The Leadership of *Kyai* in Islamic Boarding School (A Study of Islamic Boarding School in Jambi)

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Abstract : This study was conducted based on the problem of *kyai* leadership pattern in Islamic boarding school in Jambi which is considered as paternalistic and centralistic. The study was aimed at exploring the effectiveness of *kyai* leadership at Islamic boarding schools in Jambi dealing with the following questions: 1) What kind of system is applied in the election of Islamic boarding school leader? 2) What kind of leadership model used in Islamic boarding school Jambi? 3) What is the effectiveness of the *kyai* leadership in relation with the vision, mission, management, and policy maker of that school? 4) What were the roles of *kyai* as the leader of Islamic boarding school among the society? Qualitative design was used in this study and purposive sampling was employed to determine the respondents. Observation, interview and documentation were used to collect the data. It was found that: 1) The Islamic Boarding School of Nurul Iman applied deliberation and consensus system leader in which teachers, board of trustees and coordinator of Pecinan are participating in when electing the leader and the model of leadership in this school is charismatic. The *As'ad* School leader's election was based on family-tree system and the model of leadership in this school was paternalistic. In PKP *Al-Hidayah*, the leader is elected directly by the government of Jambi province as the owner of the school. 2) In general, the model of leadership applied in Islamic boarding school in Jambi was collective-passive model because generally Islamic boarding school at Jambi are under the management of particular foundation. 3) The leadership of *kyai* is not effective because the management system applied was not effective. 4) The role of *kyai* among the society ran harmoniously. Based on the research findings, democratic and open election system are recommended in Islamic boarding school leader election to respect individual right to consider leader's credibility, quality and acceptability.

Key Words: Leadership, *Kyai*, Islamic boarding school, Jambi

INTRODUCTION

Islamic-based dormitory school as an education or religion institution is very attractive to observe from all aspects mainly when the modern or global era arises. The focus question from many people is how the boarding school position as an education institution in the modern era, whether the boarding school still maintains its position as traditional religion institution or it follows the process of modernization system, such as the improvement of the curriculum and the changing of the management.

This condition depends on the management model and the leadership of the *Kyai* which are applied in a boarding school to respond to the changing era because in general,

the leadership of boarding school is still centralistic and hierarchical pattern that is centered on *kyai*. *Kyai* is one of the main elements in boarding school. He organizes the boarding school with his skills, sciences and charismatic. As a result, the boarding school does not have a good education management because everything depends on thoughts and decision of *Kyai* (Hasbullah, 2001: 49).

A *kyai* in boarding school plays many roles such as: educator and caregiver, society connector, leader, and manager of the boarding school. The complex role requires *kyai* to be able to adjust himself in various situation. To do that, therefore, it is needed a *kyai* who has ability, dedication and commitment to do these roles.

Leadership is the most vital role since it cannot be separated from the importance of kyai leadership in managing the boarding school. Kyai is a key figure who determines the success or failures of education. In addition, kyai is also a model, representation and idol of the society around him.

The position of a *kyai* causes absolute authority. Zamakhsyari indicated that most kyais in Java assume that a boarding school is like a small kingdom where kyai is the absolute source of power and authority in that school. That is why, all of the boarding school policies such as objective, implementation and evaluation are decided by the *kyai*. A *Kyai* controls all sectors in boarding school. Teachers and students should ask permission from kyai before doing something, especially it is beyond the habit.

However, the changing of leadership management in boarding school has caused the role of kyai, especially in boarding school outside of Java. Preliminary study indicated that the classical roles of kyai as knowledge source, educator and caregiver were distorted. For example the role of kyai as the chairman of the boarding school changed into social and political roles. A *Kyai* only has a little time to do his duty as a teacher whereas the social and political activities of the kyai are for the boarding school improvement. But, it has negative implication to the boarding school management. The recitation of “Kitab Kuning” (Yellow-Book) which is a uniqueness of the boarding school is not taught by kyai anymore. Instead, it is taught by the assistant of the kyai. Likewise, the management of the boarding school was handed over to the principal who has different charisma from the kyai.

This phenomenon mostly occurs in boarding school world, as well as in Jambi city. There are three boarding schools which face the modernity. First, Boarding School Nurul Iman totally refuses the modernism, both mindset and education system. However, the authentic tradition and values of the boarding school are maintained carefully.

Second, Boarding School As’ad accepts modernism selectively. In this pattern, there is a creative process of the boarding school in accepting modernism, it receives a part of modernism and then combined with Islamic tradition. Boarding school applies modern methods in teaching system, while students are taught not only about classic books but also general knowledge.

