Principal’s Visionary Leadership in the Framework of School Change Process

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ABSTRACT
Leadership has a strategic position in the organization and even influences organizational performance. The principal’s leadership role can have a positive or negative effect on the school. The principal’s leadership which brings positive influence is able to bring change to the school. School change can be achieved if the principal as a leader has the competence to formulate a vision and development strategy for his school. Forms of leadership principals who have such competence can be said to be visionary leadership. This study chose SMA Nasional Malang, Indonesia, as a place to conduct research studies. This research is using a qualitative approach to the type of case study research. The case study was chosen because SMA Nasional Malang has changed significantly over the past few years and has become a reference school. The purpose of this study is: (1) to describe the role of the principal’s visionary leadership, (2) the principal’s strategy in making effective school changes, (3) innovations made by the principal in making effective school changes, (4) the process of occurrence changes in schools, (5) factors that support principals in making changes, and (6) inhibiting factors in principals.

Keywords: visionary leadership, change process, effective school, school vision

1. INTRODUCTION

A leader has the responsibility for organizational management. The principal who holds the role of a leader is one of the most important human components for schools [1]. As a leader and leader, the principal has the responsibility to create school change for the better [2]. At this time, the leadership style chosen by the principal is not only coercion but rather a show of self-competence and the result of togetherness [3]. The responsibility of the principal as a leader is as a determinant of organizational decisions, providing direction and guidance to all members in achieving the educational goals. Effective leadership by school principals can bring schools to achieve predetermined goals [4].

Based on the above opinion, it can be concluded that the success of schools in achieving educational goals is strongly influenced by the leadership carried out by the principal [5]. There are many types and styles of principal leadership, one of which is visionary leadership. Vision and mission are the highest standards in an organization [6]. Therefore, a leader must be able to formulate a strong vision and mission to realize organizational success. This article aims to describe how the implementation of visionary leadership in schools is an effort to make a difference.

2. METHOD

Research focuses on the discussion of visionary principal leadership in implementing change strategies in SMA Nasional Malang, Indonesia. Based on the selected research focus, this study chose a qualitative method where the findings obtained were discussed using words. States that qualitative research methods are aimed at a focus on the uniqueness of the research object [7]. Furthermore, observations will be made through descriptions of behavior and actions, opinions, encouragement, actions, etc., as a whole, and by describing them in the form of words and language, in a special natural language and by utilizing various methods. Based on some of the opinions above, the researcher uses a qualitative approach as a way to
describe the role of visionary leadership, strategy and innovation and its implementation, the change process, the driving and inhibiting factors of change.

The type of approach in this research is using a case study, because this type of research is conducted to focus attention on the role of visionary leadership, strategy and innovation and its implementation, the change process, the driving and inhibiting factors of change. The case study in this research aims to develop deep knowledge and maintain the integrity of the research object, so that this qualitative research emphasizes searching and exposure [7].

This research uses a case study because the object under study has unique properties and specificities. The objectives of a case study can be issues or events, people, places, and documents. These targets are examined in detail and thoroughly as a form of seriousness by the chosen subject so that we can understand the interrelationship of the various components contained therein. The informants in this study were the principal, teachers, and staff, as well as students in general.

3. RESULT

3.1. The Role of Principal Visionary Leadership at SMA Nasional Malang

SMA Nasional Malang was a private educational institution that was previously almost closed because it did not have students. However, with the role of the new school principal, changes have occurred that can improve the school again. Changes in SMA Nasional Malang are strongly influenced by the role of a school principal. The principal of SMA Nasional Malang, namely Drs. Rusdi, M.Si, has the competence to be able to formulate what changes the school should make. In this regard, the principal must first prepare both personal and managerial (overall). An interesting thing that was done by Mr. Rusdi was the effort to prepare individuals before serving as a school principal, namely by conducting case studies to several well-known schools in Indonesia. Mr. Rusdi submitted requirements to the head of the foundation to be allowed to conduct case studies before he was officially appointed as the new principal. The purpose of this study was expressed by the principal, namely to be able to find out how the strategy and implementation in the school so that it can become a quality school. This will later become a guideline for the principle of SMA Nasional Malang to determine changes following the conditions of the school.

