencana kegiatan tahunan, dan rencana kegiatan dan anggaran sekolah. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metodologi studi kasus. Wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen adalah teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan. Sumber data terdiri dari data primer (kepala sekolah, guru, operator sekolah, dan komite sekolah) dan data sekunder (rapor pendidikan, RKT, RKAS, kurikulum, dan profil sekolah, dan lain-lain). Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala sekolah memainkan peran penting sebagai penggerak pengumpulan data, pemimpin implementasi perencanaan pendidikan berbasis data, pemberdaya guru dan tenaga pendidikan, kolaborator, dan pelaksana kegiatan monitoring dan evaluasi.

## A. Introduction

Educational planning is a strategic step in determining education's direction, goals, and policies to achieve optimal results. Good planning enables the effective and efficient management of educational resources, thereby improving the quality of learning and ensuring equitable access to education. Planning should not be taken lightly or considered merely a formality that can be ignored during the execution of activities (Prasetyono et al., 2022). However, many educational institutions implement strategies or policies based on estimates, predictions, or subjective beliefs without valid and structured data. When educational policies are made without being supported by strong data, there is a high possibility of a gap between the designed strategies and the conditions on the ground. As a result, educational resources may not be allocated optimally, and the implemented policies may be less effective in improving the quality of learning and access to education.

Data-based planning is crucial for determining the success of an educational institution in formulating strategies that are useful for improving the quality of education (Nurzen, 2022). Therefore, the principal plays a strategic role in developing data-based educational planning that aligns with the real needs of the school. The principal in the planning process serves as the director of the school's vision and mission, ensuring that every program designed can support the achievement of the school's long-term goals. Data-based education planning becomes necessary for the principal, in this case, so that every decision truly reflects the school's needs to improve the quality of education in their school. A decision must address planning and what needs to be done (Khosy' in, 2021). The use of valid and structured data allows schools to identify problems more accurately, design appropriate solutions, and evaluate the effectiveness of the policies that have been implemented. Schools can identify problems, plan appropriate interventions, and evaluate the results using data. Thus, educational policies are no longer based merely on assumptions or estimates but on accountable empirical evidence.

The Ministry of Education and Culture launched the education report (*Rapor Pendidikan*) platform in April 2022, which serves as the primary data source in data-based educational planning to improve the quality of education. The data obtained from the education report will serve as the basis for identifying the challenges faced by educational units so that the planning and policies made are more targeted and evidence-based. The purpose of the education report is to measure the performance of education in schools (Syamsuddin & Harianto, 2023). The education report is expected to provide recommendations on data-based education planning and map the region's quality of education (Shintia et al., 2023). Schools will review the results of the education report obtained as a reference in preparing future education plans. Data-based education planning is the government's effort to improve the education planning process by referring to or basing it on the available education report (Oktody et al., 2024). Data-based education planning is not just a planning tool but also a new culture in educational governance that is more transparent, accountable, and focused on improving education quality. Several steps must be taken in the implementation of data-based education planning. The steps are

identification, reflection, and improvement. These steps are used to improve educational services to be more flexible and aligned with the needs of the students (Muthalib et al., 2025; Fuad & Iswantir, 2024).

In addition to the primary data source in data-based education planning, which comes from educational reports, the supplementary sources come from the school community, namely teachers, educational staff, students, school committees, and other stakeholders. The principal can improve school quality by optimally utilizing these diverse data sources (Schildkamp, 2019). Utilizing these diverse data sources allows the school to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the actual conditions in the school environment. As the decision-maker, the principal can analyze data obtained from various parties to identify needs, challenges, and opportunities in improving the quality of learning and school management. The utilization of data from various sources also supports the decision-making process. The principal can use it to formulate policies, allocate resources, and design more effective educational quality improvement programs.

