Principals Instructional Leadership and Culture-Based Instructional Program under Organization Change

By

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Abstract

The study attempts to examine the practice of effective principals' instructional leadership in high schools at a time of curriculum reform with a cultural approach. The new curriculum encompasses not only knowledge, but also attitudes and behaviors. It also emphasizes the use of scientific approach and portfolio as a form of authentic assessment in the learning process. The research data were collected by interviewing principals, vice-principals and senior teachers at five referral High Schools in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. These schools are parts of pilot projects in implementing the new curriculum. The study uses qualitative research methods. This study revealed that instructional leadership is associated with curriculum reform, starting from a full understanding of the curriculum vision. It is realized in a conducive culture and climate, such as religious culture, discipline culture, literacy culture, creative and innovative culture in solving life problems, learning anytime and anywhere, doing a collaboration, joining fair competition, and caring for the environment. The habituation makes values, attitudes, and behavior applied not only in theoretical knowledge (memorization) and practiced in school but also brought by students to their families and communities.

Keywords: instructional leadership, organizational change, dynamic learning-based culture

Introduction

Technological developments, natural disasters, resource degradation, and global pandemics have changed the way we work and live (Temouri et al., 2020). In the education sector, environmental changes due to technological developments and global pandemics change how the learning process is planned, delivered, controlled, and evaluated. Small-scale

environmental cahnges do not affect the curriculum. While large-scale environmental changes require adapations to the curriculum.

In Indonesia, the curriculum development is dynamic, responding to change demands and policies in which the curriculum is implemented. In the last two decades, the education curriculum has undergone several changes, namely curriculum 2002, curriculum 2006, to the latest curriculum (2013). The curriculum 2013 was developed to adust the developments in the educational environments such as globalization, environmental problems, technological developments, knowlege-based economy, the rise of cultural and creative industries, and education development in other countries. Environmental changes lead to an increasing demand for human resource competencies in the future, namely people skills, critical thinking, the ability to examine the ethical issues, aptitude, and environmental awareness. Curriculum reform also develops people's perspectives on the worlds of education, such as education which emphasizes on cognitive aspects, heavy burden on students, and characterless (Kemendikbud, 2014).

The implementation of curriculum 2013 in Indonesia emphasizes thematic-integrative learning based on scientific approach, active strategies, and authentic assessments. The curriculum reform designs to make people to be productive, creative, innovative, and affective to strenghten integrated knowledge, attitude, and skills. The curriculum concept emphasizes on the balance between hard and soft skills, the Curriculum 2013 policy encompasses four elements of changes, namely the Graduate Competency Standards, Content Standards, Process Standards, and Assessment Standards.

The learning process of the curriculum 2013 is evolving based upon personal experience, including observing, asking, reasoning, and trying [observation-based learning] develop creativity in students. Furthermore, they are accustomed to working in networks through collaborative learning. The new curriculum uses an authentic assessment in the form of portfolio to assess competence, knowledge, and skills. The assessment involve the following aspects: measure students' level of thinking skills from low to high, use higher-order questions (not just by recollecting), assess the process (not just the product), and use students' portfolio.

At the educational level, the principals play a vital role in the effectiveness of curriculum reform and its success (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The practice of instructional leadership is crucial, it is proven more successful for improving student's learning outcomes than other leadership styles (Bush & Glover, 2014; Murphy, Neumerski, Goldring, Grissom, & Porter, 2016; Hallinger, 2003). Instructional leadership has a focus on student learning processes and outcomes compared to administrative aspects (Shaked, 2020). Instructional leadership is a leadership practice that provides direction to achieve learning goals, is sensitive to challenges of learning and curriculum, and consistently improves teaching and learning (Shaked, 2020; Brazer & Bauer, 2013; Neumerski et al., 2018).

The recent studies revealed that the inclusive practices of instructional leadership carried out in the learning processes and outcomes (Breyer, 2014; Seobi & Wood, 2016; Purwanti et al., 2014), applying a distributed leadership style (Almarshad, 2017), and collaboratively (Erdal, 2017). et al., 2016; Kaparou & Bush, 2016). The effectiveness of instructional leadership is not carried out directly but indirectly by building a positive school climate (like governing work processes, relationships, and involvement) and school culture (Heck & Hallinger, 2014; Hallinger & Hosseingholizadeh, 2019).

Schools have their own vision, missions, and goals. They are realized through a strategy, which is implemented in the form of organizational culture. Each school has values in a heterogeneous culture. Based on Adaptive Systems Theory in the formation of a cultural system (Keesing, 1997), organizational culture can evolve and adapt to environmental development. Organizational culture can change or develop naturally (proactive and reactive) to adapt environmental changes. Many organizations make changes, strategies, and organizational culture, even evaluate the vision and mission statements to adapt and grasp the changes of the external environments.