The principal of SMA Nasional Malang was able to formulate solutions to problems faced by the school, namely the very low number of students. An initial step taken by Mr. Rusdi to make changes was to submit a request to the head of the foundation to have full authority over the school. Furthermore, the principal as a visionary leader implements several new policies that have never even been implemented in any school. Principals are brave enough to take risks in the formulation of these new policies. Based on the interview activities conducted by the principal, it was revealed that in formulating new policies to be able to make changes, it must be as optimal as possible and oriented towards the future even if it must be accompanied by several risks. As a leader, the principal also has a role to be able to manage and utilize all the resources owned by the school effectively and efficiently, including Human Resources. The school principal provides direction, coaching and also an example to the existing teachers and staff in order to be able to implement policies optimally.

3.2. The Strategy of the Visionary Principal at SMA Nasional Malang

Strategy carried out by the principal at SMA Nasional Malang by describing the ideas and ideas about the changes that will be made. Henceforth, the principal pours out these ideas and ideas into an applicable work plan. The principal revealed several things that became the basis for the formulated strategy, such as: (1) renewal and originality, (2) the strategy used was long-term and applicable, (3) the change strategy was comprehensive and could bind all components of the organization, (4) and can be supported by existing resources. The principal of Malang National Senior High School formulated a strategy taking into account the conditions of the school and previously implemented policies.

3.3. The Innovation of Change by the Principal at SMA Nasional Malang

Innovations made by the principal of SMA Nasional Malang include establishing policies such as (1) increasing the tuition fee from the original sixty-five thousand to two hundred thousand rupiahs, (2) increasing the building fee from five hundred thousand rupiahs to two million rupiahs, (3) only accepting prospective students from rank one to ten, (4) enforcing discipline and quality of human resources through the recruitment of new teachers with a minimum GPA (Grade Point Average) requirement of 3.5 for graduates public universities and 3.64 for graduates of private universities. In addition to this policy, the principal also has several innovative programs such as in the field of the curriculum which frees teachers to design lesson plans as short as possible.

This was explained by Mr. Rusdi as an effort to reduce the administrative burden of teachers so that teachers are expected to be more optimal in the teaching process in the classroom. The principal also made modifications to the learning model of students, namely by opening classes that facilitate the talents and interests of students such as physics, chemistry, or sports classes. The school principal also made innovations related to
school identity by enforcing the provisions of student uniforms (clothing). One of the interesting things was that students and teachers were given uniforms with jeans under them. The principal also conducts character development of students through several program activities such as the existence of student infaq coins and appointing several students to become special officers to serve at the front office and serve existing visitors.

3.4. The Process of Change at SMA Nasional Malang

The process of change at SMA Nasional Malang started with preparations made by the principal, namely through a case study. In addition, the principal also conducts analyses related to problems and resources owned by the school. After analyzing the principal, then formulating several innovations and change strategies and teaching them into programs and performance plans. Henceforth the principal communicates related to the change innovation plan being carried out. Communication is carried out by holding meetings with all teachers and staff, heads of foundations, and school stakeholders. The stage after the communication process is the implementation of existing policies and programs. After the policy is implemented the principal conducts supervision, control and evaluation of the achievement of predetermined targets and goals.

3.1. Driving Factors and Inhibiting Factors for Change in SMA Nasional Malang

At the time of the implementation of changes in SMA Nasional Malang, factors were driving and inhibiting change. The factor that supports change is the support from the head of the foundation by giving full authority to the principal and providing a source of funds to be able to implement the planned program. However, in its implementation, there is also an inhibiting factor, namely rejection from the teacher. The reason for refusal by the teacher was due to not being ready for the risks posed by the program.

Teachers feel threatened because they are accustomed to the old policy where there are no rules that enforce discipline and the quality of human resources. In addition, the teacher’s fear of the imposition of expensive building fees, an increase in tuition fees, and restrictions on prospective students, namely only accepting prospective students with a ranking of one to ten can cause public interest so that it can cause the number of students to decrease. This, of course, will cause school income to decrease and affect the teacher’s payroll system.

There are inhibiting factors from the community because people object to the high cost of education. The principal’s efforts to realize the four proposed programs, namely: (1) asking the authority to the foundation to give the authority to be able to run the program, (2) placing a banner to inform the public that SMAN Nasional Malang only accepts prospective students from rank one to ten; and (3) socialization to state and private junior high schools.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. The Role of Principal Visionary Leadership at SMA Nasional Malang

Leadership is one of the styles used by leaders in carrying out their duties as a leader in a school organization [8]. In its application, four things can characterize that leadership is included in the form of visionary leadership, namely: (1) a visionary leader can provide guidance and direction to his subordinates in achieving organizational goals, (2) a visionary leader, namely someone who has rational ideas to initiate change in schools and can influence its members, (3) visionary leaders can be the main source of information both inside and outside the organization and have a strong vision and mission to achieve organizational goals, and (4) visionary leaders can set examples and become role models for members in implementing rights and obligations within the organization.

