# The Role of the Principal in Era 4.0 in Improving School Quality through Democratic Leadership at Santa Lucia Kindergarten Medan

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#### **Abstract**

This study aims to determine the role/relationship of the Principal in Era 4.0 in improving school quality through democratic leadership at Santa Lucia Kindergarten located in the Medan region. The population and sample in this study amounted to 130 students with a sample of 56 people. The data collection method in this study was a questionnaire or questionnaire. The data analysis technique used was simple linear regression analysis, t test and determination test. The conclusion is that school principals in Era 4.0 have a positive and significant effect/relationship on democratic leadership, school principals in Era 4.0 have a positive and significant effect/relationship on improving school quality, leadership has a positive and democratic significant effect/relationship on improving school quality, school principals in Era 4.

Keywords teacher ability; student achievement



#### I. Introduction

The principal is the highest position in a school organization. Apart from being a leader, the principal is responsible for the activities carried out in the school. The principal has very high demands to lead all components in the school, both students, teachers and employees. Principals as school leaders and managers have a very important role in facing the challenges of the industrial revolution 4.0, therefore school principals are required to have an entrepreneurial spirit, be good at opening networks and partnerships with various stakeholders (stakeholders). The biggest challenge in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 is how we can survive in this era.

In an effort to improve the quality of schools in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, one of the important components to realize it lies in the important leadership role of school principals in educational institutions. Principals are required to be able to carry out effective and efficient leadership in the sense that they can develop and build leadership oriented towards school management (Fitra Nita Nur, Mardia Hi Rahman, Marwia Tamrin Bakar, 2023).

In carrying out its leadership function, the principal is expected to be able to develop and build leadership that is oriented towards school management. If the principal's leadership factor is not implemented properly, no matter how big the input is, the output will not be optimal. Principals must pay attention to human resources in an effort to improve quality so that they are able to compete in facing the challenges of the 4.0 industrial revolution era. The role of the school principal as an educator must be able to guide educators, guide students, and follow the development of science and technology. Apart from the role of the school principal in improving the quality of schools, democratic

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leadership must also be able to influence and mobilize members in school institutions (F. Viktor Zebua, et al, 2022).

Democratic leadership is an ability to influence other people so that they are willing to work together in achieving the goals that have been set in various ways or activities that can be carried out which are determined jointly between subordinates and leaders. The characteristics of this democratic leadership are having leader authority that is not absolute, leaders are willing to delegate some authority to subordinates, policies and decisions are made jointly between subordinates and leaders, communication can take place in two directions where leaders are subordinates and vice versa, supervision towards (attitudes, actions, behavior or activities) to subordinates is carried out fairly, and leaders will pay attention to actions and attitudes to create mutual trust and respect (Dea Mustika, et al, 2022).

Principal leadership in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 must of course be professional and able to read the changes that occur because of ideal leadership, namely democratic leadership that follows technological developments. In addition, the Principal also plays a role in improving school quality, there are several things that must be done by the Principal in improving school quality, namely the use of information technology, training, mentoring and guidance, developing discipline and continuous supervision (Muhammad Rasyid Ridho, 2022).

Principal leadership plays an important role in improving the quality of schools, especially in responding to globalization in the 4.0 era. In order for leadership to work effectively, a school principal needs to understand how to be an effective school principal. Besides that, to increase their capacity as a leader, the principal should have competencies that can support his professional performance. One effort that can be done to overcome this global competition is to improve the quality of human resources. The most strategic increase in human resources that can be carried out by the Government of Indonesia is to improve the quality of education through educational equity and improving the quality of education (schools).

Improving the quality of schools by fulfilling infrastructure alone does not guarantee an increase in the quality of human resources produced without the intervention of professionals who manage them properly. This is because the quality of schools is determined more by the principal as the school leader. A successful school must be led by a qualified principal. Therefore, school principals play a key role in empowering all the resources in schools to improve the quality of the schools they lead (Rina Damayanti and Elly Jumiyati, 2020).

