

The Implementation of Servant Leadership in Improving Teachers' Performance at Elementary School

(Study Case at Catholic Elementary Schools in Bandung)

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Abstract—This research wants to explain the implementation of servant leadership of principals toward the improvement of teachers' performance at catholic elementary school in Bandung. This research aims to discover the way of model implementation of principal's servant leadership in improving teachers' performance, so it influences on the increasing of school's quality. This research uses a descriptive-qualitative method. The result shows that the servant leadership of principals has an effect on the increasing of teachers' performance, as a result the quality of catholic elementary school in Bandung increases. The implementation of servant leadership's criteria can empower teachers, create vision together at school, build self-confidence, encourage teachers' motivation and commitment to improve the quality of school, be open toward the development of era and establish an open communication with teachers, so they are open each other. The implementation of servant leadership in total affects in the increasing of the school quality.

Keywords—*servant leadership; teachers' performance; elementary school*

I. INTRODUCTION

A principal's leadership is quite influential on the increasing the quality of school. This looks on the opinion of Mulyasa that principal is a single leader in the school which has responsibility to teach and influence all aspects involved in academic activities in the school to work together in order to achieve the school's goals [1]. Therefore, the way of principal's leadership is essential to improve the quality of school. The success of it is influential on the learning result of students. Moreover, Mulyasa said that in order to create qualified school achievement, the principal should be able to empower educators to bring qualified, smooth and productive learning process [1].

Related to the leadership of the principal which has an important role on the increasing of school quality, so the good principal is one which is able to improve teachers' performance at the school. According to Wahyudi, as a manager, firstly, principal should have strategies to empower educators and education itself through cooperative team works [2]. Secondly, principal gives opportunities to educators to increase their

profession. Thirdly, principal encourages the involvement of educators in various activities which support school programs.

The principal has leadership responsibilities in increasing the profession and giving opportunities on teachers to improve their potential since teachers is the foremost ones in increasing the quality of education. However, in the reality it often happens a crisis in leadership at school from the consequence of helplessness of principal. That helplessness happens because of principal's behavior which behaves as he wishes based on his own business, the operation of organization, as a result, is chaos and shows lack of the effectiveness and leadership [3].

In the context of operation leadership crisis of school organization and lack of education quality, servant leadership, therefore, strongly needs to be implemented so as to increase the quality of school. The servant leadership model was firstly formed by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970. This leadership was the leadership model which tried to increase the development of workers' personality and fix the quality of service from the organization through the combination on team work and developing the community, self-involvement in the process of making decision, also careful and ethical behaviors. The new approach appears in the concept of this leadership, then it is called as servant leadership [4]. Greenleaf explains about servant leadership as "It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions? The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types."

The servant leadership model is really good if it is applied to school organization which emphasize on service and care. The principal positions himself as a colleague and servant to school society, so the limitation between principal and teachers does not exist. In the servant leadership model, principal positions himself as a servant. Principal prioritize someone else rather than his own business. He gives opportunities to each individual in school environment to be able to increase professional skills. He empowers teachers and job goals to improve students' achievement.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Servant leadership is the concept of leadership which was introduced by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970. According to him, servant leadership is the leadership which is from the honest and deepest heart intending to serve [5]. The model of servant leadership basically serves someone else like from employee to employer, customer and society as the main priority. It starts from the honest heart which intends to serve like becoming the first side in serving. The choice which is from that heart gives desire to become the leader [6]. While according to Neuschel, servant leadership is the one who has the highest feeling of humanity. The right to become the leader is not to be served, but has privilege to serve [7]. However, in the mind of Spears, servant leadership is the leadership which prioritizes the service, started with natural feeling of someone who wants to serve and prioritize the service consciously, this option brings on aspiration and encouragement in leading someone else [8]. In addition, according to Trompenaars and Voerman, the definition of servant leadership is as a management style in term of leading and serving in the one harmony, and there is interaction to the environment [9]. The servant leader is the one who has strong desire to serve and lead, is able to strengthen both of them positively.

To become the one who serves, the leader should have criteria which become role model in behaving and managing organization. One of servant leadership thinkers named Larry C. Spears said that there are 10 servant leadership characters, as following [8]:

- Listening: it is the ability in communicating and making decision, servant leader, however, should add the ability to listen.
- Empathy: it is about listening and caring on complain and problem faced by team, being able to understand the limitation faced by user, team procurement and the other project team supports, and then together seeks a win-win solution.
- Healing: this is the ability to heal a pain, trauma from the failure of previous project, or be able to give spirit again particularly to personal itself, then to the other project teams.
- Awareness: it is compassion, paying attention to surrounding will strengthen leadership act of servant leadership model. By understanding awareness, it then will give the understanding related to the issues such as attitude, authority and followed values.
- Persuasion: the process of decision-making with persuasion is rather than with authority approach or authority itself.
- Conceptualization: it is about having conceptual mindset in its role as a manager and leader. The mindset is not in half rate, but it is integrated and in whole.
- Foresight: it is when being able to understand previous accident, reality in the present and possible decision-making process which will be done in the future.

- Stewardship: It is able to hold the mandate given which suits with its role and responsibility.
- Commitment to the Growth of People: it has commitment to build and develop human resources.
- Building community: it is able to build community located in its surrounding. In running tasks, a manager should be able to build his team mates and the other sides who get involved in the tasks, help each other to successfully implement those tasks.