States that a visionary leader is a leader who in carrying out his leadership with full commitment, has the idea of renewal for the organization he leads and can provide a sense of kinship and welfare for all its members [9]. Besides that, Mukti [10] emphasizes that a visionary leader can be seen from the competence that exists in leadership in expressing ideas for renewal, communicating, and implementing ideas and ideas about organizational change and improvement. Visionary leaders will be able to optimize existing resources to be able to achieve optimal change, including sharing the workload and wages effectively and efficiently [11]. This is also in line with the opinion Poi’s which states that good division of labor and can establish togetherness in its implementation is one of the strengths of visionary leaders [12]. Following the opinion of these experts, it can be concluded that a visionary leader will always strive to be able to realize effective organizational change and create strategies as an effort to achieve goals [13]. This is also supported by Christianingsih [14] which states that visionary leadership is a driving force, communicator, and determinant of change that can improve the quality of the institution.

SMA Nasional Malang is a private educational institution that was previously almost closed because it did not have students. However, with the role of the new school principal, changes have occurred that can improve the school again. Changes in SMA Nasional Malang are strongly influenced by the role of a school principal. The principal of SMA Nasional Malang, namely Drs. Rusdi, M.Si, has the competence to be able to formulate what
changes the school should make. In this regard, the principal must first prepare both personal and managerial (overall). An interesting thing that was done by Mr. Rusdi was the effort to prepare individuals before serving as a school principal, namely by conducting case studies to several well-known schools in Indonesia. Mr. Rusdi submitted requirements to the head of the foundation to be allowed to conduct case studies before he was officially appointed as the new principal. The purpose of this study was expressed by the principal, namely to be able to find out the strategy and implementation in the school so that it can become a quality school. This will later become a guideline for the principle of SMA Nasional Malang to determine changes by the conditions of the school.

The principal of SMA Nasional Malang was able to formulate solutions to problems faced by the school, namely the very low number of students. An initial step taken by Mr. Rusdi to make changes was to submit a request to the head of the foundation to have full authority over the school. Furthermore, the principal as a visionary leader implements several new policies that have never even been implemented in any school. Principals are brave enough to take risks in the formulation of these new policies. Based on the interview activities conducted by the principal, it was revealed that in formulating new policies to be able to make changes, it must be as optimal as possible and oriented towards the future even if it must be accompanied by several risks. As a leader, the principal also has a role to be able to manage and utilize all the resources owned by the school effectively and efficiently, including Human Resources. The school principal provides direction, coaching, and also an example to the existing teachers and staff to be able to implement policies optimally.

Leadership carried out by the principal of SMA Nasional Malang is in line with the opinion Sunarta [9] which states that a visionary leader is a leader who is carrying out his leadership with full commitment, has ideas and ideas for a forward-oriented organization, and can create a sense of kinship and prosperity. for all its members.

4.2. Visionary Principal Strategy Strategic

Planning is needed to be able to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently [15]. In practice, a visionary principal will realize the ideals and ideas he has into plans called strategies so that they can be implemented later [16]. Strategy can be seen as a broad and comprehensive direction, has long-term goals, and is based on the achievement of organizational goals. A strategy the leader must pay attention to the vision, mission, and goals of the organization as well as the morals and values that apply in the organization. Furthermore, leaders need to develop this strategy into the organization’s long-term operational planning and apply it to work plans and targets [17]. Therefore, several things are of concern when formulating strategies such as: (1) long-term ideas, (2) the external environment of the organization (both present and future predictions), (3) the internal strength of the organization, (4) organizational culture, applicable, (5) stakeholders (including stakeholders), (6) as well as possible future resources.

The principal in making changes must be able to optimize existing resources so that the results achieved are optimal [18]. The principal must also always provide a good stimulus to teachers and staff to generate motivation and be able to optimize their talents to achieve predetermined goals [19]. The strategy formulated covers innovation and challenges that will be faced in implementing it. The principal must be able to encompass all components in education, both the community and other related institutions through effective communication and partnerships (Suriansyah, 2014). The success of the strategy implemented by the principal can be seen from the existence of good planning, its implementation is systematic and directed according to the design, and the existence of stable sustainability. Visionary school principals in formulating strategies in planning must pay attention to existing standards, namely 8 standards (National Education Standards).