The biggest challenge in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 is how we can survive in this era. Principals must have special skills in order to survive in the current of globalization and advance the schools they lead. The flow of globalization and the advancement of 21st century learning must be properly addressed. One example is changing the mindset of today's children which is also a challenge for a school principal and his staff to be able to get the best solution to overcome it. Seeing various problems in the world of education with the industrial revolution 4.0 and 21st century learning, Principals are expected to innovate and have brilliant ideas to be able to understand the opportunities that occur in the industrial revolution so that they can come up with the right solutions for school principals in facing the industrial revolution era (Lilis Kholifatul Jannah, 2020). It is hoped that the leadership challenges of school principals in the era of the industrial revolution will lead to appropriate solutions for school principals in carrying out their duties and functions in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 in improving the

quality of schools through democratic leadership, especially in the Santa Lucia Medan Kindergarten.

Santa Lucia Kindergarten is located in the Medan area and has a very large area in the middle of a densely populated settlement. The principal of TK Santa Lucia Medan can contribute to the democratic attitude of teachers which can be reflected in teaching and improving school quality. Based on the above, it is necessary to know the role of school principals in fostering a democratic attitude of teachers which can be reflected in their performance, both in the implementation of teaching and learning activities, orderly administration and in improving teacher competence.

The role of school principals in the 4.0 era has played a big role in fostering a democratic attitude towards teachers in the schools they lead. As well as being able to provide an alternative to the field of education as an addition to the literature on what kind of democratic attitudes a teacher must have which can be fostered through the role of the school principal.

#### II. Review of Literature

## 2.1 The Role of the Principal

The principal as a leader must have criteria that can improve the quality of the school itself. What a school principal must have is democratic, open and straightforward leadership (Mulyasa, 2011). In this case, the principal has a very large role in carrying out his function as a manager, supervisor, leader and motivator in guiding teachers to become professional educators by displaying a democratic attitude that can be imitated by their subordinates or teachers. A democratic leader must always encourage his subordinates to provide good work productivity (Engkoswara & Komariyah, 2010).

The principal's role is to lead the school and its employees by providing guidance and supervision, increasing morale, facilitating two-way communication, and delegating responsibility. The role of the principal as an innovator requires careful preparation to foster constructive relationships with the wider community, pursue new perspectives and integrate all school activities. and create cuts. sophisticated teaching methods (Fetia Nurul Hidayat and Rugaiyah, 2023).

The principal as the leader of the education unit is a key figure in driving the development and progress of the school. Because the principal is a leader in his institution, he must be able to bring his institution towards achieving the goals set, he must be able to see changes and be able to see the future in a better global life. School heads as educators, administrators, leaders and supervisors are expected to be able to manage educational institutions towards better development and can promise the future (Alif Lutfi Ghozali, Umi Alimah Milansari, 2019).

The principal must have the skills and understand the meaning of his role as the principal. The principal is not only the boss of the teachers or his subordinates, but the principal must be aware that the principal must be supported by teachers who jointly make plans and school programs openly. Everything that is done for the betterment of the school must be supported and transparent through meetings and dialogue between school members. The role of the school principal must be involved in everything from planning to supervision so that a democratic principal's attitude is needed. Principals who understand democratic leadership will be open, providing opportunities for teachers to improve school quality.

### 2.2 School Quality

The quality of the school is very dependent on the pattern of leadership of the principal as the highest leader in the school. Only school principals are capable of making policies in all matters, such as recruiting teaching staff, assigning teaching staff, rotating teaching staff, coaching teaching staff and even promoting the rank of teaching staff. More and more educators work enthusiastically, are well motivated, dynamically following the progress of both theory, instruments, technology and policies, of course, will provide high productivity to schools.

School quality is not created instantly, but requires struggle and a long process as well as professional expertise. A quality school is determined by the leadership of a quality principal and a quality school principal is a professional. A professional school principal will be able to manage and develop a school in a comprehensive or comprehensive manner. Therefore, the Principal has a heavy burden and responsibility as well as an important and strategic position in realizing the vision, mission and goals of the school he manages (Muhammad Rasyid Ridho, 2022).