Cultural development is one of the essential components in instructional leadership (Halverson and Diamond, 2004). However, there are gaps in literature reviews on the role of principals' instructional leadership related to the development of school culture and its relationship to environmental change, thus, it motivates the researchers to puruse research. The study attempts to examine the practice of effective principals' instructional leadership in high schools at a time of curriculum reform with a cultural approach

Research Methodology

This is a qualitative research intended to investigate the principals' instructional leadership practices. The study used narrative inquiry to explore the practices of instructional leadership associated with environmental changes and curriculum reform. The study was undertaken in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The research location was chosen due to its unique characteristics as a centre of Indonesian Education, which often become a national barometer of achievement in many sectors, especially education. Thus, it can be a model to reveal the practices of Principals' Instructional Leadership. There were 5 Referral High Schools implementing the Curriculum 2013 in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The overall samples represented its sociocultural, economic, and geographical statuses. These schools have met or exceeded the National Education Standards and designed excellence programs to develop the potential of schools and to address community needs.

The study was conducted by interviewing principals at five Senior High Schools in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Methods of data collection were observation and interviews collected from September 2019 to January 2020. Meanwhile, in-depth interviews were conducted by interviewing principals, vice-principals curriculum, and senior teachers in each school. Years of working experience with the current principals were used as the criteria of selecting senior teachers. The data validity achieved by maintaining credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The data analysis consisted of three concurrent flows of activities, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

Research Results

The results showed that the principals commonly demonstrated a complete understanding of the vision with both school and national curriculum in carrying out instructional leadership. The vision statement was then communicated to the members of the school community, and the Determination of Vision is created collaboratively. This vision is then manifested in a conducive culture and climate, such as religious, discipline, literacy, and creative and innovative culture in solving life problems, learning anywhere and anytime, doing a collaboration, joining a fair competition, and caring for the environment). The habituation makes values, attitudes, and behavior applied not only in theoretical knowledge (memorization) and practiced in school but also brought by students to their families and communities.

In the new curriculum, knowledge, attitudes, and skills are applied through academic and non-academic activities. Knowledge is improved through academic programs, while skills are improved through extra-curricular both individual and team-based activities. Behavior and attituedes are improved through motivations, and the development of school culture and climates. The principals foster a positive school environment to create a good and conducive classroom climate. The principals have a strategy in mapping learning activities by building an organizational culture manifested in their habits.

The Principal of school A (Pla, 03/09/2019) revealed the need to build culture through activities, examples, and habituation. Discipline and punctuality were implemented by applying fingerprint attendance, greeting, salutation, and smile; literacy culture by habituation of 15 minutes of reading before learning, picking and throwing garbage in its place, banning cheating and bad grades, the culture of inquiry, including critical thinking to ask questions, and the culture of a healthy lifestyle and love for the environment.

The vision was manifested to a mission to organize learning, create quality guidance, develop national and cultural character, and increase awareness of love for the environment (P1b). To realize the vision and mission, the flagship programs were developed, namely healthy school programs, education services for special intelligent, success in national exams and in entering universities. Furthermore, to develop student interests and talents, the school offered compulsory and optional extra-curricular activities. Moreover, the school also organized computer-based evaluations, green school programs, and safe and friendly school environment to help students have a good character in leadership.

The religious character was built through knowledge (religious lessons) and behavioral attitudes in daily life, such as praying/worshipping and various religious activities. The vision was to produce a religious generation, therefore school A developed activity programs, namely religious education and various activities at the religious laboratory and places of worship. To produce a religious generation in school b, the Activity Programs conducted were Religious Education and extra-curricular activities. Religious culture at school C was developed through regular religious activities. Religious culture at schools was applied through various religious activities.

To develop excellent and competitive graduates, school A conducts various activities, both academic and non-academic. The academic programs included material deepening, achievement motivation, try-out tests, scientific competitions, academic assistance, literacy movement, reading culture, college entrance exams, mastery learning, e-report, and e-libraries. The non-academic programs included referral schools, healthy canteens, accredited libraries, extra-curricular based on talents and interests, schools based on cultural arts, talent development in sports, and artistic achievements.

Like school A, school B developed excellent and competitive graduates through various academic and non-academic programss. The school improvement program was carried out to foster interest and talent for academic and non-academic achievements through an annual work program (P1b). Through various programs in the referral school action plan, various efforts were well facilitated, namely coaching for students by (P2b) activities such as the smart class program, favorite university pass program, achievement motivation training, psychological counseling, Adiwiyata School, religious counseling, and extra-curricular.