Third, PKP Al-Hidayah receives modernism totally, including mindset, model and reference. The students are taught about religious values and general knowledge. The school curriculum was no longer in used today.

The interesting fact to be observed is the reality that the existence of PP Nurul Iman which refused modernism is decreasing. It is proved by the condition of the students which is decreasing year by year. The leader of the boarding school remained in the kyai who has deep Islamic knowledge, charismatic and authority. It becomes the main attraction to the students to choose the boarding school.

Different from the two other boarding schools which got positive development, the leader was not a kyai. The leader of PP was elected based on the heredity of the boarding school founder. Similarly, the leader of PKP is a burreoucrate who was appointed directly by the Government of Jambi Province.

Based on the phenomenon, it is interesting to do a broader study about the management and leadership of kyai in Jambi city boarding school, because kyai should play many roles in boarding school at the same time.

Definitions of leadership

Every organization wants a good leadership because it will create good implementation of organization program and organization objectives effectively and efficiently. A leadership determines whether the organization will be success or failed (Toha 1986:1)).

According to George R. Terry leadership is an activity to influence people to achieve

organization objective (Terry, 1960: 493). In Indonesian dictionary leadership is about lead and how to lead (Anonim, 1994: 769). In general, leadership means the implementation of the authority and decision-making (Fiedler, 1967: 7). In Arabic, leadership is known as Imamah which generally means political-religious leadership; the term imamah is identified with the term Khalifah, because both of them refer to state and government (Al-Faruqi, 1998: 191). The word Imam/a'immah stated five times in Al-Qur'an. First, in surah At-taubah verse 9. Next, Al qashash verse 4, Al Anbiya verse 73, Al Qashash verse 5 and last as Sajadah verse 24 (Shihab, 2002: 164).

In addition, opinions from management experts are presented below:

1. Hemphill and Coon (1957) defined leadership as individual behavior to lead the activity of a group to achieve goal together.
2. Bush, Tony & Les Bell, (2002) defined leadership as the process of influencing group activity which is organized to face goal achievement.
3. Shein (1992) defined leadership as the ability to do something out of behavior and begin the changing process evolutionary that can be adjusted well.
4. Drath and Palus (1994) defined leadership as the comprehending process about what people do in order to make people understand what they are doing).

Referring from the above facts, it can be concluded that leadership is the whole act to influence or persuade others to achieve the goal. Furthermore, Oteng Sutisna (1993: 254) as in Davis which stated that leadership is an ability to persuade others to achieve objectives which were determined previously.

The quotation above states that leadership is an ability that should be had by the leaders to control all organization resources especially the human resources to do what he wants. This ability becomes a consideration whether the leader is good or not.

Hersey & Blanchard (1977: 83) explained that "... is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in

efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation". (In addition, Stodgil (1974:7) also stated that "leadership is the process of influencing group activities toward goal setting and goal achievement".

The definitions above can be interpreted that the study of leadership does not concern on the person, but it concerns on the process of the person to influence others.

Education leadership in boarding school

Every manager of boarding school should be able to improve students' learning outcome, so that the education leadership should be as optimal as possible. In general, the role of education leader in boarding school can be idealized into four main elements, namely: mission and objectives, teaching and learning, learning atmosphere and supportive environment.

The administrator of boarding school is hoped to be able to communicate mission and objective of the boarding school to education community of boarding school. In learning process a leader is expected to (a) encourage the quality of learning, (b) guide and evaluate teaching process, (c) allocate learning time, (d) coordinate the curriculum, and (e) monitor the students' learning activities.

While based on learning atmosphere, an education leader of boarding school able to (a) establish positive expectations and positive standards, (b) maintain feasibility, (c) give stimulus to teachers and students to work harder, (d) encouraging development of teachers and students capacity.

Whereas based on environment, a boarding school leader should be able to (a) create a safe and organized environment, (b) provide the widest opportunity for students to participate in a boarding school programs, (c) develop cooperation and integration of staffs, (d) ensure the external source to achieve boarding school objectives. (e) Strengthen the relationship between the students' family and boarding school. (Sulthon and Khusnuridlo, 2006: 63).

METHOD

In this qualitative study, PP As'ad and PKP Al-Hidayah were the subject of investigation. The selection of research setting was based on some considerations, such as; first, the boarding schools including the oldest boarding schools in Jambi province. Second, the boarding school which accept modern ideas. Third, the leader of the boarding schools is a Kyai, community leader and political figure in Jambi.