## 2.3 Democratic Leadership Concept

In an organization of an institution, the form of leadership of a leader is seen as a very important factor in the success of the organization in achieving the coveted goals. A leader can be said to be successful if the people under him can move according to the instructions directed by a leader. This is inseparable from the ability of a leader to influence members who are in related organizations. This influencing skill is closely related to the model or form of leadership carried out by someone who holds power in an organization. One model of leadership that has been known among the public is democratic leadership. Democratic leadership has an approach that is fair and consensus. To get what you want,

Democratic leadership that always sides with the interests of members by adhering to the principles of realizing truth and justice for the common good. Concepts like this are in line with Islamic teachings which prioritize behavior that is able to distinguish between right and wrong (Sri Wahyuni, Zainal Arifin, 2015).

Democratic leaders are creating situations where individuals can learn, are able to monitor their own performance, recognize subordinates to set challenging goals, provide opportunities to improve work methods and job growth and recognize achievements and help employees learn from mistakes. A leader who uses a democratic leadership style is willing to accept and even expects opinions and input from all members of the organization. All policies are formulated through deliberation and decided by the group, the leader is objective and always based on facts in giving awards and criticism, besides that the characteristics of a democratic style are building consensus through participation, competence is being able to collaborate, be able to lead a team, and communicate well with subordinates.

A democratic leader will tend to involve the opinions of employees and use suggestions and ideas before making decisions in solving problems. In addition, a democratic leader also provides opportunities for employees to participate in setting goals, making decisions and describing orders, and a democratic leader will encourage his subordinates to grow and develop their innovation and creativity. He really listens to opinions, suggestions, and even criticism from other people, especially his employees (Irdayanti, 2021).

Leadership of Elementary School Principals in the Era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0. The industrial revolution 4.0 namely: Changes in the order of human life which includes changes from physical, digital and biological aspects. The industrial revolution 4.0 can be seen from the emergence of artificial intelligence, incredibly fast computing, robots, unmanned cars, the development of the human brain through technology, and so on. The era of the industrial revolution 4.0 has updated human perceptions about work, its structure and even the skills needed to achieve it. The era of the industrial revolution 4.0 also changed our view of the meaning of education. The changes that occur are not only from the teaching methods carried out by the teacher in the classroom, but these changes also change our view of the concept of education itself. Industrial revolution era 4. 0 requires school principals to be able to create an ideal teaching and learning atmosphere in the learning process in accordance with the times. Given that currently the industrial world demands graduates who are able to compete with the global world. This means that school principals must be able to carry out their duties and obligations as school principals properly (Muhammad Gading Priangga Muhammad Syahidul Haq, 2021).

The role of leadership in the Revolution 4.0 era is urgently needed in every agency or institution both in the government sector and in other competent institutions including in educational institutions which require schools to lead to management adapting to the industrial revolution era 4.0 which includes the ability to communicate, collaborate and innovate based on technology. The current era of the industrial revolution 4.0 has changed the concept of work, job structure, and competencies needed by the world of work. A survey of international recruiting firms conducted by Robert Walters,

Leadership that is able to keep up with the demands and developments of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, utilizes the influence of technology which is its trademark, and has the skills to influence, mobilize, lead, direct and encourage subordinates to excel and develop. In the current era of the industrial revolution 4.0, of course the leadership of school principals has a vital role in developing the skills and competencies of educators so that they become quality educators. To improve the quality of professional educators in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, there are several things that must be considered by the Principal, namely utilizing technology in the learning process, providing training to educators, mentoring and guidance, coaching discipline and continuous supervision (Muhammad Rasyid Ridho, 2022).

