Visionary Leadership of School Principals in Developing Institutional Quality Management

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Article History
Received : Feb 17th 2024
Revision : March 17th 2024
Publication : Juni 30th 2024

Abstract
Visionary leadership is characterized by leaders who possess a clear vision to achieve the organization's goals. This study is motivated by the current developments that demand school leaders to innovate and advance to compete with other educational institutions. The aim of this research is to explore the development of quality management at MTs Al-Furqon Pasir Sakti through the visionary leadership style of the school principal. This involves the creation, formulation, and implementation of the school vision, with the principal's role being pivotal. The objective is to become visionary leaders to advance the school and achieve high quality standards. This qualitative descriptive research involved the school principal, vice principals, teachers, and students. Data collection methods included interviews, observations, and documentation. Data analysis involved reviewing all data, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The findings indicate that the principal's visionary leadership in developing quality management at MTs Al-Furqon Pasir Sakti focuses on quality functions and management processes including planning, organizing, managing, monitoring, and evaluating. The steps in visionary leadership include: (1) Creating the school's vision and mission based on its ideals and contextual situation, (2) Formulating a unique and unprecedented vision, socializing the principal's ideas, and gathering feedback from all members, (3) Guiding and motivating the principal to realize the vision through concrete actions, and (4) Enhancing student capabilities and improving school quality. Consequently, MTs Al-Furqon Pasir Sakti has an excellent class program designed by the principal, taking into account the unique talents of the students.

Keywords: Visionary Leadership, Quality Management Development

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INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most critical aspects of human life, serving as a process that humanizes individuals, endows them with a noble life order, and realizes their dignity through the proper utilization of human intellect. The current developments present challenges in the field of education, particularly in non-formal education.
institutions. Schools are expected to produce a greater number of young people who possess good abilities and morals to adhere to their religious teachings. According to the Indonesian National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, the goal of national education is to develop skills that enhance the quality of life of society and establish a dignified and civilized national character. This aims to develop students’ potential to become faithful and pious individuals, noble citizens, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, democratic, and responsible (Yusransal & Marwan, 2023).

One of the national education goals is to cultivate individuals who are faithful and pious to God Almighty. Therefore, to achieve this goal, education should ideally be conducted under institutions that integrate national and religious curricula. Educational institutions, particularly schools, must be able to adapt and make new advancements to compete with other schools, becoming high-quality Islamic educational institutions that produce talented students. This role is inseparable from the leader, the school principal, who must have the competence and forward-thinking mindset to advance the school. As explained in the Quran, Surah Hud, verse 37:

"وَاصْنَعِ الْمِهْدَىَّ بِإِذْنِيَّ وَوَحْيِيَّ وَلَكَ تَوَّابُونَ "

"Construct the ship under Our observation and Our inspiration and do not address Me concerning those who have wronged; indeed, they are to be drowned." (Translation by Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019)

This verse highlights the importance for leaders to innovate and create something new that has not been done before, exemplified by Prophet Noah, who was instructed by Allah SWT to build a ship to save his people from a flood, an innovation at that time. Organizations rely on leaders as a key factor in achieving organizational goals. Leaders must be sensitive to changes and capable of analyzing the organization’s strengths and weaknesses, both internally and externally (Prasetyo et al., 2023).

As a leader, the school principal must have a unique leadership style, such as visionary leadership. Visionary leadership is the ability of leaders to control all emerging thoughts by involving all stakeholders. It is a shared goal that must be achieved in the future with the participation of all members (Arya & Saprialman, 2023). According to Haider Nawawi, leadership involves leading, directing, guiding, and training the people being led so they can perform their duties (Adib Shofawi & Novan Adhy Wiyani, 2021). Leadership is the manager’s ability to motivate members to undertake various activities to achieve the established goals. Leadership encourages, influences, guides, and mobilizes others to achieve jointly established goals. It is an honor based on the skills and abilities brought by an
individual for the development of joint ventures (Yovi Aji Pratiwi & Novan Ardy Wiyani, 2020).

Leaders must be able to realize their vision into reality, turning dreams into achievable successes. They build good relationships with all involved because they believe that achieving the vision together leads to success. Leaders also transform old ideas into new ones filled with creativity and innovation. The success of an educational institution can be measured by the principal’s ability to realize a clear and realistic vision. Bars Nanas explains that visionary leaders are effective because they: (1) always have a plan; (2) fully focus on results; (3) create new and challenging visions; (4) influence others; and (5) enthusiastically utilize resources to achieve the vision.

The quality of an organization or institution is crucial. Garvin and Davis define quality as the dynamic condition of products, work, processes, tasks, and environments that meet or exceed customer expectations. Moreover, it complies with the National Education Standards according to Government Regulation No. 57 of 2021, encompassing eight National Education Standards, including (1) Graduate Competency Standards, (2) Content Standards, (3) Process Standards, (4) Educational Evaluation Standards, (5) Educational Personnel Standards, (6) Facilities and Infrastructure Standards, (7) Management Standards, and (8) Funding Standards.

