

The role of transformational leadership In improving muslim students entrepreneurship

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Abstract: Buya K.H. Husen Harahap has succeeded in building and improving the entrepreneurship based Islamic boarding school which is still rare to find Indonesia, especially West-Java. This study aims to understand the role of transformational leadership applied by Buya K.H. Husen Harahap in cultivating Muslim students' entrepreneurship. Qualitative data collection method in particular to the in-depth interview was conducted. The school management staffs were interviewed to explore the strategies applied in managing the school. The main characteristic of the transformational leadership applied is the transformation of the unproductive land into the productive one through seven strategies which are: (1) creating vision and mission, (2) stimulating students' leadership and entrepreneurship, (3) building the cooperation unit, mineral water company, and fruit farms, (4) formulating the entrepreneurship oriented curriculum, (5) creating the vegetables and fruits garden, (6) engaging the students in practical business activity, and (7) providing the role models to the students and teachers

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Curriculum, Transformational Leadership, Islamic Boarding School

1. Introduction

The main challenge faced by the Islamic education institution is leadership. Following the tradition, the stake holders appoint a leader regardless his professionalism and vision. In contrast, they consider more on the kinship. This system might negatively impact the management in human resource development, financial, educational environment, and the organization improvement of the institution. Referring to the Islamic teaching on the organization, leader has the highest position and required to be responsible. Therefore, ALLAH SWT promises the big rewards for the trustworthy leaders and punishment for the unsafe (Wahyudin, et al., 2018).

The studies showed that transformational leadership is best among the others because of its ability to motivate the quality improvement of the followers (Robbins, 2006). The continuous attention, training, guidance and counseling, and supervision provided can maximize the quality improvement of the institution. Transformational leadership encourages the leader to be a visionary and innovative in facing the forthcoming educational challenges.

One of the future agendas that have to be concerned by the educational experts is the emerging of the entrepreneur spirit among academicians. Teachers and students are the educational customers whom need to be guided, motivated, and directed so that they can create some educational innovation. Thus, we can find the best solution for the problems faced by the society.

The Indonesian Statistic Centre documented that by August 2017 there were 7.56 million of Indonesian unemployed while in the previous year was 7.24 million. Based on the educational background, the unemployed are dominated by the graduates of the vocational school (12.65%), followed by the senior high school (10.32%), diploma (7.54%), undergraduates (6.40%), junior high school (6.22%), and primary school (2.74%).

The above data indicated that the government faces the big problem in providing sufficient jobs opportunity for its citizen. There is a need for Indonesian academician to find effective ways to decrease the number of unemployed, such as stimulating students' entrepreneur spirit (Ranto, 2016). This stimulation requires a lot of energy and innovation from the academician.

Ciputra (Ranto,2016) mentioned that according the Mc Cleland's concept, from the 250 million citizens, Indonesia needs at least 4.5 million entrepreneurs (2% of the population). Current data showed that it has only 400,000 entrepreneurs. Thus, it needs other 4 million entrepreneurs. During his professorship inauguration in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, Moeljono emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship stimulation in order to develop the country and create its compatible citizen. Therefore, entrepreneurship is extremely required to emerge in all aspects of the society within the economic development framework (Ranto, 2016).

Through his power and good vision, a transformative leader is able to manage his energy and spirit so that he can positively influence his followers. In a nutshell, a transformative leader must have entrepreneurial spirit; therefore, he can do more innovation in human resource empowerment.

The leadership implemented by Buya K.H. Musthafa Husein Harahap in Islamic Boarding School Al-Musthafawiyah integrates the religious teaching and agribusiness to stimulate and develop the entrepreneur spirit among the school members including the students, the future leaders of the country. The agribusiness designed by the school leader aims to stimulate students' independence so that they can be successful entrepreneurs.

This study aims to understand the role of the transformational leadership implemented by Buya K. H. Musthafa Husen Harahap in stimulating Muslim students' entrepreneur spirit and explore his strategies.

2. Theoretical Perspectives

1. Transformational Leadership

The word transformation derives from the Latin, *transfomare*, which means "changing the character, purpose, or situation". It can be implemented by various entities, such as individual, group, community, or political system (Hacker and Robert, 2003). Another perspective convinced that transformation comes from the word "to transform" which means change something from one situation to the better and more valuable one. Besides, transformation means able to change one thing to a different form, for example, a possibility into a reality or achievement motivation into the real achievement (Tucunan, Suparta & Riana: 2014).

Theory of transformation is also called relational theories of leadership. This theory focuses on the relationship formed between a leader and his followers. Caldwell et al (2012) stated that:

The ongoing cynicism about leaders and organizations calls for a new standard of ethical leadership that we have labeled 'transformative leadership.' This new leadership model integrates ethically-based features of six other well-regarded leadership perspectives and combines key normative and instrumental elements of each of those six perspectives.

Transformational leadership was firstly introduced by McGregor Burns. In line with its name, transform means changing. A transformative leader must be able to upgrade the quality of his follower; therefore the organization can achieve its targets. His main role is to create a supportive environment for the organization to reach the expectation.

Moreover, transformational leadership is perceived to be more effective than the transactional. Indeed, it is the combination between charismatic and transactional leadership (Murtiningsih, 2015). In general, the transformative leader has the following characteristics; (1) Idealized influence, (2) Individualized consideration, (3) inspiration motivation, and (4) intellectual stimulation. Van Oord (2013) highlighted that transformational leadership consists of five stages which are: (1) the evaluation of current practice; (2) deliberation on how to improve; (3) the drafting of a development plan; (4) dialogue with all stakeholders; and (5) the decision-making.

2. Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is considered as an effective way to connect the knowledge and marketing ability. It involves the establishment of a company and managerial skills (Wahyuni & Hidayati, 2017). Stein dan Jhon F. Burgess (1993) defined an entrepreneur as someone who is able to manage, organize, and be responsible in initiating a business. In addition, Encyclopedia of Americana describes an entrepreneur as the one who is eager to take a risk in coordinating the production, capital, materials, and employees through which he will be able to generate the profit. An entrepreneur must intentionally invest his time, effort, and capital in opening and managing his enterprise.

From Islamic perspective, entrepreneurship means be active, professional, productive, and innovative. Those characteristics are not having by nature. In contrast, stimulation is required (Jalil, 2013).

3. Method

This is a qualitative field study with naturalistic inquiry. Through a set of procedure, the authors descriptively narrate both the writing and oral responses and the observed attitude of the participants. The data were collected using participant observation, in-depth interview, and study of documentation. Those are the main data collections techniques in qualitative study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Nasution, 1996).

The authors used the degree of credibility to validate the data. Lincoln and Guba (1985: 40) emphasized various techniques to have data credibility, which are: (1) extend the duration of living in the field, (2) do more persistent observation, (3) triangulate the data, (4) negative case analysis, (5) member checking, (6) peer debriefing, and (7) referential adequacy.

Moreover, data analysis was continuously conducted throughout the study time within the theoretical framework. Miles dan Huberman (1992: 20) suggested some steps in the interactive data analysis, which are: (1) data reduction, (2) data serving, (3) conclusion and verification.

4. Result And Discussion

Al-Musthafawiyah is an Islamic boarding school located in Mega Mendung, Kabupaten Bogor, West- Java, Indonesia. It integrates the Islamic education and local wisdom in order to be beneficial to the society. Its leader, Buya K.H. Musthafa Husein Harahap has successfully transformed the unproductive land into the productive and valuable farm by empowering the society. Currently he supervises about 25 ha land.

The visions and missions of the school indicate that both the founder (Buya KH. Musthafa Husein Harahap) and the director (KH. A. Syamsul Bahri N) implement transformational leadership. One of the visions states “provide an educational system stimulating and developing the spirit of leadership, entrepreneurship, and independency towards global competition”. One of the missions is “be the best Islamic boarding schools producing the Islamic future generation with high level of IMTAQ (Iman and Taqwa), IPTEK (knowledge and technology), skills, independence, and caring within the framework of Al-Quran and As-Sunnah”. Moreover, the school programs highly stimulate the development students’ entrepreneur spirit.

Ensuring the successful of the programs, seven strategies are implemented by the school leaders. They are:

1. **Creating vision and mission.** Entrepreneurship program is the uniqueness of Al-Musthafawiyah Islamic boarding school. The school leaders benefit the unproductive and left-behind lands in the nearest village. Then, they ask the students to contribute in managing the lands and generate profit from selling the product.

2. **Stimulating both leadership and entrepreneurship.** The school creates and supports students’ organization in order to enhance their leadership. The senior students are required to take charge of the organization. They are guided by the teachers in designing, realizing, and evaluating the programs. Further, they have to defense any single mistake in the forum attended by all students. In addition, students are in charge of daily programs.

3. **Establish enterprises.** The school has registered at minimum three companies; the cooperation selling the daily needs of the students and society, the mineral water whose name is AEQ, and farms.

4. **Formulating the entrepreneurship oriented curriculum.** The school integrates the curriculum from Indonesian Educational Ministry, Indonesian Religious Ministry, and the local. The local curriculum includes the obligation to use both English and Arabic as the only medium of communication among the school members. To stimulate and improve the entrepreneur skills of the students, the junior students are taught 2 hours per day both the theoretical part of entrepreneurship and the practice in the farms. They are trained the farming process and the product packaging. On the other hand, the senior students are taught 6 hours per day; 4 hours for the theoretical part and 2 hours for practice. The senior students are expected to find some innovation in plantation modification. For instance, they have successfully produced “salak madu” and fruit based syrup. In addition, for the pharmacy students, they allocate 8 hours per day to transform the plantation into the medication, such as herb tea and insulin.

5. **Creating the vegetables and fruits farms and functioning it as entrepreneur lab.** The school employs 60 permanent staffs to manage the farms, coordinated by a leader. Since the students practice their entrepreneurship knowledge in the farms, the farms leader has the responsibility to manage the schedule and mentoring the trainer.

6. **Engaging the students in practical business activities.** The students are actively involved in the production and packaging process of the product. Therefore, both their soft-skill and hard-skill are well enhanced.

7. **Providing the role models**

School leaders and teachers are required to keep upgrading their knowledge so that they can do some innovation. This will motivate the students to learn more. In addition, the senior students have obligation to be the best role models for their juniors in terms of dressing, discipline, and achievement.

5. Conclusion

Buya K.H. Musthafa Husein Harahap implemented the transformational leadership. His leadership characteristics are: (1) be charismatic and inspiring role model to create a commitment, attitude, and behavior of the school members, (2) consistently apply seven strategies stimulating teachers and students’ entrepreneur spirit. The strategies are classified into two parts; the innovation on the school programs and the leadership practices that can be a role model for others.

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