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# The Effective School Strategic Plan Implementation: A Best Practice of School Improvement

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Schools face the social changes quickly that was caused by the global village phenomenon. It makes schools' strategic plans and their implementation strategies becoming important topics to be discussed. This study aimed to know how the implementation of State of Junior High School (SMP) Islam Cendekia Cianjur strategic plan during academic year 2018/2019. A school in West Java addresses religious and globally competed graduation. The research used qualitative-descriptive. Collecting data used observation, interview, and document analysis instruments. The finding showed that SMP Islam Cendekia Cianjur achieved maximum result in implementing annual work plan. Almost all program objectives were realized, some even exceeded the annual targets set due to their well-organized of strategic plan and the accuracy of its implementation strategy. The collaboration of principal's managerial and social competencies and participative leadership approach have proven effectively in embodying school annual work plan. The principal succeed in improving educators' competencies and their working performances, as well as in collaboration with various potential parties. The challenges were related to school human resources.

**Keywords:** *Effective School. Strategic Plan Implementation* 

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The theme of education in the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic Indonesia Strategic Plan 2015-2019 is regional competitiveness. The term regional competitiveness refers to the relation between regions within and between countries (Aiginger & Firgo, 2015). Regional competitiveness in education field means the quality of educational process and outcomes that eligible to compete on a crosscountry scale. It could be realized when all educational institutions-including schools, exert their sources to accelerate their educational services and graduates quality based on their own visions.

A way to realize all school's learning activities effectively embody desired competed graduation as of its vision is, compiling a strategic plan that arrange for (at

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least) 4 school year workplans and goals (Shakibirad, 2019; Alqahtani 2016). The strategic plan certainly will not change the school by itself, without its maximum and sustainable implementation by all related parties. Both strategic plan and its sustainable implementation become the schools' demand today. Therefore, a study about arrangement and implementation of school strategic plan always holds a focal place in the field of education.

State Junior High School (SMP) Islam Cendekia is considered as one among the schools in Indonesia that commit to the global competitiveness of their graduates. The school which is located in Cianjur District, West Java, is well equipped with international standard infrastructures and facilities. In 2016, three years from its initiation, the school successfully got 'A grade' from the National Accreditation Board (BAN-S/M). The school also has achieved many remarkable achievements and won various national and international recognitions (Pikiran-rakyat, 2019). Even it is perhaps the one and only school in the city which has been able to gain such considerable achievements so far. These achievements are one of the positive impacts of a well-designed school strategic plan. It, therefor, invites the attention of researcher to know it. Accordingly, this study on the implementation of school strategic plan of SMP Islam Cendekia hopefully could bring a positive contribution for both academia and educational practitioners in Indonesia.

There were researches related to the said topic. They are Sobri (2018), about Strengthening Principal Competence in Improving Education Quality. Juharyanto et al., (2019), the Principal's Leadership in Strengthening the Role of Mjulti-Stakeholders Forum. Maswan (2015), School Quality Management. Nurwati (2015), Strengthening the Principal's Leadership in School and Intra-Extra Scope. Dharyanti et al., (2019), Implementation Process of Strategic Planning at Dictrict Hospital. Kabeyi (2019), Organizational strategic planning, implementation and evaluation with analysis of challenges and benefits for profit and non-profit organizations. Sobri (2018), Juharyanto, (2019), Maswan (2015), and Nurwati (2015) observed school improvement and principal capacity building generally. This research would like to capture school improvement specifically through its strategic plan implementation. While, this study focus on his managerial and social competencies and the leadership style to lead the implementation of school strategic plan effectively. The research finding of Dharyanti (2019) reported that Implementation Process of Strategic Planning at Dictrict Hospital in implementation was not running well caused by many obstacles. Kabeyi (2019) offered the strategic plan, implementation, and its evaluation generally. On the contrary this research specifically saw the school strategic plan implementation, and the result showed its success.

This study is very important because currently school has a big opportunity to innovate and compete through school-based management. School is not only an implementer organization of government policies, but also a *self-driving organization* which is required to find and realize its expertise among other schools. Therefor the accurate school strategic plan and its effective implementation is very significant to be concerned on.

