

Transformational Leadership Impact on Teachers' Organizational Commitment

Agustina Veny Purnamasari, S.Pd, MM

***Abstrak.** Kepemimpinan transformasional merupakan suatu proses di mana seorang pemimpin menginspirasi perubahan, meningkatkan kinerja diri sendiri dan kinerja perusahaan. Pemimpin transformasional memungkinkan para pengikutnya untuk bertanggung jawab terhadap diri mereka dan terhadap pekerjaan yang telah dipercayakan kepada mereka. Kepemimpinan transformasional meliputi 4 komponen, yakni: charismatic leadership, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation dan individual consideration. Organizational commitment atau komitmen organisasi didefinisikan sebagai keterikatan dan keterlibatan seseorang terhadap organisasinya. Komitmen organisasi menunjukkan bagaimana seorang karyawan mengidentifikasi dirinya dengan organisasi tempat kerjanya dan sejauh mana para karyawan, dalam hal ini, para guru memiliki komitmen terhadap organisasi yaitu sekolah. Paper ini membahas bagaimana kepemimpinan transformasional berpengaruh secara positif terhadap komitmen organisasi para guru. Hal ini dikarenakan oleh karakteristik dari kepemimpinan transformasional yang memungkinkan seorang pemimpin, dalam hal ini, kepala sekolah, untuk menjadi role model dan menginspirasi para guru untuk berpikir dan bertindak kreatif. Kepala sekolah juga tidak mengkritik di hadapan umum/forum suatu kesalahan yang dilakukan oleh guru. Lebih jauh lagi, kepala sekolah yang memiliki model kepemimpinan transformasional bersedia untuk meluangkan waktu untuk memberikan perhatian kepada para guru dan menghargai perbedaan pribadi masing-masing guru. Seluruh karakteristik seorang pemimpin transformasional mampu menciptakan suasana yang nyaman dan membangun lingkungan kerja yang komunikatif bagi para guru. Kesemuanya itu dapat meningkatkan organizational commitment para guru terhadap sekolah.*

Introduction

Leadership is a process to determine the goal and direction of an organization. Further, Hughes et al. (2001) assert that leadership is a process, not a position. It is a complex phenomenon involving the leader, the followers, and the situation. Leadership includes both the rational and emotional sides of human experiences. It includes actions and influences based on reason and logic as well as those based on inspiration and passion. Since people are both rational and emotional, leaders can use rational techniques and/or emotional appeals in order to influence followers.

Bass and Burns (in Bass, 1998) state that a new paradigm of leadership has begun to capture attention. Leadership is conceived of as transactional or transformational. Kreitner and Kinicki (2001) suggest that transactional leadership focuses on the

interpersonal interactions between managers as the leaders and employees or the followers. There are two characteristics of transactional leadership, namely: (1) leader use contingent rewards to motivate employees and (2) leader exert corrective action only when subordinates fail to obtain performance goal. Conversely, transformational leadership is described as a process of inspiring change and empowering followers to achieve greater heights, to improve themselves and to improve organization processes. It is an enabling process causing followers to accept responsibility and accountability for themselves and the processes to which they are assigned. Research shows that transformational leadership can move followers to exceed expected performance.

Analysis on Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership theory was first introduced by Burns in 1978 and further expanded by Bernard Bass (Humphreys, 2001). Transformational leadership does not constitute an exchange of commodity between the leader and the followers. Transformational leaders operate out of deeply held personal value systems. Burns (in Humphreys, 2001) defines this as end values. End values are those which cannot be exchanged or negotiated between individuals. By expressing these personal standards, transformational leaders are able to unite their followers and actually change their followers' goals and beliefs.

Moreover, transformational leadership is a form of leadership that occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interest of their employee, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and missions of the organization and when they stir the employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the organization (Bass, 1990). This form of leadership goes beyond the traditional form of transactional leadership that emphasized corrective actions, mutual rewards only when performance expectations were met.

