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Vocational Education Principal of Leadership: A Case Study in East Nusa Tenggara

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Abstract
This paper proposes 5 principles of leadership reinforcement intervention for developing their leadership in the vocational education. The principles are drawn from a qualitative study in twenty-two (22) private and public vocational schools located in the province of East Nusa Tenggara. A total of 40 principals and senior school teachers participated in the study. The principles draw from their understanding and perception of leadership reinforcement. The leadership reinforcement requires the principals to have a clear vision in producing ready-to-work graduates. Principals reinforce their leadership by (1) enhancing the understanding of local wisdom, (2) benchmarking, (3) involving professional training, (4) instilling the beliefs, and (5) having a strong character with high integrity. The activities that mostly do are carrying out activities related to East Nusa Tenggara regional culture at school, involving directly the industry partners in the planning, process and distribution of graduates, participating the seminars or workshops related to strengthening leadership and management, giving good ethical examples and exemplary in actions and words, applying openness and transparency in making policies and decisions.

Keywords: Leadership reinforcement; Vocational education; East nusa tenggara.

1. Introduction
1.1. Leadership
This paper is inspired by the finding a model of school leadership reinforcement conducted by Jumintono *et al.* (2018). The model of the school leadership reinforcement requires the principals to have a clear vision in producing ready-to-work graduates. These supporting institutions can provide valuable inputs to enable schools to produce appropriate output that matched with the requirements of the industries. Strengthening the school leadership can be in the form of understanding of the local culture, benchmarking other schools, providing professional training, instilling good ethics and building strong character with high integrity. The model of school leadership reinforcement in East Nusa Tenggara is drawn as a figure 1.

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Figure-1. Model of school leadership reinforcement in East Nusa Tenggara (Jumintono *et al.*, 2018).
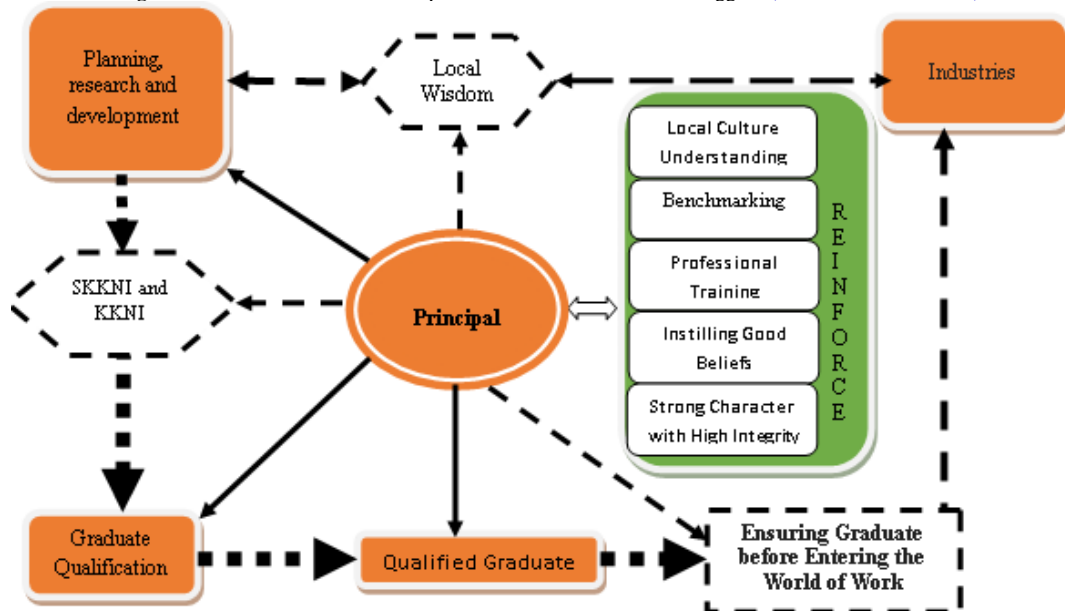
The finding model of leadership reinforcement was supported by the previous model of successful school leadership from four research conducted by Raihani (2008), Damanik (2014) and Jawas (2014). Leadership reinforcement needs teachers' professionalism, rational the school principals' decision-making style, the leadership behaviors of the school principals and competence to identify and create and change the school cultures (Damanik, 2014; Jawas, 2014; Raihani, 2008).