Although SMP Islam Cendekia Cianjur (SICC) is a private school, many things could be adopted by any other school. Many students reached achievements at provincial, national level by free of charges. They enjoyed online competition systematically. It could not happen without an appropriate strategic plan and its effective implementation. Planning is clearly an essential management function in all

schools, regardless of geographic location or grade levels served (Beach & Lindahl, 2000).

This research aims to easily contribute school managers and enthusiasts in Indonesia about the way to improve their own schools, through the accurate strategic plan and its implementation effectively. Academically the research finding hopefully could offer the effective school strategic plan implementation pattern which is coloured by the appropriate principal leadership style.

This study aims to find out (1) how the school's strategic plan in realizing its vision (2) how its implemention (3) what things have been achieved, and (4) what obstacles school faced in implementing its strategic plan. Strategic plan in the education sector is the physical product of the strategic planning process and embodies the guiding orientations on how to manage an education system within a larger national development perspective, which is evolving by nature and often involves constraints (Al Basel, & Osman, 2020; Jalal & Murray, 2019; Chang, 2008). Based on that, we may argue that school strategic plan is a planning that oriented in realizing school vision in a certain period, with consider potentials, opportunities, and obstacles those might come. The strategic plan contains the vision and mission, goals, and strategy to reach them effectively. Therefore the strategic planning is a key for school improvement.

## **SWOT Analysis**

SWOT is an instrument commonly used in strategic plan and strategic management (Gurel, 2017). SWOT analysis is used to formulate effective planning for an organization to achieve its goals according to the specified targets. SWOT analysis can be used in many fields of study; industry, management, engineering, and also in education (Pozdnyakova et al., 2017; Ansoff et al., 2018). The SWOT helps us to analyse both the internal and external factors of an organization. The internal factor consist of organization's strengths and weaknesses. Organization strengths can be inform of finance, networking, human resources, etcetera which are become the 'ammunition' in achieving goals targeted. Organization weaknesses can be in the form of geographical location, human resources, infrastructure, and etcetera. These weaknesses are analysed in order to formulate their exit strategy planning. The external factors of organization are opportunities and threats. They are some variables around where the organization is located which are potentially related to realize its goals. When all organization factors have been analysed, the stakeholders determine a strategic plan to be implemented by its community. Collaborating organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to realize its vision is the main role of a leader.

#### **METHODS**

This study used a qualitative method. It could be applied by researcher who desire to describe a phenomenon that is difficult to quantify, such as the process of a working step, the recipe of a formulation, and the characteristics of goods and services (Hammersley, 2018; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). A descriptive qualitative research aimed to describe the phenomenon, either natural or human engineering, which pay more attention to its characteristics, quality, and interrelationship between activities (Willis, D. G et all., 2016; Grove, S. K., & Gray, J. R, 2018). A descriptive research did not provide treatment, manipulation or revision of observed variables, but rather describes a phenomenon as it is. Research itself is the only treatment given. It applies through observation, interview, and documentation.

The observation of this research was conducted during August-December 2019 (5 months). The subjects were 12 teachers, 4 staffs, and head of foundation. Researcher interviewed them and observed the school activities. Data analysis is performed with compiling, categorizing, interpreting, and confirming them systematically. It can be done before, being, or after the researcher enters the study site. Writing the results of study refer to planned research report. That what did researcher do in this study.

# RESULT AND DISCUSSION School Strategic Plan

The vision of SMP Islam Cendekia Cianjur (SICC) is to be a leading school in graduating intellectual Muslim who are creative, productive, global-minded, and have a healthy live culturewith the highly care for environment. The desired graduates are good Muslim who pious for themselves and their environments.

To embody the vision, SICC drew up a strategic plan, after conducting a SWOT analysis.

	Strength	1.Has a large financial budget.	
		2.Parents have economic ability and educated.	
		3. The average of teachers is in productive age (30	
		years).	
		4.Has a large area (6.8 Ha).	
Internal	Weakness	1.Location far away from the Airport.	
tei		2.The teachers' ability to practice English and	
Arabic are in the intermediate leve		Arabic are in the intermediate level.	
External	Opportunity	1.Networking of the Pribadi Kamila Foundation.	
		2.Networking of students' parents.	
		3.Internet of Things (school development	
		opportunities).	
kte	Threat	1. Internet of Things (HRD challenges).	
Ĥ		2.Congestion.	