Leadership that follows the demands of the industrial revolution 4.0 follows technological developments to be able to influence, encourage, guide, direct and mobilize others to carry out and develop education and teaching in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0. There are still many school principals who do not have the ability to develop technology so they cannot keep up with changing times, coupled with the facilities and infrastructure that support technology-based learning which are still minimal. Becoming a professional school principal is required to have personality, managerial, entrepreneurial, supervisory, and social competencies. Skills in dealing with the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 can be seen from the ability of school principals to use technology and entrepreneurial abilities (Aulia Nursyifa, 2019).

In facing the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, the readiness of school principals is always required to observe the atmosphere, conditions and local wisdom found in the school environment they lead. Principals must be prepared to explore current technological developments. Schools need shared visions and commitment between the principal and all parties. The school principal must try to improve the quality of human resources, namely in the field of ICT and be able to bring the organization he leads as a reference and guide for others. The implementation of the principal's leadership can be fully supported by the

school community so that school goals can be achieved quickly according to the desired goals in improving school quality (Fitra Nita Nur, Mardia Hi Rahman, Marwia Tamrin Bakar.

# 2.4 Hypothesis

To determine the hypothesis of this study, the authors used the results of the study which stated that it was suspected that the Principal in the 4.0 era played a role in Improving School Quality Through Democratic Leadership in Santa Lucia Medan Kindergarten

#### III. Research Methods

This type of research uses descriptive quantitative research, namely by seeking information about existing symptoms, clearly defining the objectives to be achieved, planning the approach, collecting data as material for making reports. The population of this study were all students enrolled in TK Santa Lucia Medan, namely 130 students. The sample is part of the number and characteristics possessed by the population. One of the methods used to determine the number of samples is to use the Slovin formula (in Suprianto, 2016) as follows:

n = == 56

Information:

n = Number of Samples

N = Number of Population

e = error tolerance limit of 0.10

So it can be concluded that the number of samples is 56 students with the accidental sampling method, namely taking samples in a random way. The analysis technique used is:

- 1. Validity analysis, to determine valid and usable questionnaire items.
- 2. Reliability analysis, to determine the reliability and consistency of respondents' answers
- 3. Simple linear regression analysis, to determine the effect of a functional or causal relationship between one independent variable and one dependent variable.
- 4. Multilevel regression analysis, to see the mediating effect on the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.
- 5. T test, to find out whether each independent variable partially has a significant effect on the dependent variable.

## IV. Result and Discussion

# 4.1 Validity test

Using a statistical approach can test whether data is valid or not. This statistical approach is seen from the value of the correlation coefficient of the item scores with the total score. The criteria for testing with this statistical approach are as follows:

If r count < r table, then the question is declared invalid

If r count > r table, then the question is declared valid

Validation Test can measure whether or not a questionnaire is valid.

The value of r table can be seen from the results of the calculation df = n-2, where n is the number of respondents, namely 56 people. So df for 56 respondents is df = 56-2 = 54. After finding the df, then looking at the r table with a significance level of 0.05 or 5% of the rtable, we get the rtable = 0.263. For more details, the table can be seen in the attachment sheet of this study

**Table 1.** Validity Test Results

Variable	No. Item	rcount	rtable	Ket.
	1	0.515	0.263	Valid
	2	0.557	0.263	Valid
Principal (X)	3	0.563	0.263	Valid
	4	0.559	0.263	Valid
	5	0.498     0.26       0.647     0.26       0.573     0.26	0.263	Valid
School quality improvement (Y)	1	0.647	0.263	Valid
	2	0.573	0.263	Valid
	3	0.608	0.263	Valid
	4	0.565	0.263	Valid
	5	0.592	0.263	Valid
	1	0.562	0.263	Valid
	2	0.754	0.263	Valid
Democratic leadership (Z)	3	0.521	0.263	Valid
	4	0.702	0.263	Valid
	5	0.653	0.263	Valid

Based on the table above the question about the principal (X),Improving the quality of schools (Y), democratic leadership (Z) and consists of numbers 1 to 15 having rount > 0.361 with the validity characteristics of the measuring instrument being fulfilled and declared valid.