This is applied to the leadership at SMA Nasional Malang. The first step taken by the principal is to explain ideas and ideas about the changes that will be made. Henceforth, the principal pours out these ideas and ideas into an applicable work plan. The principal revealed several things that became the basis for the formulated strategy, such as: (1) renewal and originality, (2) the strategy used was long-term and applicable, (3) the change strategy was comprehensive and could bind all components of the organization, and (4) can be supported by existing resources. The principle of Malang National Senior High School formulated a strategy with consideration of school conditions and previous school policies.

4.3. Innovation Change by the School Principal

The principal’s form of innovation by making changes to the curriculum. The principal has a role in designing the curriculum, including making changes according to the conditions in his school [20]. Curriculum changes include changes to the learning system, learning methods, learning resources, and other curriculum components. Innovations made by school principals aim to create effective schools [21]. Schools can be said to be effective if the efforts that have been made can bring the organization (school). One of the main resources for determining the success of innovation formulated by the principal is Human Resources (HR). The principal has the authority to be able to motivate and optimize his subordinates to assist and carry out the innovations that
have been formulated. The principal has the right to manage his employees starting from planning, implementing, appraising, giving appraisals, awards, and dismissing them [22]. Innovation in the field of human resources must be able to create positive competition among employees to be able to improve their competencies and bring excellence to schools [23]. The form of innovation applied by the principal can be influenced by the leadership style used [24]. Leadership style can also affect employee motivation and performance.

Innovation a leader needs to pay attention to the following things: (1) innovation is the result of research that has been done before so that it can solve organizational problems, (2) has a high willingness and work ethic to be able to implement innovation designs, (3) innovations that are planned rationally and can be implemented, and (4) and evaluation and review are needed to see the effectiveness of the innovations being carried out. Based on the explanation of some of the expert opinions above, it can be concluded that the innovation carried out by the principal is a form of solution to problems experienced by the organization, is comprehensive, and rational can be implemented. As a leader, the principal has the right and authority to be able to make optimal use of existing resources to be able to achieve success in the innovations made [25].

Innovation that can be made by a leader in schools is to improve the curriculum applied in schools. Curriculum changes include changes to the learning system, learning methods, learning resources, and other curriculum components. Innovations made by the principal at SMA Nasional Malang in the field of curriculum, such as freeing teachers to design lesson plans as short as possible. This was explained by Mr. Rusdi as an effort to reduce the administrative burden of teachers so that teachers are expected to be more optimal in the teaching process in the classroom. The principal also made modifications to the learning model of students, namely by opening classes that facilitate the talents and interests of students such as physics, chemistry, or sports classes.

The innovation made by the principal aims to create an effective school [21]. Schools can be said to be effective if the efforts that have been made can achieve the goals of the organization (school) that have been previously set. This is also done by the principal at SMA Nasional Malang. As a leader, the principal has the authority to mobilize his subordinates to help and carry out the innovations that have been formulated. Innovation a leader needs to pay attention to the following things: (1) innovation is the result of research that has been done before so that it can solve organizational problems, (2) has a high willingness and work ethic to be able to implement innovation designs, (3) innovations that are planned rationally and can be implemented, and (4) evaluation and review are needed to see the effectiveness of the innovations being carried out. In practice, the principal of Malang National High School also takes these elements into account. After the principal’s consideration is then poured into school policies and programs such as: (1) raising the tuition fee from the original sixty-five thousand to two hundred thousand rupiahs, (2) increasing the building fee from five hundred thousand rupiahs to two million rupiahs, (3) only accepting prospective students from rank one to ten, and (4) enforcing discipline and quality of human resources through the recruitment of new teachers with a minimum GPA (Grade Point Average) of 3.5 for state university graduates and 3.64 for graduates private colleges.

4.4. The Process of Change

An organization, including schools, can experience changes because it contains transformational and dynamic institutional values [26]. Change cannot just happen but requires several stages or processes until a change occurs. Changes in several stages starting from unfreezing, changing/movement, to refreezing. Unfreezing is the stage where there are efforts to reduce the pressure from change. The next stage is changing / movement, which is a stage where efforts are made to be able to apply new norms, values, and policies as well as innovation in organizational implementation [27]. The last stage, namely freezing or re-freezing is a stage of change that focuses on efforts to be able to balance the driving force and inhibition of change.