Table 1. SICC SWOT Analysis in 2018

The school's strategic plan produced an annual work plan for the next 4 years. The first academic year (2018/19) are; (1) school has an updated strategic plan for development guideline (2) completing teachers learning administration (3) optimizing cooperation with the school committee (4) collaboration with NGOs for a sister school program (5) compiling annual work plans (6) compiling standard operational procedure for school activities (7) teachers' working discipline improvement (8) implementation of foundation's employee regulation on performance evaluation (9) teachers' English skill improvement (10) teachers' competencies improvement with external recognition approach (11) project based learning implementation (12) students participation in an international competition, (13) final assessment (UNBK) score improvement, and (14) healthy school program supervision.

Second year; (1) school re-accreditation, (2) implementation of *computer based learning* (3) SICC application launching (4) completion of Math and Natural Sciences laboratory facilities and infrastructure (5) building a garden for student laboratory (6) initiating cooperation with schools abroad (7) improvement of teachers' English and Arabic language skills (8) *project based learning* development (9) student achievements

in international competition at the Southeast Asian level, (10) increasing UNBK scores (11) *zero waste* school program implementation.

Third year; (1) *computer based learning* development (2) SICC application development (3) designing and constructing school management office building (4) following up the *partnership school* program development (5) students gain achievements in international competitions at the Asian level (6) *healthy school* program development (7) *zero waste* school program development.

Fourth year; (1) ISO school certification (2) building jogging tracks in the school area as student sport facility (3) SICC application development (4) students gain international competitions achievements in global level (5) *zero waste* school certification from a credible party.

## Implementation of School Strategic Plan

## 1. Implementation strategy

According to Arce (2012) the implementation of a strategic plan consists in carrying out one or more strategies established in the plan. Depending on the purposes of the plan and time horizons, a strategic plan is implemented through the realization of tactical and operational plans, which include programs, projects and actions sequences.

This research found that in SMP Islam Cendekia Cianjur, principal managerial and social competencies collaboration with a participative leadership style became a strategy to run school strategic plan effectively.

Managerial aspect implementation steps were; (1) revision of existing school strategic plan (2) annual work plan compiling (3) compiling standard operational procedure of school activities (4) teacher performances supervision and evaluation (5) teacher competencies improvement with *external recognition* approach.

Social aspect implementation steps were; (1) school committee refreshment (2) inventorying potential parties (3) mapping and synchronizing opportunities with school strengths (4) formulating work plan.

Participative leadership is defined as the process of making joint decisions or at least sharing influence in decision making by the superior and his or her subordinates (Somech, 2005; Bell & Mjoli, 2014).

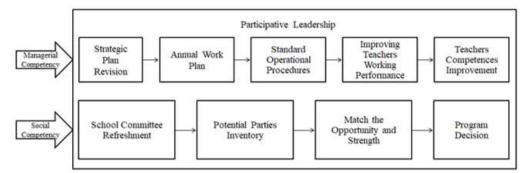


Figure 1. Implementation Strategy Concept of the SICC Annual Work Plan 2018/2019

## 2. Managerial aspects implementation

*Teacher's attendance.* Every month principal displays teacher attendance chart. Discuss the volume of their permition, time accuracy, and delay of each personnel. Teachers are required to be at school in every working day no more than 07:00 am. Exceeding this hour is categorized ascoming late. When the percentage of coming late

reaches 30% and more within 3 months, the person get first warning letter (SP1). In implementing this policy, principal issued SP1 to 3 teachers during first semester. The treatment was effective, no teacher received more a similar letter in the second semester.

Six working days. Due to support school educational services quality, all teachers must work in 6 working days per week. This policy invited some rejection. Personal activities on Saturday and the amount of salary were the main reasons. The implementation of this policy led 7 teachers resignation along 2018/2019 academic year.