2. Leadership Reinforcement

According to Richard Quantz *et al.* (2017) the definitions of educational leadership are full of different 'theories of leadership'. There are so many theories and models that are different from one and the other. The leadership will benefit from concepts that may be used as theory based on organization or culture-based theory and advocacy (Richard Quantz *et al.*, 2017). Carol *et al.* (2003) added a recognition of the importance of values in leadership, in education, and particularly in educational leadership. This article is based on interviews with six school leaders in England about their values and leadership. According to Carol *et al.* (2003) the values of leadership are used by people who study in school and they are articulated in their relationships with students, staff and local communities and their aspirations and expectations for their school. Such values emphasized educational and social justice concerns and the capacity for school leaders to be active and influential rather than passive recipients of educational policy changes and government discourse.

Penny *et al.* (2018) describe four interactive dimensions of the ethical leadership praxis in a global society model. Four interactive dimensions are: (1) understanding social justice theory and leadership theory, (2) applying state, national and professional ethical/legal standards, (3) engaging in ethical leadership practice and role modeling for Culturally Responsive Leadership (CRL), and (4) employing personal leadership ethics and core values as a cyclical process of self-reflection and decision-making.

Thang and Philip (2017) explored cultural context and school leadership. In the study, the researchers frame the 'context of school leadership' in Vietnam in terms of Confucian socio-cultural values of the Vietnamese society and the institutional-political structures within which education is delivered. The study employed phenomenological research methods in a multi-site case study design. Qualitative methods of interview, observation and document analysis were employed to generate a thick description of how principal leadership was enacted in three schools in Vietnam. The study found that in this context, effective school leadership integrated elements associated with strong autocratic and moral leadership (Thang and Philip, 2017).

Linda *et al.* (2018) showed the model of the implications of school-community partnership for leadership. Partnerships have been found to enhance student learning, strengthen schools and support struggling neighborhoods (Linda *et al.*, 2018).

Fusun (2011) found the model of leadership competence educational for a twenty-first century nursing doctoral education in contemporary Turkey. This article proposes a nursing education model about leadership that can be used to improve the leadership skills of nursing doctoral students. Diane and Megan (2007) explained the emotions and educational leadership. According to Diane and Megan (2007) that a viable conception of emotions and educational leadership needs to understand emotions with two key conceptual shifts. First, emotions need to be understood as publicly and collaboratively formed, not as individual, private and autonomous psychological traits and states. Second, leadership needs to be seen as an enacted, emergent phenomenon rather than socially expressed or constructed.

Based on these studies, Leadership needs to reinforce and enhance by values in leadership, ethical leadership, cultural context, school-community partnership, leadership competence, emotions and educational leadership.

3. Research Methodology

The study is based on research and development model by Gall *et al.* (2007). A total of 40 respondents ranging from the principal (P), vice-principal (VP) or senior teachers (ST) with more 8 years of teaching experience were involved in the interview session. The interviews were conducted in approximately 30-45 minutes after the school hours.

The collected data were transcribed, coded and categorized following the emerging themes, and interpreted using inductive and deductive methods. This study conducted in the form of interpretive research where "the researcher is interested in understanding how participants make meaning of a situation or phenomenon, this meaning is mediated through the researcher as an instrument, the strategy is inductive, and the outcome is descriptive" (Merriam, 1998).

This study took place in six districts in East Nusa Tenggara province, there are Kabupaten Timor Tengah Selatan, Kabupaten Timor Tengah Utara, and Kota Kupang, Kabupaten Sumba Tengah, Kabupaten Labuan Bajo, Kabupaten Alor, Kabupaten Rote. The researchers did not differentiate between public vocational school principals or private vocational school. The schools were being selected based on the number of student populations and their achievements. The office of education located in those districts will be consulted in selecting the schools. The samples of this study consisted of a purposive sampling of 40 respondents (shown in Table 1). The researcher collected data using three different techniques: interviews, observations and document analysis. The three different instruments were adopted to ensure that rich data and information can be obtained in this research (Creswell, 2012).