Numerous studies have shown that transformational leadership:

- Significantly increases organizational commitment
- Increase employees trust in management and organizational citizenship behaviors
- Enhance employees' satisfaction with both their job and the leader
- Reduces employees' stress and increases well-being

Transformational leadership consists of four components. The description of each component is as follows (Bass, 1998):

1) Charismatic leadership (or Idealized Influence)

In this concept, the leadership is charismatic such that the followers seek to identify with the leaders and emulate them. This is because the transformational leaders behave in ways that result in their being role models for their followers. The leaders are admired, respected, and trusted. Followers identified with the leaders and want to be like them. These leaders are endowed by their followers as having extraordinary capabilities, persistence, and determination. They can be counted on to do the right thing, demonstrating high standards of ethical and moral conduct.

2) Inspirational motivation

Transformational leaders behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers' work. Team spirit is aroused. Enthusiasm and optimism are displayed. Leaders get followers involved in envisioning attractive future states.

3) Intellectual stimulation

Transformational leaders stimulate their followers' efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways. Creativity is encouraged. There is no public criticism of individual members' mistakes.

4) Individualized consideration

Transformational leaders pay special attention to each individual follower's needs for achievement and growth by acting as coach or mentor. Followers and colleagues are developed to successfully higher levels of potential. Individualized consideration is practiced when new learning opportunities are created along with a supportive climate. The leaders' behavior demonstrate acceptance of individual differences (e.g. some employees receive more encouragement, some more autonomy). A two-way exchange in communication is encouraged and interaction with followers are personalized (e.g. the leader remembers previous conversations, is aware of individual concerns, and sees the individual as a whole person rather than as just an employee).

Organizational Commitment

Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982) defined organizational commitment as 'the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization'. In addition, Allen and Meyer (1996) organizational commitment can be defined as "a psychological link between the employee and his or her organization that makes it less likely that the employee will voluntarily leave the organization" (p. 252). Based on their work, Meyer and Allen (1991; 1997) proposed that organizational commitment can be conceptualized in three forms: desire (affective commitment), obligation (normative commitment) and cost (continuance commitment).

Continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Those with high levels of continuance commitment stay with the organization because they need to. "Normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Those with high levels of normative commitment stay with an organization because they feel they ought to remain. An individual can have similar or different levels of all 3 types of commitment. They are not mutually exclusive.

Further, commitment to the organization creates a sense of community, affiliation, and personal caring among adults within the schools and facilitates integration between personal life and work life (Louis, 1998). Many factors impact teachers' levels of commitment to the organization. Specifically, previous studies show that teachers' commitment to the organization is influenced by (a) beliefs and acceptance of organizational goals (Mowday, et al. 1996), (b) level of involvement in decision making (Kushman, 1992), (c) orderly climates conducive to learning and (d) student achievement (Kushman, 1992).

Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organizational Commitment

Bass & Avolio, 1997; Yammarino & Bass, 1990 as quoted by Ahn and Kwon (2001) suggest that transformational leaders motivate followers to perform at higher levels, to exert greater effort, and to show more commitment than other types of leaders. Similarly, Palomo (2004) in his research on organizational commitment and perceived leadership in a mental health setting found that transformational leadership at the direct

level was positively correlated to organizational commitment and transformational leadership of the nursing officers was correlated to organizational commitment.

Concerning the impact of transformational leadership, Bass (1998) maintains that commitment to the organization and its goals is enhanced by the extent the leader is engaging in inspirational behavior that provides meaning for the soldier in organizational mission and challenge for accomplishing it.

Impact of Transformational Leadership on Teachers' Organizational Commitment

Marzano, et al. (2005) asserts that since mid 1990s, the influence of transformational leadership in the educational sector has been the focal point of many research studies. This leadership paradigm has quickly become the most current and widely accepted model of school leadership because of its emphasis on the fostering and development of organizational members.

Moreover, Koh et al. (1995) completed a study involving 846 teachers in 89 schools in Singapore that supports this assertion. In their study, the researchers investigated the influence of transformational leader behavior by school principals as it relates to organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, teacher satisfaction with the leader and student academic performance. The results of the Koh et al. (1995) study revealed that transformational leadership have a significant effect on organizational commitment and teacher satisfaction with their leader. Commitment to the organization, related organizational citizenship behavior, and job satisfaction were significantly greater when the principals were described by the teachers as more transformational.

Likewise, Leithwood et al. (1999) identified 20 studies providing evidence linking leadership to teacher outcomes. Although the results on some measures were mixed, the reviewers found that transformational leadership consistently predicted the willingness of teachers to exert extra effort and to change their classroom practices and/or attitudes. The most consistent findings link transformational leadership to organizational learning, organizational effectiveness, and organizational culture.