Teacher on duty. Once all teachers and worked 6 days a week and arrived at school on time. The next challenge was their working effectiveness during at school. To encourage their productive working, school picket regulation was needed. The regulation aims to create a learning society. Welcoming students, monitoring teacher's discipline, monitoring student activities during school hours, etcetera.

Performance appraisal based on KPI (Key Performance Indicator). In assessing the performance of each teacher, the school uses KPI that was formulated based on an annual work plan, standard operational procedure of school activities, and employment regulation. Badawi & Team (2016), the implementation of the key performance indicator work based had proven to be effective in term of comparing teacher performance scores in the first and second semester. 4 teachers received C grades in the first semester, and 3 teachers in the second one. 4 teachers received 'A' grades in the first semester, and 5 teachers in the second one. A (grade) working performance became the basic consideration of increasing salary / privilege / promotion in the nextacademic year. Conversely, a grade C for 2 years caused the termination of employment in accordance with working agreement previously.

Reward and punishment. According to KPI based performance appraisal. Principal recommended 8 teachers to be appreciated in the form of salary increasement, promotion, and inventory vehicle facility. This was realized at the beginning of the 2019/20 academic year. On the contrary, in the same academic year, principal decrease 7 teachers position in form of demotion, warning letter, and termination recommendation to the HRD of foundation. Lying, representing school without the principal's approval, and misuse of the school budget were the reasons for them.

Teacher competency improvement. Principal stimulated teacher competency improvement by motivating and supporting them to get an external recognition. Recognition of external parties could be in the form of certificate, award, and related item on the trusted competencies they owned. For instance, a teacher who get her/ his article published in a local or national newspaper might use it as the external recognition of his writing skill. Teachers also might claim the external recognition, if they are passed the BRIDGE teacher selection, an Indonesia-Australia education cooperation program. Or if they successfully coach students in certain competitions.

The principal recapitulated all teachers' performances and achievements. The developed teachers were announced in the front of Foundation employees. The best performed-developed teacher became a teacher of the year.

## 3. Social aspects implementation

After a new school committee was formed, the principal discussed school strategic plan and annual work plan. The through discussion on the school strategic plan and annual work plan aimed at identifying feasible and potential opportunities that could be exploited. During this phase, synchronization of external opportunities and internal resources has produces several collaborative programs as follows;

Indonesian Young Scientist Association (IYSA). To encourage student achievement on international competition level, principal engaged IYSA. Teachers received an enrichment related to international competition. Furthermore, to accommodate the interests of students in research field, school held a mini expo of international competition to be planned along existing school year.

Ganesha Operation (GO). School collaboration with Ganesha Operation was rolled out to improve the quality of school graduates, especially in achieving the Computer-Based National Examination (UNBK) scores.

Kampung Inggris Sawangan (KIS). Kampung Inggris Sawangan is a non-formal English language learning institution that historically has been supported by/linked to the BRIDGE (Building Relationships through Intercultural Dialogue and Growing Engagement) Schools Partnership Program. An Australia-Indonesia partnership in improving the selected schools quality through sister school program. The principal made a correspondence with the founder of KIS. It realized SMP Islam Cendekia Cianjur participation in the 2019 BRIGDE Schools selection. The selection was conducted by the Asia Education Foundation and the Australian Embassy for Indonesia.

*Sky-bridge*. In order to realize the improvement of teacher English competency. SMP Islam Cendekia Cianjurengaged Sky-bridge, one of the leading English course in Cianjur district.

## Achievements in Implementing School Strategic Plans

The implementation of school strategic plan effectively embodied school mission to realize many achievements below:

School has a strategic plan, annual work program, SOP of activities, and teacher performance appraisal instruments based on KPI. The tools help school effectiveness in implementing its strategic plan.

Increasing working performances of all school residents. The level of delayed coming and absence was decreased. All teachers work 6 days per week. School picket regulation were running well.

The foundation employment regulation of transparent and accountable performance appraisal as well as the realization of reward and punishment were well done.

Achieving external recognitions in improving teacher competences. Many teachers had succeeded in publishing books, news and articles in various media. Some of them successfully guiding students to reach international medals, and being selected as BRIDGE teachers.