Overall subjects in this research include aspects that are related to the leadership of the boarding school. There are four factors which are considered to determine the number of informant sample are; degree of uniformity, precision in the research, analysis plan, energy, time, and cost. (Singarimbun, 1989: 149-150). Based on the data requirements and research objectives the subjects in this study is determined purposively in boarding schools, which consists of 3 kyai as key informants, 30 teachers, 15 students, and 9 the community leaders. The procedure of data collection in this study consisted of field orientation, the examination of conceptual framework and the technique of data collections used participant observation, in-depth interview and documentation. The Analysis of data which is used in the study is interactive analysis as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984). The analysis consists of three interacting activities, namely; 1) Data reduction 2) Data display, 3) Conclusion based on existing theories. (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 18-21). In order to achieve the reliability of the data (trustworthiness), researcher conducted a technical extension of the researcher participation, accuracy of observation, and triangulation. (Moleong, 1998: 175-197).

RESEARCH FINDINGS

People have less interest in the traditional boarding school, even though in the science side, traditional boarding school still teaches the Islamic science intensively to the students. In addition, the boarding school which is led by kyai should be a special attraction for

the society to send their children into boarding school.

The reality of boarding school in Jambi city showed that boarding school does not only depend on ability of kyai as presented by Zamakhsyari Dhofier:

Kyai is the most essential element in boarding school, because mostly kyai is a founder of the boarding school. The dominant role of kyai in a boarding school can be understood, because:

1. There is an assumption that boarding school is like a small kingdom where is kyai is the absolute source of power and authority in boarding school.
2. The only one hierarchy of power which is recognized in boarding school environment is a kyai.
3. Most of the boarding schools are the illustration and manifestation of kyai. It is because kyai is the founder of boarding school who has authority to develop boarding school. (Dhofier, 1994: 55).

Based on the fact, kyai as the leader of boarding school, especially in Jambi city needs to optimize the behaviour of leadership. Therefore, the development of a boarding school depends on the management of boarding school itself to achieve objectives that was determined. For that reason, the boarding school needs to reconstruct its management to achieve effectiveness.

DISCUSSION

Through leadership system improvement and boarding school management reconstruction, it is expected to create leadership effectiveness of kyai who is able to face the globalization.

The leadership of boarding school needs a behavior of developer leadership, it is hoped to be able to improve the leadership in boarding school. So that, the effectiveness of Kyai leadership in boarding school will give satisfaction to the society through the creation of useful output for the all levels of society.

Reconstruction of Management Pattern in Boarding School of Jambi City

The phenomenon above describes that the existence of PP NurulIman which maintains boarding school culture was decreased. However, the leader of the boarding school is a kyai who has deep Islamic knowledge, charismatic and authority. It becomes the main attraction to the students to choose boarding school.

Different from two others boarding schools which get positive development although the leader is not a kyai, the leader of PP As'ad was selected based on the heredity of the boarding school founder. Similarly, the leader of PKP Al-Hidayah is a bureaucrat who was appointed directly by the Government of Jambi Province.

The reality that occurred in boarding school of Jambi city shows that boarding school does not only depend on kyai ability as proposed by Arifin (1993) that) :

The charismatic of Kyai influences the development of the boarding school. For example, Although PPAs'ad is led by kyai who has many activities outside the boarding school, but PP As'ad still exists and develops rapidly.

Based on this research, there are two fundamental factors which caused this condition, are:

1. Management of the boarding school conducted with task delegation system to other administrators, while learning process is handed over to the teachers. Nevertheless, leader still maintains communication with the administrators and teachers in boarding school.
2. Even though incentive (Salary) which is received by the teachers in boarding school is inadequate, but they still do their responsibility well.

As'ad boarding school has loyal human resources, so that PP As'ad can be more successful if boarding school administrators

especially Kyai optimizes the management system in boarding school.

The boarding school is essential subculture of society for social changing, however, boarding school should be adapt with social context and time development to fill its functions, but the boarding school should maintain the Islamic values because those are the characteristic of education in boarding school.

Management Actualization based boarding school)

Management based boarding school is a management that is more internal in boarding school. Management is crucial factor that determines objective of boarding school.

As mentioned above that the problem of boarding school in Jambi city is the lack of kyai leadership to manage the boarding school. Boarding school needs to apply professional management to face globalization and social changing, because professionalism is the foundation for good education in globalization era (Ismail SM et al., 2002: 115).

Furthermore, boarding school should be able to provide education system in accordance with science and technology without leaving the Islamic principles, because the Islamic principles become characteristic of boarding school education. The integration of general science and Islamic science was conducted broadly in Islamic Elementary School such as: Al Azhar, Islamic Elemenatry School NurulIlmi, Islamic Elementary School Alfalah. Actually, boarding school will be better if it handle well because the boarding school system allows students to develop themselves freely.

The integration of general science and Islamic science in boarding school of Jambi city does not conduct well because lack of leadership pattern.