Quality is the degree of excellence of a product, whether in the form of goods or services. In education, quality refers to the educational process and its outcomes, encompassing various inputs such as teaching materials, learning methods, and supporting facilities. A school’s quality is dependent on the principal. The quality of a school is an essential factor for parents in choosing an educational institution for their children. School quality is assessed by school accreditation, the acceptance of graduates into top schools, professional teachers with excellent results, good test scores, and students with good character (Tohir & Soraya, 2023).

Creating trends in education has become a necessity, and institutions must be bolder in innovating. Innovation in education under the Ministry of Religious Affairs is a prerequisite because the community’s perception of institutions as a secondary choice is gradually fading. To create a quality image, institutions must offer new, high-quality advantages in educational materials, facilities, and education. The emergence of high-quality institutions has recently helped increase community trust in educational institutions. This is evidenced by the increasing interest of the local community to enroll their students in the institutions (Kawakip et al., 2023). Consequently, institutions face challenges to improve their quality to maintain community trust.

Superior categories, as explained by Silalahi (2006), refer to classes that teach special programs for outstanding students to nurture their talents and creativity, allowing their potential to emerge, grow, and develop according to their level of
intelligence and talents. As an educational institution in the era of globalization, continuous innovation is essential to attract consumer sympathy (Yunianika, 2022). Without innovation, consumers will leave the institution and move to other educational institutions that constantly innovate. Lack of innovation implies that the institution is not serious about improving quality. Learning at every basic education unit must be synergistic, enjoyable, motivating, and challenging, actively involving students and providing sufficient space for initiative, creativity, and independence according to their skills, interests, talents, and psychological and physical development (Mawikere, 2022).

Preliminary observations by the researchers indicate that the managerial quality activities at MTs Al-Furqon Pasir Sakti are still considered weak due to insufficient number and qualification of educators, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, and unorganized administration. These issues stem from limited funding and relationships. To address these limitations, the principal strives through his leadership practices to make quality the target of managerial activities, continuously innovating and developing ideas to advance the school.

Therefore, visionary leadership is considered an urgent need for Islamic educational institutions today. It is essential to model and implement strategies and work culture to create progressive, superior Islamic educational institutions that attract broad community attention and aspirations, especially among Muslims. The role of visionary leadership in improving education quality is crucial in determining the input-output ratio of students, the number of teachers and educators, the provision of facilities and infrastructure, and the academic and non-academic performance of students. Based on this background, the researchers believe that it is necessary to study the visionary leadership of institutional leaders.

METHOD

This research was conducted at the beginning of 2024, located at MTs Al-Furqon Pasir Sakti in East Lampung. The research method employed is qualitative with a descriptive approach. The qualitative data consists of information presented in verbal form rather than numerical form, including general descriptions of the research object. Primary data sources in this study include the school principal, Vice Principal of Curriculum, Vice Principal of Student Affairs for New Student Admissions, Vice Principal of Public Relations, and Vice Principal of Facilities and Infrastructure. Secondary data sources consist of books, documents, literature studies, notes, and written archives related to the research object.

Data collection techniques involved in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The data analysis technique used in this research follows a descriptive qualitative method, comprising several steps: Data Collection, Data Reduction, Data Display, and Conclusion Drawing/Verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994).
The data collection step involves gathering comprehensive information from primary and secondary sources through interviews, observations, and document reviews. In the data reduction phase, the collected data is systematically condensed and organized to focus on the most relevant information. The data display stage involves presenting the data in an accessible and interpretable format, facilitating further analysis. Finally, in the conclusion drawing/verification phase, the researcher synthesizes the findings to draw meaningful conclusions and verify the results through iterative checking and validation (Creswell, 2013).

By employing these qualitative methods, the study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of visionary leadership and quality management development at MTs Al-Furqon Pasirsakti.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Visionary Leadership of the School Principal

A leader who executes the school’s vision and mission must be equipped with the ability to maintain leadership quality. The success of a school hinges on how well the leader motivates their subordinates to work diligently towards common goals and aspirations. Therefore, the leadership of the school principal must encompass a clear vision and mission for the school’s development and future plans. The following are steps for visionary leadership that the principal of MTs Al-Furqon Pasir Sakti should undertake:

1. Creation of Vision When developing a vision, the principal must consider the school’s aspirations and communicate them to all involved parties. The key to creating a vision is the ability to analyze and predict future possibilities and understand the direction of future changes. In formulating the vision, stakeholders must be involved, and decisions should be made after thorough discussions. Effective communication and coordination skills are crucial for resolving issues and disputes. The principal’s decision-making skills include:
   a. Communication and Coordination Skills Interviews with Mr. Nur Chalim, the principal, reveal that he regularly engages in discussions with the foundation and other teachers to ensure good communication and coordination.
   b. Decision-Making Skills When making decisions regarding the school’s vision, the principal seeks input and consideration from the foundation leaders or stakeholders to ensure the vision aligns with collective aspirations.