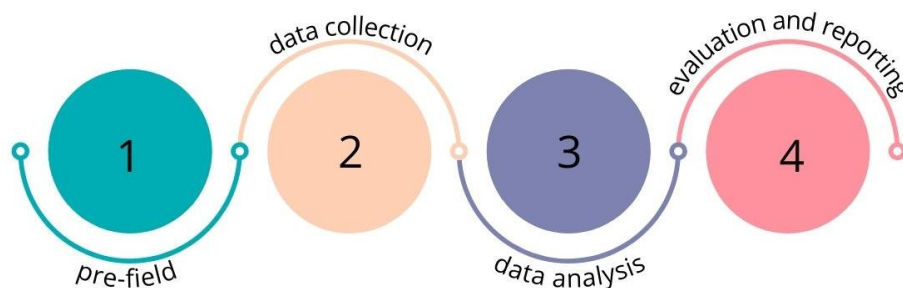
In the implementation of school management, the stages of planning, organizing, and controlling (POAC) are interrelated stages that must be carried out systematically for a school to function well. These four stages are closely related to educational planning, which is the foundation for determining the direction, strategy, and educational policies to achieve the jointly established goals. Several recent studies examine data-based educational planning. The research conducted by Musakirawati et al (2023) highlights that in implementing data-based education planning, educational reports are used to identify the sources of problems, evaluate achievements, and provide stakeholders with materials for constructive discussions. Next, the research conducted by Astutiningtyas et al (2024) focuses on implementing data-based education planning in managing educational financing by identifying priority issues and enhancing transparency in the management of educational costs. The research conducted by Nurcahyati et al (2024) highlights that the preparation of school activity plan, annual activity plan, and school activity and budget plan become more targeted and relevant, supported by accurate data, making educational planning more efficient, transparent, easy to implement, and accountable. Next, the research conducted by Endang et al (2024) highlights that although data-based education planning has been carried out by identifying issues through educational reports, implementing these findings has not been optimal in preparing school activity and budget plans. The research conducted by Setianto et al (2024) highlights the implementation of data-based education planning, which faces various challenges due to its reliance on established systems and applications. Thus, these studies focus more on the final output aspect of data-based education planning: preparing the school budget allocation plan.

This research aims to fill that gap by highlighting the importance of the principal's role in implementing data-based planning, resulting in final outputs in the form of the School Work Plan and the School Budget Plan tailored to the school's needs. This research aims to explore how school principals play a role in the implementation of data-based educational planning, thereby mobilizing all components of the school to synergize in

improving the quality of education. The focus of this research is to analyze the role of the principal in the stages of implementing data-based education planning to develop strategies for educational planning that can improve the quality of education. This research aims to contribute to school principals as school leaders in performing their roles in planning education based on data. The findings of this research are expected to serve as a reference for school principals and other stakeholders in improving the quality of education, particularly in educational planning. The main question highlighted in this research is how the role of the principal in implementing data-based education planning. The novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on the role of the principal in the implementation of data-based education planning.

## B. Method

This research is a qualitative study using case study analysis techniques to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of school principals in data-based educational planning. Qualitative research aims to explore a deep understanding of issues related to humans in social life (Fadli, 2021). This approach enabled the researcher to understand and explore the school principal's experiences, views, and actions in implementing data-based educational planning. This research was conducted at TK Negeri Sunter Agung, North Jakarta. The data collection techniques in this research include interviews, observations, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with the principal, teacher, educator, and the school committee to obtain information about the principal's role in implementing data-based education planning. Observation was conducted to observe the principal's behavior, activities, and involvement in implementing data-based education planning. Meanwhile, documentation is used to gather supporting data such as educational reports, identification-reflection-improvement sheets, annual activity plan/school activity and budget plan sheets, school profile sheets, and other relevant documents to strengthen the research results.



**Figure 1.** The Flow of Qualitative Case Study Research Stages (Moleong, 2017)

The data analysis techniques include data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is carried out by sorting and summarizing important information from interviews, observations, and documentation, thereby sharpening the focus of this research. The summarized data is then presented as descriptive narratives to facilitate the identification of patterns, themes, and relationships between variables that emerge from

field findings. The presentation of this data aims to provide a systematic and clear overview of the aspects being studied. The final stage is drawing conclusions, which is done by interpreting the overall analysis results to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the principal's role in implementing data-based education planning. This conclusion is the basis for relevant recommendations or follow-up actions to enhance the effectiveness of data-based education planning implementation in schools.