Achievement culture in school C was carried out through activities such as research development in class X, applying the Basic Training for Scientific Method program. Then, in

grade XI, students were encouraged to present the results of the research designs that have been prepared previously. Meanwhile, in greade XII, science expo program, an activity to show research results that have been designed and presented, was held. In addition to the program, the provision of rewards and punishments also applied to motivate students. Based on the results of observations, there were many trophies and certificates arranged in a display cabinet in the school lobby. The trophy was an evidence that school C has achieved quite a lot of achievements. Achievements of the students were then awarded by the school. The school gave appreciation to students who excel both in inside and outside the school. The awards are usually in the form of positive points, trophies or certificates, congratulation message, and money.

The discipline culture in school A, B, C, D and E was the responsibility of all school members, without exception. Discipline was applied in the school rules that have been made and mutually agreed upon. The discipline culture was implemented in daily activities, namely going to school and showing up on time, coming on time to the flag ceremony, and wearing uniforms according to school's policy. School C used student point and covered different aspects, including delays, study hours, uniforms, and students' violations with the most serious sanctions are suspended. With clear and firm regulations, sanctions exist for students who violate the rules, counseling, and routine appeals given by the school, the order in school must always be maintained.

The culture of healthy and clean lifestyle at school A was carried out through habituation of healthy and clean culture, hand hygiene and disposing garbage properly, and culture of loving the environment. To realize the culture of caring and loving the environment, healthy and green school program were developed at school B through various program activities in the curriculum, facilities and infrastructure sector, and public relations. In the curriculum sector, the program was carried out through the development of an environment-based curriculum. Meanwhile, in the facilities and infrastructure sector, it was carried out through school environmental management plan to realize green schools, provide facilities and infrastructure for environmental management. The Public Relations sector developed school policies that care and are environmental cultured.

Green culture in school C has been accustomed to using programs that already exist in schools contained in 7K program (security, order, cleanliness, kinship, comfort, beauty, and shade). The culture of cleanliness in schools was applied by disposing garbage properly because the school has provided organic and non-organic trash cans placed in front of the class or the school garden. Even though cleaning services worked to maintain the cleanliness of the school environment, all school residents can still work together to maintain its cleanliness.

The independence culture in school C was implemented through independence from the beginning they enter school, assign assignments from teachers to students, and school events. The school events were almost entirely the responsibility of the students. In addition to teaching students' independence, school events also helped students to build sense of responsibility.

According to the Principal of school C (Plc), students were equipped with a culture of achievement, namely enthusiasm, discipline & order, confidence, love to read, creative, never give up, and diligently pray. Good character in leadership was balanced between their intellectual and emotional intelligence. Principal of school C (Plc) added that the banned for cheating culture is very significantly different from other schools. Moreover, this school has received an integrity award from the Corruption Eradication Commision because of its declaration. Children wore blue bracelets when taking the national exam. The Principal of

school C preserves the existing culture. The Culture of Achievement was applied by posting quotes in the front hall, namely "enthusiastic, discipline & order, confidence, love to read, creative, never give up and diligently pray." All school members implemented this culture, and even our school received the School of Integrity award from the Corruption Eradication Commission. The children voiced the movement for banning cheating and being late for clas. Near the national examination, the school declared this movement and pinned a blue bracelet on each participant.

School A tried to build a culture in its school by promoting respects to the others and the environment. The culture of respect was implemented with the culture of smile, salutation, and greeting. Every morning students greets with a smile, a handshake, and a pat on the shoulder to motivate their readiness to learn. "Building a positive school culture and climate is needed when schools want to establish their vision and mission." A positive culture and climate are manifested by clear school rules, efforts to improve school achievement, the continuous implementation of professional activities, and better school infrastructure (Pla, 03/09/2019). Principal of school A encouraged students and teachers not only to know the school's mission but also to implement it. As a 'reminder, the principal wrote the vision and mission statement on a school banner and placed it in the hall (Meeting Place) of the school so teachers, parents, and school stakeholders could see it easily.

The programs activities in schools for improving academic and non-academic achievements were written in the School Work Plan, and were informed to all students, committees, teachers and parents, therefore, these activities can be supported by the school communities (Pla,03/09/2019; Plb.11/10/2019). School principals play an important role in the socialization of the new curriculum, preparation and development human resources, infrastructure planning, and provisions for instructional strategies. The socialization process was carried out at flag ceremonies and meetings. management and development of human resources were conducted through coaching and mentorship. workshops and mentorship as well as coach supervision were carried out by themselves. School principals have a role to guide teachers in the implementation of Curriculum 2013 and is further strengthened in direct sipervision of the principals. Indeed, learning implementation plan cannot be separated from the syllabus since it is a guideline of learning implementation plan. Principals are usually established an input/direction concerning the components of implementation plans, including the identity of the school, themes, sub-themes, learning activities, time allocation, basic competencies, indicators, methods, learning media, and learning stagess. There are pre, main, and post activities; the assessment are given at the end of a lesson. Principals always motivate teachers to have good lesson plans, adapt their teaching methods to the new curriculum, participate in any professional development activities, and obtain higher education (P1b. 11/10/2019).