Education program of modern boarding school Gontor can be considered as reference, as stated in "Pancajiwapondok" are:

1. Ikhlas, Students should look all of their actions as worship to God

2. Simple, students should be able to show simple and natural appearance
3. Independent, everyone should be able to help themselves even help others
4. Ukhuwahislamiyah, the relationship between Muslims inside and outside of the boarding school
5. Free thinking, students should be think freely about their future but it is limited by norms in boarding school (Mastuhu, 1994: 131-132).

Natural leadership pattern of boarding school should be reformed at least in managerial level. Boarding school needs to form a leadership council led by a manager because the teachers were in-charged for education, teaching and religious life in boarding school.

Multi-leader leadership is absolutely necessary considering that not all kyai able to lead everything in boarding school, this pattern requires division of tasks based on the capabilities of the leader. Although Dawam Rahardjo said that ideally Kyai should master every skill in boarding school field. It means that kyai should be able to lead the boarding school development (Mastuhu, 1994: 118). In fact, the leader who can master everything in boarding school is very difficult to be found, position of boarding school leader now does not allow to handle everything.

Nowadays, an education institution needs to teach Islamic science deeply as a result of globalization era. It needs integralistic-holistic science in order to be problem solver for society problem including economy, behavior and political problem.

The Implementation of Management based Society

The history of a boarding school is cannot separated from society, because of that the success of boarding school depends on the society and vice versa. Boarding school is one of the history evidence where is an education institution exists in society. The relationship between boarding school and education institution was symbiotic mutualism.

Unfortunately, this management relationship was changed by the times. It caused by disability of boarding school to adapt with social change.

The distance of relationship between people and the boarding school indicated by the absence of independent organization from parents, teachers, managers, society and stakeholders.

Therefore, should be clarification and socialization about the role of boarding schools as an Islamic educational institution. But, firstly boarding school should change its old paradigm about Islam to be integral-holistic Islam).

Manager of Boarding school needs to work hard in order to harmonize its relation with society. The revitalization effort of boarding school role is should be discussed together.

Boarding school management needs to be responsive and sensitive to the problems that occur in the community and be a problem solver so that people will feel how important the role of boarding schools in their lives. Therefore, sciences in boarding school should be integralistic-Islamic science that can solve the problem with various approaches.

The solution above can be applied to do persuasive approach to the society, looking for some volunteers and collaborate with external people to build an *entrepreneurship*.

The efforts mentioned above can reconstruct society problem and financial problem also can minimized. As the result, teacher welfare and learning facility can be provided.

Application of Integrated Quality Management

Integrated quality management is a management system that utilizes the synergy of various qualities, such as efficiency, productivity, effectiveness, accountability, and innovation capabilities.

The weakness of boarding school because sometimes it only has one of the qualities even may have not all of the qualities.

Whereas, in the Al-Qur'an mentioned about the qualities, it means that boarding school as basic of Al-Qur'an education is very potential to have all of the qualities.

In addition, boarding school in Jambi city still implementing management pattern with "Lillahita'ala" concept, the concept covers all activities in boarding school.

In the globalization era, the concept is still needed to maintain existence of boarding school. However, the concept of management development in boarding school should be more accommodating to the fast changing in global era. Therefore, idealism "lillahita'ala" must be combined with the contextual concepts of modern management.

A quality approach can be applied through synergy between boarding school quality and society power elaboratively. The power of financial from donors, curriculum strength, character of Islamic-based dormitory schools, the power of the teachers and administrators will give positive effect for the boarding school development.

Therefore, boarding school in Jambi city needs professional resource that can create a professional atmosphere so that the output of boarding school is very useful for social changing.

Besides the strength of Islamic-based dormitory schools mentioned above, the researcher also found some weaknesses of the Islamic-based dormitory schools as follows:

- a. Those schools do not accept something new, especially about the changing of their schools' management.
- b. Some of those schools refuse the involvement of the government particularly in their management system.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description and analysis as found in this study, it can be concluded as follows: 1) Leadership election system in PP NurulIman is done with deliberation and consensus system by teachers, administrators,

and coordinators. On the other hand, type of the leadership is charismatic leadership. In PP As'ad the election system is based on heredity system (kinship). However, the type of leadership is paternalistic leadership. In PKP Al-Hidayah leader is elected directly by the provincial government. While the leadership type is bureaucratic leadership; 2) In general, boarding schools in Jambi city are used collective-passive leadership, it is called collective-passive because boarding school is under the foundation but practically the leadership is individual leadership; 3) Generally, leadership of kyai in boarding school is not effective yet, because management which is applied in boarding school is not optima). 4) the role and the leadership of kyai has been established harmoniously in society.

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