All the respondents were being individually interviewed at the time and place convenient to both the researchers and respondents. The questions posed to the participants are meant to find answers to the research questions. All the interviews were being recorded using a digital tape recorder.

Table-1. Respondent's Profile

Demographics		Principals	Teachers	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	12	9	21	52.5
	Female	10	9	19	47.5
Profession	Principals	22		22	55.0
	Senior teachers		18	18	45.0
School location	City	13	8	21	52.5
	Rural	9	10	19	47.5
Age	Under 34 years	0	3	3	7.5
	35 - 39 years	3	2	5	12.5
	40 - 44 years	0	5	5	12.5
	45 - 50 years	9	5	14	35.0
	51 - 55 years	7	2	9	22.5
	more than 55 years	3	1	4	10.0
Tenure as principal or teacher	Under 2 years	1	0	1	2.5
	2 - 4 years	14	0	14	35.0
	5 - 8 years	6	3	9	22.5
	more than 8 years	1	15	16	40.0
Highest Education	Diploma IV	0	0	0	-
	Undergraduate	14	15	29	72.5
	Master's	8	3	11	27.5
	Doctorate	0	0	0	-
Training	Agency for School Principal Empowerment and Development (LP2KS)	3	0	3	7.5
	Center for the Development and Empowerment of Educator and Staff (P4TK)	2	2	4	10.0
	Education Quality Assurance Agency (LPMP)	11	2	13	32.5
	Region level	2	4	6	15.0
	Others	2	6	8	20.0
	Never	0	2	2	5.0

4. Finding and Discussion

The research findings were obtained through the triangulation of data collection methods namely, document analysis, interviews with principals and senior teachers, and observations at schools. Moreover, official documents, open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and field observations were used to analyze and answer the

five research questions in this study. During the interviews, audio data were digitally recorded, transcribed and coded according to themes. Through a thematic analysis, codes were selected from broad themes such as local culture understanding, benchmarking, professional training, instilling good beliefs and strong character with high integrity. In line with research ethics and for further confidentiality purposes, the names of principal interviewees were not revealed. Further identifier like 'P' that symbolizes principal, 'ST' denote interview with the senior teacher. The following subsections present the research findings based on the five research questions of this study.

Research Question 1: What components help the school principal to strengthen leadership related to understanding East Nusa Tenggara culture?

The description of research data presented here is based on findings of interviews and questionnaire with involving thirty-eight respondents from principals and senior teachers in East Nusa Tenggara. The principal and senior teachers do many things to strengthen the cultural activities at their schools. These cultural activities are understood help the principal reinforce their leadership. This is supported by one of the school principals:

"In our school, we involve the school community in social, cultural and community activities" (P1).

Another school principal added:

"The background of teachers and students comes from various ethnic groups in East Nusa Tenggara so that it affects a lot of relationships, attitudes, and behavior in the school environment. We have to make a preservation of Timor ethnic culture such as including students in the competition for umbu (traditional culture) and rambu (traditional culture)" (P2)

This statement is reinforced by field observations that there are my activities and art studio in the context of cultural preservation in their school.

Based on the questionnaire, some programs related to cultural activities in East Nusa Tenggara vocational schools are carrying out activities related to East Nusa Tenggara regional culture at the school by 34%, Using East Nusa Tenggara regional cultural symbols at school by 25%, Considering East Nusa Tenggara regional culture in school policy making by 21%, Cultivating verbal words related to local wisdom for students by 14%, other programs by by 5%.

Research Question 2: What components help principals to strengthen leadership in relation to benchmarking with other educational institutions?