Table 1 *Culture-based Instructional Program*

Instructional Programs	School				
	A	B	C	D	E
Multiple intelligence	√	√	√	√	√
Child Friendly School	√	√	√	√	√
Green School	√	√	√	√	√
Use of technology (CCTV) for learning monitoring activities	√	√	√	√	√
Gutu Teaches According to His Qualifications	√	√	√	√	√
Special coaching for high-ability students	√	√	X	X	X
Maple clinic for the bottom 5%	X	√	√	√	X
computer-based evaluation	√	√	√	√	√
Compulsory and optional extra-curricular activities, to develop achievements	√	√	√	√	√
Favorite PTS Pass Program, by providing achievement motivation training	√	√	√	√	√

Note: *X = weakness, V= applied*
Source: *mapped by researchers from the results of interviews and observations*

Discussion

The results support previous research on the effectiveness of instructionalvleadership through developing a vision that embodies a conducive school culture (Usman & Raharjo, 2013) and school climate (Heck et al., 2012; Abonyi & Sofo, 2019; Alsaleh, 2018), as well as planning and implementing supervision and evaluation of inclusive learning that involves staff, shared leadership, distributed leadership, and internal and external collaboration. These results showvthe important role of principal's learning leadership, which does not only focus on administrativevactivities (Shaked, 2020: 11). Effective instructional leadership pradgjpes are indispensable invimplementing a curriculum that prioritizes character development (religious, active, creative, innovative and solutive in facing opportunities and challenges in the digital era, complexity and dynamics of the environment (Kemendikbud, 2014).

The instructional program consists of a input, process, and output. (Plessis, 2013: 88). The inputs consist of students, education staff, infrastructure, financing. The processes consist of teaching and learning processes, including the planning and implementation of the learning activities, assessment of learning outcomes, and supervision. The outputs consist of assessment and the graduate competency standards. The results showed that the principal's instructional leadership programs consisted of compulsory and superior programs. The compulsory programs are activities undertaken by reference schools to improve school quality and fulfill the National Education Standards (SNP). SNP is the minimum criteria for the education system in Indonesia. The SNP includes eight components of education standards, namely Management; Educators and Education Personnel; Facilities and Infrastructure; Financing; Process; Content; Educational Assessment and Graduate Competency. The eight national standards are required for all academic units, including the high school level (Permendikbud No. 69/2013). They are standards of the learning process. Concerning the SNP, the principals in the five reference schools play a role in fulfilling the administrative SNP and, more importantly, the effectiveness of quality improvement.

The flagship program is an activity program to improve academic-non-academic achievements such as (Pla, 03/09/2019) special coaching for high-ability students, developing multiple intelligences, not all students have the same interests and abilities, not all children learn the same way, maple clinic for the bottom 5%, computer-based evaluation, favorite college graduation program, by providing achievement motivation training, compulsory and optional extra-curricular activities, to develop achievement. The flagship program for character development is carried out through the development of cultural school culture, such as religious culture, discipline culture, literacy culture, creative and innovative culture. Various programs, both compulsory programs, and superior programs, through academic and non-academic activities aimed at improving student achievement and building student character (knowledge, skills and attitudes). Academic programs undertaken for the purpose of improving students' knowledge. Extra-curricular activities are carried out to develop students' skills both independently and working in a team. Motivation, role model and school culture and climate are carried out to improve students' attitudes and behavior. The five principals emphasized that it is also importsnt to create a good atmosphere in the school to create a conducive learning environment.

Conclusions and Implications

The principals of the Referral High Schools in DIY demonstrated a complete understanding of the vision with both school and national curriculum in carrying out

instructional leadership. The vision is then manifested in culture (attitudes, behaviors, habits) and a conducive climate (such as climate), learning anywhere and anytime, doing a collaboration, joining a fair competition, environmental care, and being religious. This condition will make culture, such as religious culture, discipline culture, literacy culture, creative and innovative culture in solving life problems, applied not only in theoretical knowledge (memorization) and practiced at school but also brought by studengg to live in their families and communities as reflected in the new curriculum. This study aims at analyzing effective principals' instructional leadership stles during curriculum reform, emphasizing the importance of scientific learning, character building (religious, active, creative, and innovative)..

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