2. Formulation of Vision Creating a vision requires the involvement of many individuals. The key elements in vision creation are a shared understanding, consistent thinking towards the vision, high motivation, and work spirit.
Differences in understanding can be a challenge but can be addressed by focusing on common views and providing a clear, measurable vision direction.

3. **Implementation of Vision** In implementing the school’s vision, the principal communicates it to all administrators and the foundation, collaboratively developing it according to school regulations and societal needs and expectations. Parents must be assured that appropriate steps are being taken. The principal also examines and analyzes the school’s needs, ensuring they align with the current situation and the school’s vision and mission. Thus, wise decision-making based on reasoning is essential.

4. **Roles of Visionary Leadership of the School Principal** The school principal plays a crucial role in the school's visionary leadership, including:
   a. **Coach** The principal must optimize all school resources, providing guidance, hope, and confidence to stakeholders to achieve the school's vision. Training includes religious education and soft skills, offering new insights to all members.
   b. **Spokesperson** As a spokesperson, the principal communicates information and knowledge to teachers and stakeholders. Communication is regular and intensive, ensuring all members receive clear and accurate information.
   c. **Direction Setter** The principal communicates the school’s vision to stakeholders through meetings and informal discussions, continually improving each member’s performance.
   d. **Change Agent** The principal must be ready to adapt to changes that positively impact school programs, evident in the planned flagship programs.

**Quality Development of the Institution**

Improving school quality involves various aspects, including facilities, human resources, administrative improvements, life skills-based curriculum, and technology integration. Thus, the school must implement management functions from planning, organizing, mobilizing, monitoring, to evaluation.

1. **Planning** Planning begins with establishing the school's vision and mission. While the vision is the desired future outlook, the mission outlines the goals and objectives to be achieved, considering the mission statement. The principal, a key school figure, plays a critical role in planning by analyzing the environment to optimize strengths, leverage opportunities, minimize weaknesses, and strategize against threats. A SWOT analysis, both internal and external, is one such model used. MTs Al-Furqon’s strengths include its strategic location near residential areas and accessible roads. Unlike typical formal education, this school is the only one in Rejomulyo village, offering local youth the opportunity to enroll. Weaknesses include continuous management deficiencies, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, and substandard human resources. Potential
threats include parents’ increasing awareness of education and technology, which could lead to the establishment of new schools in Rejomulyo village. Thus, the SWOT analysis forms the basis for developing quality management strategies in educational institutions.

2. **Organizing** Organizing involves assigning tasks to all school members and administrators to achieve collective goals. As a religious school, duties include teaching, maintaining order, security, and cleanliness, and overseeing student activities. The principal considers staff commitment, expertise, dedication, and integrity when assigning tasks to ensure they are manageable and executed with integrity.

3. **Mobilizing** An effective activity schedule, including learning and school activities, will be developed. The principal’s role as a motivator, guide, and coach is crucial, as they are the school’s role model and leader.

4. **Monitoring** Monitoring involves overseeing the learning process with the help of assistants. The principal’s care and attention demonstrate their responsibility to parents who entrust their children to the school. Often, the principal is admired by students, akin to a parent effectively managing supervision and control processes.

5. **Evaluation** Evaluating the success of vision implementation and program completion involves periodic assessments by institution leaders and daily evaluations conducted before lessons begin.

By employing these management functions, the school aims to enhance its quality and achieve its vision effectively.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of this research regarding problem identification and the visionary leadership of the school principal in quality management development, it is evident that visionary leadership is crucial in activities related to establishing the school’s vision and mission. The most important aspect of creating a school vision is the quality and adaptability to shared expectations and aspirations. This vision should be tailored to the school’s context, encompassing both the created vision and a broad image through the implementation of new innovations. The vision and mission must be communicated both verbally and in writing. Verbally, this can be done directly in meetings or informal discussions with all members. In writing, it can be communicated through brochures, booklets, or the school website.

The realization of the school’s vision and mission is achieved by translating them into actions and activities that support their attainment. Historically, the principal of MTs Al-Furqon Pasirsakti has demonstrated foresight and continuous innovation, creating a foundation beneficial for the future and valuable for the community investing in the school.
From the perspective of quality management development in schools, management functions such as planning, organizing, mobilizing, monitoring, and evaluation need to be appropriately implemented. Despite existing limitations and suboptimal management of activities at MTs Al-Furqon Pasirsakti, effective management can establish a high-quality Islamic educational institution.

Implementing these management functions correctly can overcome the challenges faced and elevate the school’s quality, ensuring it meets the expectations of the community and stakeholders involved.

REFERENCES