#### 4.2 Reliability Test

Reliability is a tool for measuring a questionnaire which is an indicator of a variable or construct. A questionnaire is said to be reliable or reliable if one's answers to statements are consistent or stable from time to time. A construct is said to be reliable if it gives a Cronbach Alpha value > 0.60 (Gozhali, 2016:41-42).

**Table 2.** Reliability Test Results

Variable	Alpha count	Cronbach	Information
		Alpha	
Principal (X)	0.767	0.600	Reliable
Improving school quality(Y)	0.810	0.600	Reliable
Democratic leadership(Z)	0.835	0.600	Reliable

Based on the results above, it can be seen that the Cronbach's alpha value for the principal variable (X) is 0, so it can be concluded that the principal's leadership variable is reliable because its value exceeds the specified requirement, namely 0.60. Furthermore, for the teacher performance variable, the result is 0.962 > 0.60, so it can be concluded that the teacher performance variable is reliable.

## 4.3 Simple linear regression results

Simple regression is based on a functional or causal relationship of one independent variable with one dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2016: 243).

**Table 3.** Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Variable	В	tcount	Sig	R2	Linear regression	Ket.
					models	
Model 1 = Z = a + b1X + e						
The constant of	4,553	2031	0.047		Z=4.553+0.794X	Significant
democratic	0.794	7.134	0.000	0697	+e	
leadership	0.794	7.134	0.000			
Model $2 = Y1 = a + b2X + e$						
The constant of	1270	0.874	0.386		Z=1270+0.955X +	Significant
democratic	0.955	12 222	0.000	0.874	e	
leadership	0.955	13,233	0.000			
Model $3 = Y2 = a + b3Z + e$						
Constant	9,219	4.166	0.000		Z=9.219+0.546X	Significant
improvement in	0.546	5.005	0.000	0.569	+e	
school quality	0.546	5,085	0.000			

### **4.4** Hypothesis Testing with t Test

Table 4 shows that the principal has a positive and significant effect ondemocratic leadership, this is evidenced by the tcount value of 7,134 > ttable 1,663 or the p value of 0.000 < 0.05. Then table 4 shows that the principal has a positive and significant effect onschool quality improvement, this is evidenced by the tcount value of 13,233 > ttable 1,663 or the p value of 0.000 < 0.05. Table 4 also shows thatImproving school qualitypositive and significant effect onschool quality, this is evidenced by the tcount value of 5,085 > ttable 1,663 or the p value of 0.000 < 0.05.

## 4.5 Stratified Regression Analysis

This multilevel analysis is a statistical technique used to determine the effect/influence of the mediating variable on the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

**Table 4**. Multilevel Regression Test Results

Variable	Standardized	tcount	Sig	Information	
	Coef Beta				
Model $1 = Z = a$	Model 1 = Z = a + b1X + e				
XZ 0.697 7.134 0.000Significant					
Model 2 = Y1 = a + b2X + e					
XY-0.874 13.233 0.000Significant					
Model $3 = Y2 = a + b3Z + e$					
ZY 0.569 5,085 0,000Significant					
Model $4 = Y3 = a + b1X + b2Z + e$					
XY-0.928 10.054 0.000Significant					

Based on table 5 it can be seen that the effectHeadmastertoImproving school qualitydecreased after controlling the variableDemocratic leadership, this can be seen from the beta value which was originally 0.697 increased to 0.928 and the effect became significant because tcount < ttable, namely 10,054 < 1,663 and p value  $0,000 > \propto (0.05)$ . Thus it can be interpreted that democratic leadershipacts as a full mediation (full mediation effect) for the influence of industrial revolution 4.0 school principals on improving school quality.

