A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH FOR IDENTIFYING INDONESIAN LOCAL WISDOM IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EXCELLENT LEADERSHIP

by Umiati Jawas

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Abstract - Since global benchmarks do not reflect the potential of local wisdom; therefore, the ability of local wisdom values can only be challenged with global values if it is able to change the mindset of the country/nation. This paper reviews literatures on the role of local wisdom values in the establishment of excellent leadership particulalrly in Indonesia and suggests a phenomenological approach to identify the values. Many academics believe that the traditional approach to exact sciences research is not entirely suitable for human or organizational research. Instead, phenomenology which is sometimes called the non-positivism approach, is an appropriate strategy for researching humans and organizations.

I. INTRODUCTION

The era of globalization has indeed created a change in the direction of community orientation in various aspects of life. Even global benchmarks do not reflect the potential of local wisdom; therefore, the ability of local wisdom values can only be coupled and confronted with global values if it is able to change the mindset of the country/nation (Rahim, 2011). The results of a study conducted by Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness / GLOBE (Kennedy, 2002) show that everything expected from a leader, what can or cannot be done by a leader, and the status and influence given by a leader are the results of culture in the country or region where the leader performs his function. As leadership affects the whole aspects of life, the glory and progress of a nation is often characterized by the power and importance of leadership roles (Khairil, 2009; Zuraidah, Zahir & Nuwairi, 2012). However, only leaders who have great-mind, decent behavior, pure life value, vision of future and courage to make changes will succeed in forming a great nation and civilization and in preserving cultural values of the society (Kartodirdjo, 1984).

II. LEADERSHIP AND LOCAL WISDOM VALUES

This literature study is based on the view put forward by Niffenegger et al. (2006), that a country that has its own uniqueness. Hofstede (1991), in a study found that in general people in Asia, including in Indonesia, have high power distance, low individualism, moderate masculinity and relatively weak risk avoidance scores compared to other countries. A number of studies that include cultural contextualizat have been carried out in various countries (eg Karande et al., 2002; Kennedy, 2002; Saufi et al., 2002; Lim, 2001; Gupta & Sulaiman, 1996; Hofstede, 1991). Most studies that deal with an emphasis relating to national aspects, do not seriously look at the country's sub-population as contributors to managerial values.

Culture as a pure mental phenomenon is therefore also a psychological phenomenon, which is limited by the psychological process of cognition and learning (D'Andrade, 2001). This cultural view is very different from what Hall (1976) meant, Hofstede (1980), and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2009) who base the categorization of culture and its measurement on the basis of the dominant value orientation. Cultural contextualization for leadership behavior and its influence on leadership in various countries and especially Indonesia has not been much studied. There are several studies that have been carried out; such as Nurfitri, Saad, and Aziz's (2015) studies in Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and Sub-Saharan Africa that show local cultural values are a factor that determines excellent leadership behavior in their organizations. Similarly, the research of Elfira (2013) concluded that leadership based on the values of Minang and Bugis local wisdom was practiced indirectly through individuals involved in leadership structures within government institutions.

III. LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The development of efficacy leadership development is more focus on building interpersonal competencies and building relationships of trust and commitment, developing social networks and coordinating efforts within and between teams and organizations (Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004). Some examples of leadership skills that are personal and interpersonal must be owned by every leader in the organization. The development of leadership capabilities is more focused on increasing social

capital, namely building social networks that will ultimately produce organizational value in achieving organizational goals.

The conceptualization of leadership capacity development in this study is in line with Day's (2001) view, in the sense that the development of leadership capabilities is seen as an integration between human capital and social capital. The development of leadership abilities as a form of human development occurs all the time, and tend to increase (incremental) and continues to grow (accretive) and is the result of complex reciprocal interactions between leaders, other people and the social environment. Therefore effective leadership development efforts will be based on the awareness that leaders can only develop and function within a social context and even though individual leader-based development is still needed for leadership, but that is not enough. Leadership requires that the development of individual abilities be integrated and understood in the context of others, social systems, organizational strategies, missions and goals.

Therefore, we assume that the essence of developing leadership abilities lies in the interaction between intrapersonal components and interpersonal components. An experience that does not have these essential elements will interfere with the development of leadership in a meaningful way, or in other words if there are incomplete elements, then the fundamental meaning of the leadership experience will not arise. Price Waterhouse Coopers (in Galli & Stewens, 2012) reports that, most of the large-sized companies invest a large portion of their income to carry out leadership development. But this big investment seems to be "based on mere belief" (done based on beliefs and not because of concrete evidence) (Mabey & Ramirez, 2005).

IV. PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

Phenomenology is based on a basic principle of intentionality. Intentionality is the principle that experience is always directed towards things in the world where humans live in relation to the world, with other people and things. In other words, existence as a human being and ourselves is constructed through our relationship with others. This appreciation of the phenomenological meaning can be applied to leadership by asking the question: "what is meant by leadership and what is the nature of leadership experience?" So phenomenology can be a rational research framework to access the phenomenon of developing leadership abilities (Peterson, 1994). Phenomenology according to its basic nature itself is a logical approach to be used in helping us better understand what is the essence of potential leadership development experience potential.

Many academics believe that the traditional approach to exact sciences research is not entirely suitable for human or organizational research (Peterson, 1994). Instead, phenomenology which is sometimes called the non-positivism approach, is an appropriate strategy for researching humans and organizations. Husserl's method of phenomenology is intended to examine and analyze the individual's inner life, namely his apparent experience. Phenomenology assures that various ways of interpreting experience through interaction and meaning of experience as reality (Bogdan & Bilken, 1998). Exploration of regional cultural values, will be able to help reveal the local wisdom of national culture in the past, including those relating to the problem of concepts and leadership patterns. Referring to the wisdom of the nation itself will certainly be more grounded, because it has become a philosophy, tradition, and culture that is rooted and tested hundreds and even thousands of years according to the geography, situation and character of the community itself.

In summary, phenomenology can be an analytical descriptive approach for understanding leadership development experience. Besides the development of leadership itself is a function (depending on) from experience, so that the development of leadership capabilities can be investigated using a phenomenological framework. Therefore, this review proposes the use of phenomenological approach to identify values of local wisdom reflected on leadership development experiences in the establishment of excellence leadership.

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