Principal Leadership in Improving Teacher Professionalism (A Case Study in Senior High School of Tulungagung, East Java, Indonesia)

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Principal Leadership in Improving Teacher Professionalism (A Case Study in Senior High School of Tulungagung, East Java, Indonesia)

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Abstract. **The current study was conducted using a qualitative approach in the phenomenology perspective. The research subjects consisted of the Principal, Head of Administration, and several teachers in the field of study in one of high schools in Tulungagung District, East Java, Indonesia. The research findings are 1). The Principal has a democratic leadership style in increasing the professionalism of the teachers. The implementation of its leadership includes treating subordinates/teachers like family members who must be given the same opportunity to increase their professionalism, being open to receive suggestions and criticism from subordinates, communicating policies and problems together with the subordinates, giving trust to subordinates, building a work team in a family manner, building work passion, and sharing the workload fairly. 2). The efforts of the Principal in increasing teacher professionalism are by applying various efforts, namely listening to ideas and suggestions from teachers, completing and clarifying errors in the principal and teacher mistakes, expressing wishes; providing input and trying to solve teacher problems, sharing tasks together, or giving more compliment to teachers who are diligent and having achievements.**

Keywords: education management, efforts of principals, teacher professionalism

INTRODUCTION

The new paradigm of education management to improve the quality of educational institutions effectively and efficiently needs to be supported by quality human resources. The development of human resources is a process to increase human ability to be able to make choices and focus on using those abilities [1].

The implementation of effective and efficient school management requires the implementation of integrated management and integrated manner in management activities. Education management is one of the strategic components to improve the quality of education. Practically, the school management is one of the factors that influence the quality of education. The school management will affect learning, teaching time, and the learning process [2].

The development and improvement of education must be carried out holistically and simultaneously, not to be partial even though it may be done in stages. Improving the curriculum sector, teaching staff, and learning facilities will not bring significant changes if not followed by improving management patterns and culture that support the change. The efforts of the teacher's creative efforts in the development of learning programs will not be meaningful in the improvement of student learning processes and outcomes if the school management does not provide opportunities for the growth and development of teacher creativity. Management is significant in changing towards an improvement [3].

Changes will affect the values of society's life that may be entirely new and different from the style of values that are now adopted by the community. Educational institutions and social institutions have a strategic role in dealing with changes in society. The readiness of educational institutions and social institutions in coping with changes is essential because the people who are in the process of cultural transition are precarious in various clash of values, one of them is the social and cultural institutions which are expected to play a major role in regulating the rhythm of changes in education [4].

Normative development and understanding of the potential and demands of the strategic environment are needed as a basis for the

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development of education in schools that are conceptually acceptable to logic, culturally in accordance with national culture, and politically accepted by the society [5].

Efforts to create educational institutions that are consistent with superior qualifications require practical steps to make strategic changes in the field of management, in this case, required to have vision, responsibility, uplifting the educators and employees towards the creation of quality schools.

Improving the quality of educators to teach effectively must be able to enhance learning opportunities for students, both quality and quantity. Student learning opportunities can be enhanced by actively involving students in learning activities. Teachers must be able to show the seriousness of teaching so they can arouse the students' interest and motivation to learn. Whereas in improving the quality of teaching, teachers should be able to plan the teaching and implement them in the form of interaction, followed by a sense of satisfaction, confidence, and high teaching spirit, and finally proceed with evaluating learning processes and outcomes. As shown in the part of the attitude of professional teachers needed in the era of globalization, teachers should strive for conveying materials to students enthusiastically and can be accepted by the students.

Education Leadership

Leadership is an important part of management, but not the same as management. Leadership and management are not the same concepts. Warren Bennis in James said that most organizations are overmanaged and underled [6].

A leader is one of the essences of management. He/she could act as the main resource and the central point of activities that occur in a company. The creativity and dynamism of a leader in exercising his leadership authority will significantly determine whether goals can be achieved or not. Dynamic and creative leaders in managing their organizations will correlate positively with the creativity and the innovation of the organizations.

The role of the headmaster as a leader includes upholding disciplinary attitudes, empowering teachers optimally, empowering Subject Teachers Association, and collaborating with communities. Besides, the headmaster as a leader creates a more conducive learning atmosphere, high teacher morale and discipline, high teacher work spirit, and discipline [7].

The majority of leadership research can be grouped into four types of approaches, namely authority, character, behavior, and situational.[8] There is also a grouping of approaches in three groups, namely nature, behavior, and situational approaches.

Power Influence Approach

Authority refers to superiority, strength, or influence possessed by a leader (Principal). The authority of the Principal can influence subordinates, even mobilize or empower all school resources to achieve school goals in accordance with the vision of the school. Based on the approach of the influence of authority, a school principal is possible to use the influence he has in fostering, empowering, and setting an example for the teacher as a subordinate. Legitimate and coercive power allows the headmaster to guide the teacher, because with power in governing and giving punishment, guidance to the teacher will be easier to do. Meanwhile, rewards allow the Principal to empower the teacher optimally because proper appreciation from the Principal is a valuable motivation for the teacher to display his best performance. Furthermore, with referent and expert power, the Principal's skills and behavior implemented in the form of work routines are expected to increase in the teachers' motivation for work [9].