## C. Result and Discussion

### Result

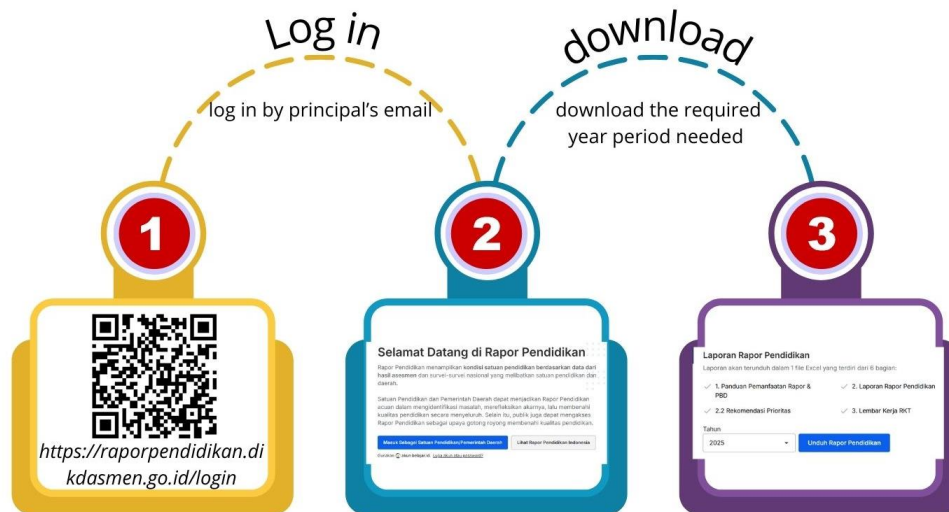
#### Data-Based Education Planning

Using valid, relevant, and accurate data has become an essential foundation in formulating targeted educational policies and programs in digital transformation and information openness. Data-based education planning has become a strategic approach that relies on data as the basis for decision-making in planning academic programs and policies, using data presented on the academic report platform. Data-based decision-making by school principals implemented in data-based education planning is critical because every intervention carried out by educational units, the education office, or local governments can address schools' real problems. Data-based education planning is an intervention method for schools, education offices, and local governments that utilizes data from the education report platform to improve educational outcomes and quality (Endang et al., 2024). School problems can be recognized, examined, and resolved using data-based education planning (Mundayati, 2022).

By using educational reports, educational units can get a complete picture of the state of the educational services they offer, including student development accomplishments, equitable access to high-quality educational services, the availability and skill of teachers and staff, the quality of the learning process, and the quality of management of educational units. In addition to reflecting the school's performance, the data is used to create annual work plans, set priorities, and develop systematic improvement measures. According to Ritonga et al (2022), the education report is an evaluation tool that includes data on the quality of education in a specific region. To assess the quality of education through academic accomplishments, every school in Indonesia administers a national assessment that includes the minimum competency assessment, learning environment survey (*Sulingjar*), and character survey (Nurbani et al., 2024). Educational units can not only comprehend the current state of educational services but also pinpoint the underlying issues that could impede the enhancement of the quality of education in schools by using the data displayed on the education report platform.

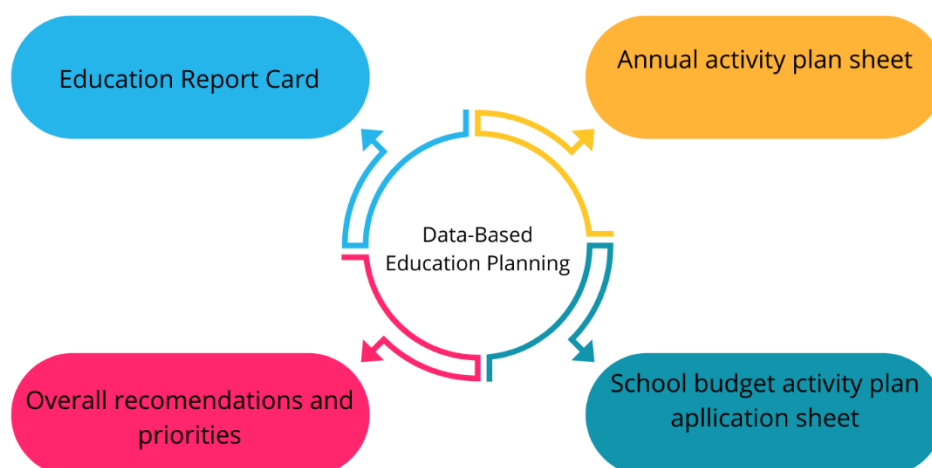
The education report platform the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education created has several established guidelines for accessing it. Only school principals or those with official authority can access the education report using a verified and registered account. The principal must first visit the education report website at <https://raporpendidikan.dikdasmen.go.id/login>. After successfully logging in, the main

dashboard displays an overview of the educational unit's status based on the evaluation results of data synchronized through *Dapodik* and *Sulingjar*. Three colors display the categories of indicator assessment. Each indicator is depicted in a color-coded graph that facilitates interpretation. Green indicates good condition, yellow indicates moderate, and red indicates poor indicators. The principal and the educational planning team can use this information to determine the main priorities that will be the primary focus of the work program and budget planning for the upcoming year (Suhartawan et al., 2024).