### 4.6 Discussion

- 1. Principals in Era 4.0 (X) play a role in democratic leadership (Z)
  - The results of the analysis in table 5 show that the tcount value of the Principal in Era 4.0 has an effect on democratic leadership of 7,134 with a p value of 0.000. Because the tcount > ttable is 7,134 > 1,663 and the p value is 0.000 <0.05, it can be concluded that the Principal in Era 4.0 has a positive and significant effect/relationship on democratic leadership. These results support research conducted by Fetia Nurul Hidayat, Rugaiyah (2023) the ability of school principals to develop ideas or concepts to improve school quality also determines the success or failure of a school. Successful principals are able to carry out their responsibilities to maintain their integrity while leading and raising the standards of their schools. As a result, the principal has a very strategic responsibility to raise the quality of the school environment is highly correlated with the leadership of the school principal.
- 2. Principals in Era 4.0 (X) play a role in improving school quality (Y)

  The results of the analysis in table 5 show that the tcount value of school principals in

  Era 4.0 for improving school quality (Y) is 13,233 with a p value of 0.001. Because the
  tcount > ttable is 13,233 > 1,663 and the p value is 0.000 <0.05, it can be concluded that
  the Principal in Era 4.0 has a positive and significant effect/relationship on improving
  school quality. These results support research conducted by Muhammad Rasyid Ridho
  (2021) In the current era of the industrial revolution 4.0, of course the leadership of
  school principals has a vital role in developing the skills and competencies of educators
  so that they become quality educators. To improve the quality of schools, there are
  several things that need to be considered by the Principal, namely utilizing technology
  in the learning process,
- 3. Democratic leadership (Z) plays a role in improving school quality (Y)

  The results of the analysis in table 5 show that the tount value of democratic leadership for democratic leadership is 5,085 with a p value of 0.000. Because the tount > ttable is 5,085 > 1,663 and the p value is 0.000 <0.05, it can be concluded that democratic leadership has a positive and significant effect/relationship on improving school quality. These results support research conducted by Citra Pratiwi (2014) which shows that the democratic leadership of school principals is willing to accept opinions, criticisms and suggestions from teachers, involves teachers in decision making, there is collaboration with teachers, provides opportunities for teachers to develop initiative and competence. creative, friendly, willing to help teachers, and able to create quality schools. This gives the influence of democratic leadership on the quality of education so that they can be accountable for their duties while teaching the school principal. Teachers always carry out their duties properly such as making the necessary documents such as syllabus and lesson plans.
- 4. Principals in Era 4.0 (X) in improving school quality (Y) through democratic leadership (Z) as Mediator

The results of the analysis in table 5 show that the influence of school principals in Era 4.0 in improving school quality before being controlled by democratic leadership as a mediator has a standardized coefficient beta of 0.928 and after being included in democratic leadership as a control variable the standardized coefficient beta drops to -0.078 and becomes insignificant seen from tcount 10,054 > ttable 1,663 or p value 0,000 > 0.05. This means that the Principal in Era 4.0 has an indirect effect on improving the quality of schools with democratic leadership as a mediator, where democratic leadership acts as a full mediation or full mediation.

The results of this study support research conducted by Supartilah and Pardimin (2021) showing that the role of school principals in the industrial revolution 4.0 is in improving the quality of schools by encouraging educators to continue their education so that the quality of learning increases. The role of the principal as a motivator is to provide rewards to teaching staff and students so that teaching staff can work effectively and students have enthusiasm in learning. The leadership style of the SD Negeri Experiment 2 principal has a democratic leadership style. The democratic style prioritizes deliberation on every school activity or program so that the SD Negeri Experiment 2 residents have a sense of ownership and responsibility.

#### V. Conclusion

The conclusions of this study are:

- a. Principals in Era 4.0 had a positive and significant effect/relationship on democratic leadership in Santa Lucia Kindergarten located in the Medan area.
- b. Principals in Era 4.0 had a positive and significant effect/relationship on improving the quality of the Santa Lucia Kindergarten school located in the Medan area.
- c. Democratic leadership has a positive and significant effect/relationship on improving the quality of the Santa Lucia Kindergarten school located in the Medan Tembung area.
- d. Principals in Era 4.0 have an influence/indirect relationship to improving the quality of the Santa Lucia Kindergarten school located in the Medan region through democratic leadership as a mediator, where democratic leadership acts as a full mediation or full mediation effect.

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