Students won 11 medals from cross-country competitions that held in Thailand, Malaysia, India and Indonesia. School had 3 partner schools located in Thailand, Malaysia and Australia. UNBK score upgrade. The school was chosen as the 2019 Indonesia BRIDGE School. Several teachers took part in the teacher exchange to Australia, then the sister school program was formulated for the next 3 years. Improvement of teacher English skills with TOEFL standard. Publication of 14 school news in various local and national media.

Table 2.

The Main School Achievements as a Result of School Strategic Plan Implementation in Academic Year 2018/2019.

Aspect	Implementation	Result
	Teachers attendance.	The level of delayed coming and absence was
		decreased
	Six working days.	All teachers work 6 days per week.
	Picket.	School daily activities & picket regulation were
		running well.
	Performance	Employment regulation of transparent and
	appraisal based on	accountable performance appraisal was running
<u>1</u>	KPI.	well.
erië	Reward &	Reward and punishment of teacher performances
lagi	punishment.	was realized.
Managerial	Teacher competency	Achieving external recognitions in improving
2	improvement.	teacher competences.
	Indonesian Young	Students won 11 medals from cross-country
	Scientist Association	competitions
	Ganesha Operation	UNBK score increasement
	Kampung Inggris	The school was chosen as the 2019 Indonesia
al	Sawangan	BRIDGE School.
Social	Skybridge.	Improvement of teacher English skills with TOEFL
Š		standard.

## Constraints in Implementing School Strategic Plan

Hiring competed human resources according to criteria required was not easy. It's hard to get applicants belong advanced portfolio. High skill personnel were needed to accelerate the school strategic plan implementation. The school where located between Sukabumi, Bandung and Bogor cities. This became a barrier to lobbying schools abroad for a cooperation, caused its distance to the international airport. It takes a long road trip. It is further worsened by traffic jam points increasement due to population and industrial growth on there. Responding to those constraints, the vice principal in public relation actively took several measures such as exploiting a wide webs of networking such as international schools fora. Her language and communication skills, and a wide networking helps the school to keep its strategic plan performed well under such constraints.

The main research finding showed; (1) SMP Islam Cendekia Cianjur strategic plan arranged based on SWOT analysis in order to realize its vision. (2) The strategic plan implementation run success caused by its appropriate strategy. Principal used participative leadership style which bold his roles as a school manager and public relator. (3) Almost all of work plans have achieved, even more some of them were

exceeded the expectation of 2018/2019 academic year. (4) A few work plans have not achieved related to human resources obstacles.

This research finding is different with previous research. Because the current study found that the fact of school improvement success specifically through its strategic plan arrangement and implementation. While, Sobri (2018), Juharyanto et al., (2019), Maswan (2015), and Nurwati (2015) observed school improvement and principal capacity building generally. This research was focus on managerial and social competencies and the leadership style to lead the implementation of school strategic plan effectively. Other researcher Dharyanti (2019) reported that strategic plan implementation was not running well caused by many obstacles. Afterward, Kabeyi (2019) offered the strategic plan, implementation, and its evaluation generally. On the contrary this research specifically saw the school strategic plan implementation, and the result showed its success.

Some of research finding could be adopted by any other school, both private and public. At the era of internet, some student achievements at provincial and national level reached by free of charges. They enjoyed online competition systematically. It could not happen without an appropriate strategic plan and its effective implementation. For the academics and school observers, the study result shows the effective school strategic plan implementation pattern for effective school improvement. The elaboration of school principal roles as a school manager and public relator, and participative leadership style.

#### **CONCLUSSION**

The implementation of SMP Islam Cendekia Cianjur strategic plan of the first academic year (2018/2019) was carried out by prioritizing roles of the principal as manager and public relator (liaison). In carrying out said duties, the school top leader used a participative leadership model. The results achieved consist of improvement the teacher working performance quality, implementation of foundation regulation of employment, international achievements, improvement of teacher competencies, and establishment of sister school programs. The results of this study indicated that managerial and social competencies of the school principal, and along with a participative leadership style became the effective strategy to run school strategic plan at SMP Islam Cendekia Cianjur Academic year 2018/2019.

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#### **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS**

The author had participated in the research and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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