The Trait Approach

The trait approach emphasizes the quality of leaders. The success of a leader is characterized by the existence of skills or ideal characteristics that must be possessed by the leader [10]. Tireless leaders who have sharp intuition, broad future insights, reliable skills, and convincing abilities to subordinates are needed for implementing this trait approach. To be a successful leader, according to this theory, someone must have specific characteristics or personalities that distinguish between a leader and not a leader. These characteristics can be in the form of physical traits, personality traits, as well as specific skills needed that are brought from birth and not created or trained. The leader is born, not made. It is consistent with the concept that a leader cannot obtain the ability to lead but inherits it [11].

A person does not become a leader because it has a combination of personality traits. However, the pattern of the personal traits of the leader must show a particular relationship with the nature, activities, and goals of his followers [12]. Thus, a leader, according to this approach, must have individual traits and specific skills that distinguish between a leader and not a leader.

Behavioral Approach

A behavioral approach is an approach based on the idea that leader's success or failure is determined by attitudes and leadership styles carried out by the leaders in their daily activities, for instance, how to give orders, how to share tasks and authority, how to communicate, how to encourage subordinates, how to provide guidance and supervision, how to foster subordinate work discipline, and how to make decisions [13].

Situational Approach (Contingency Approach)

Leadership with a trait and behavior approach is seen as not fully able to explain leadership. In addition, most of the results of the study show that there is not a single leadership style that is right for every manager or Principal on all occasions.[14] Researchers who use the trait and behavior approach show that effective leadership depends on many variables, such as organizational culture and the nature of the task [15].

A situational approach or contingency approach is a theory that seeks a middle ground between views of universal organizational and management principles and a view which argues that each organization is unique and has different situations, so it must be faced with a certain leadership style.

Efforts of Principals to Improve Teacher Professionalism

Increasing the professionalism of teachers in educational institutions are interpreted as an effort to expand knowledge, improve teaching skills, and foster professional attitudes so that teachers become experts in managing teaching and learning activities to students.[16] Professional teachers must have high competency for guiding the students. Competency refers to the individual's knowledge, skills, abilities, or personality characteristics that directly influence someone's work [17].

Professional teachers are educators who have a vision, are innovative and independent. [18] Vision can be interpreted as a view; thus, teachers must have a correct view of learning, namely: (a) the quality of the teacher lies in the quality of learning, (b) learning requires a process that continues to develop, and (c) educator as a service. Vision is interpreted as something dynamic, namely as an expectation to be achieved in the future. The process of improving teacher professional abilities are two kinds, namely: 1). Fostering the ability of teachers through education supervision, certification programs, and study assignments. 2). Promoting commitment or motivation or moral work of educators/teachers through fostering their welfare such as upgrading, guidance, training, courses, formal education, promotion, position rotation, conferences, work meetings, workshops, seminars, discussions, and case studies [19].

Teachers, as educators in the globalization era, should concentrate on educating the children to prepare them as well as possible so that they could have a good personality. Therefore, teachers must be educators who educate the body, mind, and morals through various methods and approaches [20].

METHOD

This research was conducted with a qualitative approach in the phenomenology perspective. The main instrument in the qualitative research was the presence of the researcher through participatory observation. In this study, the subject of research focuses on human data sources, namely people who can provide leadership information as an object of the research. The research subjects consisted of the Principal, Head of Administration, and several teachers in one of high schools in Tulungagung District, East Java, Indonesia.

The data collection technique uses three procedures, namely:

(1) In-depth interviews; (2) participant observation; and (3) documentation. Data analysis consists of three activities that coincide, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification [21]. Checking the data validity was based on four criteria, namely; credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Principal Leadership in Improving Teacher Professionalism

Principal Leadership in Increasing Teachers Professionalism prioritizes the implementation of democratic leadership styles. Democratic leaders, in carrying out their duties, always listen to suggestions and criticisms from their subordinates for their success in work. He gave sufficient freedom and trust to his men so that they would perform their best to complete the work. All efforts are aimed at making subordinates always achieve good results.

The implementation of the Principal's leadership style to improve teacher professionalism include:

a). The Principal considers the teacher as a partner who must be given the opportunity to improve his professionalism. As a subordinate, the teacher is a pivotal figure to the success of students. Principals should treat and approach teachers as family members. Thus they will feel appreciated and feel responsible for the progress of the school by providing quality performance in teaching the students.

b). The Principal is willing to receive suggestions and criticism from subordinates. Principals have substantial authority to achieve educational goals. Subordinates, including teachers, will carry out all policies issued. Nevertheless, to achieve mutual success, principals need to listen to suggestions and criticism from subordinates seriously for the improved quality of the school. Leaders who listen to and accept suggestions and criticism from subordinates would give a positive responses to the subordinates, especially the teacher, so the teacher will feel valued. Thus the teacher will be motivated and will carry out the task given well to improve the quality of students.