**Figure 2.** The Way to Download the Education Report

Data-based education planning also enhances cooperation between local governments, education departments, and schools to support education transformation. The process of planning and policy-making that is more responsible, inclusive, and well-coordinated depends on this cooperation. All stakeholders can come together with a shared understanding of the educational conditions in their respective regions if they have equal access to and understanding of educational achievement data through education reports. At all levels of the education system, significant efforts are needed to build data literacy, enhance information transparency, and strengthen data management capabilities if data-based education planning is to be successfully implemented and significantly improve the quality of learning and educational services. To support the implementation of data-based education planning, these three factors will ensure that the available data is collected, carefully examined, and strategically applied. To be successfully implemented, data-based education planning requires several things: teachers trained in data analysis, adequate technological resources, and a school culture supporting data-driven decision-making (Nikmah et al., 2024).



**Figure 3.** Education Report Cycle Scheme and Data-Based Education Planning

Four schemes showing the systematic relationship between educational reports and the data-based education planning process as an integrated continuous cycle are based in Figure 2. This plan shows how information and data from various sources inform educational planning and policies in educational units. First, this data-based education planning cycle begins with an education report card. Data on the quality achievements of the education unit based on several indicators analyzed nationally are included in this report. In addition to providing quantitative data, this report offers interpretative narratives that help schools understand their actual performance and conditions. Second, overall recommendations and priorities from the educational report card are generated. These recommendations serve as a starting point for identifying important issues and areas that need to be developed. The gap between actual achievements and national education standards, as well as the specific needs of each school, are considered when setting priorities.

Third, the school principal and the education planning team prepare the annual activity plan. Based on the recommendations from the priority report in the data-based education planning report, the annual activity plan is a strategic document that outlines the annual work program of the educational unit. The annual activity plan created consists of planned activities, not just meaningless routine programs, that genuinely meet the needs on the ground. Fourth, the planning process continues into the sheet from the school activity and budget plan application after completing the annual activity plan. This is where all the planned activities are transformed into specific budget allocations. The principal, along with the school operational assistance/early childhood education operational assistance fund management team involving teachers and the school committee, designs and prepares the school activity and budget plan by analyzing the needs required by the school to create appropriate school programs (Yanti, 2021). So that all parties involved can understand and support the direction of the school's policies, the school must involve the school committee both in the planning and implementation stages of activities to ensure transparency and accountability.

## Principal Leadership

The school principal's leadership plays a role in determining the direction, culture, and quality of education in educational institutions. The principal, who is at the center of school management, handles administrative tasks and stimulates creativity and change. From input and the learning process's implementation to the institution's final educational outcomes, the principal guides every phase of education (Julaiha, 2019). Good leadership is demonstrated by inspiring, creating a shared vision, and maximizing school resources to achieve high educational standards. The principal is a change agent who can identify problems, find creative solutions, and encourage the implementation of long-term school development initiatives. The principal formulates academic goals and supports teachers by providing the necessary resources so that the classroom learning process aligns with those goals (Fitri et al., 2022). The principal significantly contributes to the development of a good working environment. The principal can build mutual trust and commitment to achieving a great educational vision by fostering positive professional relationships among teachers, staff, students, and parents. Thanks to participatory leadership, teachers, school operators, and school committees are given a sense of involvement in decision-making, which encourages accountability and motivates everyone to put forth their best effort. The principal's leadership style greatly influences the moral development of teachers, harmonious cooperation, interest in educational advancement, a pleasant work environment, and improved professional quality (Hanafiah, 2018).

In the framework of modern education, which increasingly emphasizes responsibility and data-based success, school principals must become strategic leaders who can adapt to challenges and integrate various data in the decision-making process. Principals must also possess sharp analytical skills in interpreting educational data, whether from educational reports, learning assessments, or internal reflections of the educational unit. A professional school principal can adapt to the needs of the educational world and evolve in the changing times in an increasingly interconnected world (Minsih et al., 2019). Principals must be flexible and sensitive to the needs of students as well as policy changes to address the ever-evolving dynamics of education. Transformational leadership encourages a positive and forward-thinking school culture and raises educational standards.

The principal's leadership is among the most important factors in developing a high-quality educational institution. A principal must possess six main standards, according to Permendiknas Number 13 Year 2007: personal competence, managerial competence, entrepreneurial competence, supervisory competence, social competence, and learning leadership competence. This foundation is for leading, supervising, and developing the school comprehensively and sustainably based on these six standards. School principals can become agents of change to meet the current educational needs. This includes encouraging the adoption of data-driven educational planning, which is more efficient and flexible and directly impacts improving school education quality.