In school organizations, the stages of change can be started by the principal who formulates a vision and mission, and goals using a SWOT analysis [28]. After careful planning, it is necessary to disseminate information to all members so that a comprehensive change can occur. Therefore, the vision and mission must be understandable and easy to communicate [29]. Easily communicated vision will have a positive effect on teacher performance, organizational climate, and courage in making decisions related to organizational change.

The process of change at SMA Nasional Malang started with preparations made by the principal, namely through a case study activity. In addition, the principal also conducts analyses related to problems and resources owned by the school. After analyzing the principal, then formulating several innovations and change strategies and teaching them into programs and performance plans. Henceforth the principal communicates related to the change innovation plan being carried out. Communication is carried out by holding meetings with all teachers and staff, heads of foundations, and school stakeholders.

The next stage is changing / movement, which is the stage where efforts are made to be able to apply new norms, values, and policies as well as innovations in
organizational implementation. At this stage, SMA Nasional Malang also made several efforts to optimize change innovation such as: (1) asking the authority to the foundation to give the authority to be able to run the program, (2) placing banners to inform the public that SMAN Nasional Malang only accepts prospective students. From rank one to ten, and (3) socialization to public and private junior high schools. The last stage, namely freezing or freezing again, is a change phase that focuses on efforts to balance the driving forces and inhibiting changes. After the policy is implemented the principal conducts supervision, control, and evaluation of the achievement of predetermined targets and goals.

4.5. Driving Factors and Inhibiting Factors for Change

Factors that support change include: (1) the existence of an effective strong drive, (2) the existence of unity from leaders and subordinates, (3) there is a specially formed team, (4) sustainable change and can communicate goals to be achieved, and (5) as well as an effective and structured approach. The principal has a significant influence on the conditions and culture of the school as well as the performance of teachers. Leadership is very influential on the changes that occur because the leader is the person who regulates the running of the organization [30].

So, it can be concluded that the role of the principal can be a driving factor for change. The competence of school principals influences employee performance and institutional dynamics. Principals with good performance can be role models for teachers and staff in carrying out the tasks that are their responsibility [31]. In addition, the condition of the institution that is already effective and conditional can also be a factor that can encourage a process of change [22]. Effective and conditional institutional conditions will affect the climate and motivation of each individual so that the change process will be maximized.

While the inhibiting factors for change include disapproval from subordinates (employees and staff), rejection from foundations and directors, ineffective implementation support, time, budget, and limited resources, as well as organizational inertia and politics. Several factors that become obstacles in the change process, including lack of support from the community, lack of human resources, and low HR competence [32]. While Hambali [33] states that one of the factors that can inhibit the change in that background (history) is a bad organization.

In implementing changes in SMA Nasional Malang, there are also driving and inhibiting factors. The driving force for change is the support from the head of the foundation by giving full authority to the principal and providing a source of funds to be able to implement the planned program. However, in its implementation, there is also an inhibiting factor, namely rejection from the teacher. The reason for refusal by the teacher was due to not being ready for the risks posed by the program. Teachers feel threatened because they are accustomed to the old policy where there are no rules that enforce discipline and the quality of human resources. In addition, the teacher’s fear of the imposition of expensive building fees, an increase in tuition fees, and restrictions on prospective students, namely only accepting prospective students with a ranking of one to ten can cause public interest so that it can cause the number of students to decrease. This, of course, will cause school income to decrease and affect the teacher’s payroll system. There are inhibiting factors from the community because people object to the high cost of education.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the principal’s visionary leadership has a very important role in making changes in schools. To be able to make changes effectively and optimally, the principal needs a strategy before implementing changes. Innovation needs to be carried out by leaders (school principals) to be able to create change in schools, innovations that must be made are based on careful planning so that they can solve existing problems. Change in school can be divided into three stages, namely freezing, changing/moving, and unfreeze. In the implementation of realizing these changes, there are driving and inhibiting factors in implementing changes in schools.

After compiling this article, some suggestions can be given by researchers to the school, especially the principal, namely, as a leader, it is the responsibility of being able to improve and bring about good change for the institution (school) they lead. To realize this, the principal can optimize existing components so that they can support change. Therefore, a principal must have optimal planning and be adapted to the circumstances of the institution. In addition, there are also suggestions for other researchers who will examine similar cases to further develop sub-discussion related to the change process in schools and the driving and inhibiting factors that accompany it so that this research will become more complex and comprehensive.

REFERENCES