c). The Principal communicates policies and discusses problems together. The Principal, as a

person who is assigned to manage the school, is required to be able to manage the school, including communicating policies from the state or from the Principal himself. The Principal always invites subordinates, including teachers, to discuss about various policies, especially policies regarding the teacher. Because if the Principal is arbitrary in giving or establishing a policy, the teacher who disagrees will rebel and end up lazy to teach or not perform well in the class. On the contrary, if the Principal is able to communicate and discuss policies by involving the teacher, it could improve the teacher's performance and enthusiasm.

d). The Principal share trust with the subordinates. To improve the teacher's performance, the Principal gives them freedom and trust because subordinates/teachers have high ability and high willingness. If delegation and trust are not given, the teachers would be reluctant to work or improve their professionalism because the headmaster does not believe in them.

e). The Principal builds a work team in a family manner. The Principal is committed to the school by outlining the interests of the school and helping the teacher to identify the values, goals, and mission of the school. In doing so, the Principal builds a work team so that the Principal can improve the professionalism of the teacher. \

f). The Principal builds work passion. To improve teacher professionalism, the Principal always increases work passion. This is done by giving rewards, praises, high hopes, and work goals. Thus the teacher will always be passionate about improving his performance continuously. The Principal is able to appreciate individual goals, stimulate teachers and students to reach high achievement while still determining the expectations of high performance, respecting the abilities of others, and expressing their trust in the results achieved.

g). The Principal shares the workload fairly. A classic problem that has emerged lately is the level of teacher's welfare. Most teachers in Indonesia still experience low welfare. This condition should be a concern of the school principal to improve the teacher's welfare. One way t is by sharing the workload fairly.

These parts are mostly related to behavioral approach [13] which emphasizes on the way the principal behaves toward his teachers, staf, and duties assigned to him.

Efforts of Principals to Improve Teacher Professionalism

The efforts of the Principal in improving teacher's professionalism are as follows:

a). Listening to ideas/suggestions from the teachers. The principal functions as a leader who is always ready to listen to any suggestions and ideas from the teachers, especially to improve the teacher's quality and abilities. The Principal not only listen to the suggestions and ideas from the teacher but also implements the ideas and suggestions to support the teacher's professionalism. When holding a meeting, the Principal explores ideas and suggestions from the teacher, and then if the advice is good and appropriate, the Principal does not hesitate to accept and implement the advice.

b). Completing and clarifying the Principal's mistakes or teacher's mistakes. In an effort to improve teacher's teaching skills, the Principal always tries to understand the subordinates' various mistakes, whether they occur due to the mistakes of the teacher or the Principal themselves, so that a teacher does not feel blamed continuously, but feels more valued.

c). Expressing and explaining wishes. The Principal, as the foremost person in the school, is expected to have new ideas for the progress of the school. In the delivery of new ideas or policies, the Principal does not immediately implement the ideas or policies, but he has to socialize the ideas with the subordinates so that the subordinates will not be surprised when the new ideas or policies are implemented at the school.

d). Providing input and trying to find a solution for teacher's problems. In managing the organization, the Principal is certainly faced with various problems, either the attitude of the teacher or the students coming from different backgrounds. In this case, the Principal must act wisely and fairly to avoid new problems. Regarding teacher's problems, principals should listen to any inputs or suggestions from teachers or subordinates.

e). Sharing tasks together. The division of tasks in the placement of teachers according to their profession is one of the scrutinies that must be analyzed by the Principal, and if this policy is not appropriate, it could affect the teaching and learning process, especially the problem of subject suitability with the teacher's assignment. If some teachers have the same quality in one lesson, then the Principal will appoint a more senior teacher first to discuss it in the meeting.

f). Setting an example. Exemplary is an important factor in influencing other people, especially leaders with subordinates. In most cultures, when the leader is lazy, then the subordinate would act the same. Therefore, good examples from the Principals are essential to influence the subordinates, for instance, entering and returning from work on time, working well, working with high spirits, being discipline, or being responsible at work.

g). Acting in accordance with the ability of the teacher. One characteristic of a good leader is acting according to the ability of subordinates, meaning that the leader does not force subordinates to do tasks that subordinates are unable to carry out.

h). Giving rewards or more attention to teachers who are diligent and have achievements. More attention to teachers who are diligent and having achievements is one of the efforts to improve teacher professionalism because the attention of giving rewards for teachers could improve the seriousness and personal motivation of the teacher.

The efforts that the principal have done indicate that the principal has high quality of educational leadership to create condusive situation [7].

CONCLUSION

1. In increasing the professionalism of teachers, the Principal should possess a democratic leadership style. The implementation of this leadership includes treating the subordinates/teachers as family members who must be given the opportunity to increase their professionalism; willing to accept suggestions and criticism from subordinates; communicating policies and problems together with the subordinates; giving trust to subordinates; building a work team in a family manner; building work passion; and sharing workload fairly.
2. The efforts of the Principal in increasing teacher professionalism are by applying various efforts, namely: listening to ideas and suggestions from teachers; completing and clarifying errors in the principal and teacher mistakes; expressing wishes; providing input and trying to solve teacher problems; sharing tasks together; giving good examples; acting in accordance with the ability of the teacher; or giving more attention to teachers who are diligent and having achievement.

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