## The Role of the Principal in Data-Based Education Planning

Implementing quality education can undoubtedly result in educational efficiency for an educational institution (Mahmudah & Putra, 2021). The more effective and directed the available resources are, the better the quality of education management will be. In addition to impacting students' learning outcomes, it directly contributes to the efficiency of managing educational institutions. Human resources, time, or budget will be more targeted when planning, implementing, and evaluating education systematically and data-based according to its needs. Data-based education planning is essential in improving educational units' quality amidst the increasing demands for accountability and effectiveness. The principal acts as a change agent who strategically determines the direction and policies of the school to align with the actual needs of the students. The principal ensures that the data-based education planning process is inclusive, participatory, and based on real conditions involving teachers, school operators, and the school committee. Therefore, the success of data-based education planning implementation in educational units greatly depends on how well the principal can effectively perform their role.

Educational planning is important to school quality management (Nikmah et al., 2024). Therefore, it is important to implement data-based education planning led by the principal as a tactical method to improve educational standards. In addition to making decisions, the principal also acts as a leader who encourages using data to inform program planning at the school. One of the noteworthy outcomes is the principal's ability to organize an educational planning team to process information from various sources, including educational reports, assessment results, and surveys. Priority issues in the school are determined by analyzing all the data. The annual activity plan, which aligns with the analysis findings, is then prepared with the help of the principal. Therefore, the principal's contribution to implementing the educational plan is that of a strategic leader and guardian of educational quality in their school.

Permendikbud Number 6 Year 2018 explains that the principal has three main tasks: managerial, entrepreneurship development, and supervising teachers and educational staff. These three main tasks cannot be separated in supporting the success of educational administration, especially in implementing data-based education planning at TK Negeri Sunter Agung.

**Table 1.** Principal's Main Duties

No.	Main Duties	Explanation of Main Duties
1	Managerial	Ensuring that the entire process of planning, implementation, and evaluation of school programs is carried out systematically using valid data.
2	Entrepreneurship development	Seeing innovation opportunities for educational programs that can enhance school services, utilizing available data sources creatively and efficiently based on planning data.

No.	Main Duties	Explanation of Main Duties
3	Conducting supervision of teachers and education staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitoring the extent to which the planned program implementation runs in the classroom and school environment.</li> <li>2. Providing feedback, mentoring, and developing the capacity of teachers and school operators in understanding and using data.</li> </ol>

Talking about the transformation of school leadership in this digital era refers to how school principals change how they manage schools and use technology effectively (Rosmini et al., 2024). In this era of educational transformation, the role of the principal is becoming increasingly important because the principal ensures that every educational policy and program is based on accurate and relevant data. The success of implementing data-based educational planning heavily relies on the leadership capacity of the principal in utilizing data as the basis for making precise, effective, and sustainable decisions. There are five roles of the principal in the implementation of data-based education planning, namely as a driver of data collection, a leader in the implementation of data-based education, an empowerer of teachers and educational staff, a collaborator with various parties, and a monitor and evaluator of ongoing processes. These five leading roles have been carried out optimally and consistently, allowing the principal to ensure that the educational process at TK Negeri Sunter Agung runs according to the actual needs of the school, is oriented towards quality improvement, and is sustainable in its implementation.

## Discussion

To face the challenges of 21st-century education, where students must possess essential skills to actively participate in real life (Wijaya et al., 2016), the role of the principal as a leader in educational institutions is no longer limited to administrative tasks alone. Principals must have a strategic capacity to manage schools comprehensively, particularly in developing practical and relevant educational planning. First, the principal is the driving force behind data collection. The principal plays a crucial role as the main driver in data collection and analysis at TK Negeri Sunter Agung. The principal actively conducts various data collection activities related to the school's condition, student achievements, quality of learning, and the availability of facilities and infrastructure. The principal provides guidance and support to teachers to understand data as a basis for designing school development programs. The principal invites teachers and educators to actively participate in filling out the questions on the learning environment survey website (*sulingjar*). The results from filling out the *sulingjar* will later be displayed in the educational unit report. The education report issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture will be used as the primary data source for identifying, reflecting on, and improving indicators that still need enhancement for educational planning activities, which are usually conducted during work meetings to determine the annual work plan and the preparation of the school work and budget plan.