In line with a clear vision of vocational education in producing ready-to-work graduates, reinforced leadership is a must. The leaders of school reinforce their leadership in making a benchmarking with other educational institutions or industries. This statement is supported by one of the school principals:

"Involving industry parties in the Vocational school is not only in the teaching-learning process but also in the competency examination activities". (P2)

A few principals have expressed, to explore new perspectives of school leadership from international school leaders:

"I have learned from successful educators abroad about school leadership and management." (P16)

Another school principal remarked:

"Collaboration with industries those are relevant to competency skills for teacher and student internships every year" (P3)

The two other schools senior teacher added that:

"Invite and involve competent experts to provide deepening of the material vocational in the training process" (ST9)

"The ISO standard has been applied in schools but it covers all aspects of the School in collaboration with industry for marketing graduates and wherever possible contributes to school development such as industrial class and teaching factory" (ST9)

In the field, observations found that there are many vocational schools have already possessed an ISO standard of quality.

Based on the questionnaire, some programs related to the activities for benchmarking are directly involving industry partners in the planning, process, and distribution of graduates by 30%, conducting comparative studies to relevant educational institutions or industries by 25%, Inviting experts from professionals or industry to provide quality assurance for the training process by 23%, adopting quality standards, for example, ISO to ensure the quality of school implementation by 20% and other programs by 2%.

Research Question 3: What components help principals to strengthen leadership knowledge and understanding?

According to the law of the Republic of Indonesia number 14 the year 2005 concerning teachers and lecturers, teachers are required to have academic qualifications, competencies, educator certificates, physically and mentally healthy, and have the ability to realize national education goals. Academic qualification as referred to be obtained through higher education undergraduate programs or diploma IV programs. Although the principal is a side job from the teaching profession, the background of the study is not enough. They must be equipped with knowledge and understanding of educational leadership.

There are many providers in preparing and enhancing educational leadership in Indonesia such as Agency for School Principal Empowerment and Development (LP2KS), Center for the Development and Empowerment of Educator and Staff (P4TK) and Education Quality Assurance Agency (LPMP). According to observation, thirty-four percent of respondents were attending the training in LPMP. The percentage of participants in the training are training in the region level 16 percent, P4TK 10 percent, LP2KS 3 percent, others 21 percent (Table 1).

Enhancing knowledge and understanding of educational leadership is very important particularly for the principal. One vocational school principal gives his statement as below:

"Principal must ensure the quality in teaching and learning process. One of the five principal competences is academic supervision performing". (P11)

The positive comments from the principals in this study reinforced that training programs can improve their professional competency. The other school principals added that:

"Principal is not only the manager but also the manager. They must learn a lot and update their knowledge. I followed the training of telescoping for the principalship of SMK before principal". (P15)

School principals also pointed out that training enables them to master the dynamics of education and educational leadership development trends, as expressed by one school principal:

"Related to the latest curriculum, the principal was trained curriculum 2013 to ensure it can be implemented well by all the teachers. Many principals joined the instructor Training of Trainer of Curriculum 13." (P19)

In addition, another senior teacher further explained:

"The training helped me carry out the education policies more firmly. I think training also guide school principals' with their leadership practices, as they are the executors of education policies." (ST15)

In line with the result of the interview, respondent pointed that strengthening leadership and management is selected mostly by them, up to thirty percent. Some programs related to enhancing educational leadership activities in East Nusa Tenggara vocational schools are participating in seminars or workshops related to strengthening leadership and management by 30%, taking special education and training in vocational leadership and management by 23%, conducting School Action Research by 23%, conducting In-House Training related to strengthening the leadership and management of vocational schools by 22%, Other programs by 3%

According to the findings, their testimonies and explanation, participating in the training programs had a positive effect on school principals, as they learned to understand the professional concepts of principal leadership development. Training will equip school principals with the knowledge needed for better planning and implementing new ideas of educational leadership. Training also helps school principals change their out-dated school management methods, and makes them more open-minded to viewing school development from different perspectives.

Research Question 4: What components help principals in strengthening leadership related to the instilling good beliefs in vocational schools?