Managing the school must be done by implementing those characteristic of servant leadership. Principal should be able to become listener besides having ability of making decision and communication. Principal should be able to understand the limitation of teachers. Principal should be able to give zest to educators. Principal should be able to build awareness of educators to keep adjusting with the development of learning theory and method. Principal should be able to utilize the strength of educators for decision-making. Principal should be able to lead the educators, hold mandate and empower educators with approaches as a colleague.

Idealism of principal's leadership oriented to service has effectiveness in increasing the quality of education in school. Principal does not position himself as a boss or acting authoritatively, otherwise principal becomes servant for educators. If principal can empower educators with servant leadership approach, as a result the quality of school can be increased.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research method used in this research was a descriptive-qualitative method which was about implementing servant leadership of principals in improving teachers' performance at catholic elementary school in Bandung. According to Margono, qualitative research needs accurate analysis, systematic objectiveness, so it is gained determination in interpreting, cause-effect from phenomenon [10]. Therefore, qualitative research emphasized on deep, systematic and objective analysis. The deep analysis was needed to beneficial research result toward advantage of that school, obviously with systematic and objective ones.

Researcher used holistic approach by doing observation directly on research objects. Researcher directly observed in the place, understood objects and did interaction, noted, interviewed, sought out complete information from research objects in the field. The results of observation, documentation and interview were arranged and noted to become research study. The collected data were implementation of servant leadership in increasing teachers' performance at catholic elementary school in Bandung. Researcher hopes that the result of observation can give clear images about servant leadership of principals in increasing teachers' performance at catholic elementary schools in Bandung.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first, Principals did the improvement of teachers' performance by doing personal approach at first. Principals

called teachers and listened to what they shared. Their sharing experience contained challenges and teachers' opportunities such as personal problem, difficulty in making learning plans, managing class or strengths of teachers which were needed to develop. Principals became listener who listened. However, from that meeting, principals could identify the challenge of teachers in teaching and becoming the solution of principals to improve teachers' performance. The second, principals had strong personality. As the leader, principals built up strong personality. Strong personality looked in honest act, having integrity, fair, wise and the foremost one was give zest to the teachers, so teachers wanted to work together with principals in creating vision-mission and school targets. Besides, principals should also give example at first in doing something. They were role model for teachers in serving. The third, this was leading with transparency, honesty and professional. School management especially finance problem which was claimed as sensitive aspect was managed transparently, honestly and professionally. The fourth, it was understanding whole school condition. As the leader, principals showed themselves as personality who were able to understand every personality whether it was teacher, student or others. The fifth, giving motivation. Giving motivation to teachers was done in briefing, spiritual musing, monthly-working meeting. Motivation was given to teachers. They gave spirit so that teachers fully loved their job and realized their profession as a teacher was as divine calling. Then, motivation was given to teachers which their performance experienced the decrease. Giving motivation to the teachers was through personal or informal meetings. The sixth, Building a trust. In order to motivate teachers, so principals of catholic elementary schools in Bandung gave the trust to every teacher in running each task. One of forms from this trust was every section experienced the exchange of coordinator in every period. Every teacher was given the same chance in leading those sections. The aim of this was to that every teacher felt given the trust, thereby they felt respected by principals. The seventh, open communication. In order to give motivation to the teachers, principals of catholic elementary schools established open communication to the teachers. Communication was important, so direction and instruction from principals to teachers were implemented matching with the plan. Hence, communication also needed, so it could not appear bias among teachers in running delegation task from principals. In order to increase performance in educating students, principals established open and trusted act from one to another among teachers. Every fighting in developing the quality of education could be socialized to each teacher faithfully and open-mindedly. The eighth, developing career or performance. In order to increase teachers' performance, principals arranged, planned, did and evaluated teachers' performance increasing program. The increasing program of teachers' performance needed to be planned by principals, so knowledge and skills of teachers in educating students developed.

Additionally, the forms of establishment program of teachers' performance which were implemented by principals were educational seminar, In House Training (IHT), MGMP *Pelajaran Serumpun*, MGMP *Yayasan, Lokakarya, Pelatihan PTK, Pelatihan Pengembangan Media IT, Retreat, Pembinaan*

Pribadi, Supervisi Klinis, informal meeting, supervision, Retreat, relocation, Out Bound, Study Tour and others.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Based on the discussion of research result in the previous part, researcher can conclude that the implementation of servant leadership at catholic elementary schools in Bandung has run well. Implementing 10 servant leadership criteria appears in technical languages of principals and has similar visions with servant leadership. In observing the research, there are several servant leadership criteria which are super high to be implemented by principals, they are: Commitment to the Growth of People. Principals have commitment to build and develop teacher resources through various programs of increasing teachers' performance, and Building Community is principals' ability to build people's community around the school through empathy approach and willing to listen. The challenge in improving stewardship performance and criteria is the ability of principals holding responsibility strongly which is given properly with their role and responsibility in leading the school.

On the other side, based on researcher's finding and study in the field, there are few criteria of servant leadership which are not optimum yet to be done to develop school, they are: principals have not yet been able to build awareness of teachers. Teachers have not understood yet important issues which appear such as attitude, authority and followed values. Then the process of decision-making is still with authority approach or with authority as school leader.

B. Suggestion

These suggestions are pointed out to institutions where research has been done, it is for principals of catholic elementary school in Bandung. Those suggestions are: (1) Principals are hoped to truly implement the values of servant leadership in improving teachers' performance by the full of consistence and example. Principals need to become the example in establishing and empowering teachers through personal approach, being open and listener, (2) hopefully teachers are able to apply principals' behaviors in serving by being open, commitment, good communicator, and always having a consistent behavior in running the task as the educator.

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