Second, the principal of TK Negeri Sunter Agung is a leader in implementing data-based educational planning. The principal is responsible for translating data analysis results into strategic steps that can be realistically implemented within the school environment. Therefore, this role requires the principal to have a clear vision and mission and good communication skills so that all school members understand the direction and goals the school aims to achieve. The principal ensures that the entire educational planning process – from problem identification and prioritization of issues to preparing annual programs and budget plans – is based on objective educational report data, learning outcome evaluations, and other data. As a leader of change, the principal must thoroughly understand the policies (Kamaludin, 2023).

Third, the principal of TK Negeri Sunter Agung also empowers teachers and educational staff. The principal builds the capacity and competence of all educational elements to optimally contribute to implementing data-based educational planning. This empowerment is about giving instructions or directions and creating a work environment that supports collaboration, continuous learning, and reflection. The principal encourages teachers and educational staff to understand the importance of data in the learning process and school management. The principal provides space for teachers to participate in decision-making and develop school programs, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility toward achieving educational goals. In this case, the principal builds a solid and professional educational planning team that impacts the school's quality of education. The empowerment carried out by the principal is not just about assigning tasks and authority but also about providing a whole decision-making process and responsibility (Hulmiati et al., 2021).

Fourth, the principal of TK Negeri Sunter Agung acts as a collaborator with various parties. The principal collaborates with the education office and teacher organizations to develop the professionalism of teachers and educational staff through training activities, workshops, and community discussions with other kindergartens in North Jakarta, especially in Tanjung Priok sub-district, as well as mentoring in interpreting educational report data, filling out learning journals, classroom observation results, and various other topics. So that teachers and academic staff can formulate appropriate learning strategies that meet the needs of students and the actual conditions in the classroom. In carrying out their duties, the principal must also collaborate with the school committee as an advisory body to establish school policies (Kamaludin, 2023). The collaboration carried out by the principal is not limited to the internal scope of the school but also includes external partnerships because the principal synergizes to expand innovation, obtain resource support, and strengthen data-based educational planning practices to be more comprehensive and contextual.

Fifth, the principal of TK Negeri Sunter Agung conducts continuous monitoring and evaluation as an integral part of implementing data-based educational planning. These monitoring and evaluation activities ensure that every program and activity planned in the annual activity plan truly runs according to the objectives and impacts, improving the

quality of educational services at the school. This activity is conducted regularly and systematically every few months, where the principal can identify obstacles in program implementation, directly observe the teaching and learning process, and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies that have been applied. As a supervisor, the principal must ensure that all school programs necessary for the school's progress have been fulfilled and evaluate which school programs have been met or not met (Hulmiati et al., 2021). These monitoring and evaluation results will serve as the basis for continuous improvement. The principal uses the findings from the monitoring and assessment to adjust the work plan for the following year, strengthen the interventions of successful programs, and address any shortcomings that arise.

#### **D. Conclusion**

In facing the challenges of 21st-century education, school principals play an increasingly strategic role in ensuring that the educational process runs effectively, relevantly, and is data-based. The principal no longer serves merely as an administrator but has become a transformational leader capable of directing all elements of the school toward a comprehensive improvement in the quality of education. Through the implementation of data-based educational planning at TK Negeri Sunter Agung, it can be concluded that the role of the principal encompasses five main aspects, namely: (1) as a driver of data collection; (2) as a leader in the implementation of data-based educational planning; (3) as an empowerer of teachers and educational staff; (4) as a collaborator; (5) as an executor of continuous monitoring and evaluation.

The findings regarding the strategic role of the principal in the implementation of data-based educational planning involve carrying out administrative functions and becoming a key player in building a data-based decision-making culture. The importance of enhancing school principals' capacity in literacy and strategic management. This requires ongoing training and mentoring by the education department or training institutions for school principals to strengthen their competence in designing work programs based on relevant and accurate data. Schools also need to develop a structured data management system so that the planning process is more targeted and aligned with the actual needs present in the school. The involvement of teachers, educational staff, and school committees in academic planning must also be strengthened to create inclusive and sustainable collaboration.

This research provides an initial overview of the role of school principals in implementing data-based educational planning, particularly in kindergarten educational units. To enrich perspectives and expand the scope of analysis, it is recommended that future research involve more educational units with diverse backgrounds and characteristics, both geographically and in terms of school status (public or private), as well as other educational levels, such as elementary, middle, and high schools. Another suggestion is to deepen the study of the challenges faced by school principals in implementing data-based planning, including technical obstacles, work culture, and

government policy support.

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