By comparison, Hallinger and Heck's (1996) review was limited to studies of the effects of principals' beliefs and behaviors that included explicit measures of school performance (mostly measured in terms of student achievement). Vocational schools in East Nusa Tenggara put good ethics and certain values to formulate the vision and mission objectives of the school. The following excerpts regarding good ethics content are extracted from the principal interviews:

"Discipline, ethics of integrity, on time culture from all components of school teacher and principal as well as students is the main key to succeed our school performance. (ST15)

"To ensure integrity, we involve parents and teachers in the supervision in instilling ethics of students." (ST5)

In addition, another senior teacher further stated:

"Not only hard skill we teach here but also a soft skill. We allocate character building as one of the subjects in the local content program." (ST9)

Another senior teacher stated:

"We have something like a motto Habit 5 S: Senyum (smile), sapa (greet), salam (welcome), sopan (ethics and santun (ethics)." (ST17)

Another senior teacher stated:

"As educator principals and teachers must be role models for their students. How can we teach if we cannot apply what we say?" (P11)

In line with the finding, the respondent stressed that giving good ethical examples and role model in actions and words is selected mostly by them, up to thirty percent. Some programs related to instilling good beliefs activities in East Nusa Tenggara vocational schools are the principal gives good ethical examples and exemplary in actions and words by 30%, the principal uses the basis of good ethics and certain values to formulate the vision and mission objectives of the school's goals and strategies in achieving school goals by 28%, the principal considers the ethics that exist in providing advice, advice or even sanctioning subordinates and students by 21%, the school principal cultivates and disseminates good ethics in schools with various existing media by 18% and others program by 3%.

Research Question 5: What components help principals to strengthen leadership related to building a strong character with high integrity in vocational schools?

The principal who has a strong character in his leadership will be very helpful in running the school. This is reinforced by the statement of the principal:

"Cultivating a culture of the orderly time and orderly administration or work order helps principal in running their school" (P11)

In addition, another senior teacher further stated:

"In our school discipline in the job, strictly in action are common." (ST 17)

Another senior teacher stated:

"Strengthening character education and literacy seminar in this school are conducted regularly."(ST13)

In line with the finding, the respondent stressed that applying openness and transparency in making policies and decisions are selected mostly by them, up to forty-five percent. Some programs related to building a strong character with high integrity in vocational schools in East Nusa Tenggara are the principal applies openness and transparency in making policies and decisions by 45%, the principal gives an example of how to say and act with high integrity by

40%, the principal delegates a job to a subordinate in his field by 8%, the principal involves outside parties, in ensuring school financial governance by 8%.

From the data above can be explained how the principal plays its role in a central. The principal may appoint a special institution of assistant school relationship and the world of work in charge from designing, formulating and describing the qualifications of graduates requested by the world of work and consistently implemented in the school system. The fulfillment of school qualifications is monitored directly by this institution and at the same time ensures that the education stages are carried out correctly.

How does the principal reinforce his leadership? In the second year, research is clearly mentioned some research findings that give leadership reinforcement. The reinforcement of school leadership is the understanding of local wisdom, benchmarking, and professional training, enhancing the beliefs, strong character with high integrity. The activities that mostly do for local culture understanding is carrying out activities related to East Nusa Tenggara regional culture at school 34%. The activities that mostly do for benchmarking are directly involving industry partners in the planning, process, and distribution of graduates 30%. The activities that mostly do for professional training is participating in seminars or workshops related to strengthening leadership and management 30%. The activities that mostly do for instilling good ethics is the principal gives good ethical examples and exemplary in actions and words 30%. The activities that mostly do for building strong character is the principal applies openness and transparency in making policies and decisions 45%.

5. Conclusion

The reinforcement of school leadership is the understanding of local wisdom, benchmarking, and professional training, enhancing the beliefs, strong character with high integrity. According to the finding above, the conclusion of this research are (1) The activities that mostly do for local culture understanding is carrying out activities related to East Nusa Tenggara regional culture at the school; (2) The activities that mostly do for benchmarking is directly involving industry partners in the planning, process, and distribution of graduates; (3) The activities that mostly do for professional training is participating in seminars or workshops related to strengthening leadership and management; (4) The activities that mostly do for instilling good ethics is the principal gives good ethical examples and exemplary in actions and words; and (5) The activities that mostly do for building strong character is the principal applies openness and transparency in making policies and decisions.

Acknowledgments

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