Leithwood (1993) argues that the contribution of leadership to the development of a strong school culture was an essential mechanism for supporting staff collaboration that

sustains collective identity. His synthesis of the research argued that 50% of the influence of transformational leadership comes from the visioning dimensions of the construct, with most of the remainder emanating from the leader's provision of intellectual stimulation and individualized support for organizational members.

The previous research findings indicates that transformational leadership has positive impact on teachers' organizational commitment. The first component of transformational leadership, i.e. charismatic leadership, enable the leader, in this case, the principal of the school, to be a role model for his/her followers, i.e. the teachers. The principal behaves in such a way that the teachers respect and admire him/her; and eventually these teachers identify themselves with the principal.

The second component, inspirational motivation, with his/her enthusiasm and optimism has made the school principal become an inspiring figure for the teachers. The third component, intellectual stimulation, provides the principal the ability to encourage the teachers to find creative ways in completing their works and one important point to be noted in this part is that there is no public criticism for individual mistakes.

The last component, individualized consideration, gives the leader willingness to pay attention to the teachers individually. In other words, the principal is willing to take time to listen to each teacher concerns, accept individual differences, for instance, some teachers might need more encouragement; some others need more autonomy in doing their works.

The pervious discussions have elaborated the positive impact of transformational leadership of the principal on teachers' organizational commitment. Since by the transformational leadership of the principal, the teachers are inspired by their principal and thus, these teachers are identified themselves with him/her. Consequently, teachers are willing to think more creatively, put more efforts in their works and be committed to their work and their school.

Conclusions

Transformational leadership is a process by which the leader inspire change and empower followers to achieve greater heights, to improve themselves and to improve organization processes. It is an enabling process causing followers to accept responsibility and accountability for themselves and the processes to which they are

assigned. Transformational leadership covers four components, namely, charismatic leadership, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration.

Organizational commitment is defined as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Organizational commitment shows how employees' identify themselves with the organization and thus, shows the employees' commitment, in this case, the teachers' commitment to their works and their organization.

Transformational leadership contributes a positive impact on teachers' organizational commitment. Since the characteristics of transformational leadership enable the leader, in this case, the principal to be a role model and inspire the followers, i.e. the teachers to do more for their works. The principal also has the willingness to pay attention to the teachers as an individual. The principal gives the teachers the opportunity to think more creatively and he/she does not criticize the teachers' mistakes publicly.

All of the traits of a transformational leader briefly creates a comfortable atmosphere and build a communicative work environment for the teachers which leads these teachers to increase their organizational commitment.

References

- Ahn, Joongho and Sundong Kwon. (2001). "The Effect of CIO's Transformational Leadership on Empowerment and Leadership Performance: An Analysis Using Structural Equational Modeling". Seoul National University.
- Bass, Bernard. (1998). *Transformational Leadership: Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Association.
- Hughes, Linda C., et al. (2001). "Relationships Between Certification and Job Perceptions of Oncology Nurses". *Oncology Nursing Series*. Vol. 28. ONCC Research Committee.
- Humphreys, John H. (2001). "Transformational and Transactional Leader Behavior". *Journal of Management Research*. New Mexico: New Mexico University.
- Koh, W. L., Steers, R. M., & Terborg, J. R. (1995). The effects of transformational leadership on teacher attitudes and student performance in Singapore. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 16, 319-333.
- Kreitner, Robert and Kinicki, Angelo. (2001). *Organizational Behavior*. McGraw-Hill.

- Kushman, J. W. (1992). The organizational dynamics of teacher workplace commitment: A study of urban elementary and middle schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 28(1), 5-42.
- Leithwood, K. A., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). *Changing leadership for changing times*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Louis, K. S. (1998). Effects of teacher quality work life in secondary schools on commitment and sense of efficacy. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 9(1), 1-27.
- Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A., (2005). *School Leadership that works: From Research to Results*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. W. and Steers, R. M. (1982). *Employee-Organization Linkages: The Psychology of Commitment, Absenteeism, and Turnover*, Academic Press, New York.
- Palomo, Gilbert. (2004). "Organizational commitment and perceived leadership style in a mental health setting. Our Lady of the Lake University.