

***Mudir* Leadership in Improving Teachers' Discipline at One *Pesantren* in Jambi**

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Abstract

This study aimed at determining the principals (*Mudir*) leadership in improving teachers' discipline at one Islamic boarding school (*Pesantren*) in the city of Jambi, Indonesia. Specific targets to be achieved from this research were guided by two research questions: 1) how is the *Mudir* leadership in improving the discipline of teachers? and 2) what are the obstacles of *Mudir* leadership in improving teachers' discipline? The research method used was qualitative method with a case study approach, where I described the research findings in the form of narrative ways. Data collection techniques used in this research were observation, documentation, and interview. In relation to the trustworthiness of the research, I applied triangulation through observation, documentation, and interviews. In addition, member checking and audit-trail were used. In analyzing the data, I transcribed the data, coded, and put them into some themes. I translated the thematic data into English and presented the data in a descriptive way. The findings of the study informed that the *Mudir* have applied some acts to improve teachers' discipline namely being an exemplary person with discipline, evaluating teachers' discipline, giving reward and punishment, and doing class visits. Some obstacles revealed in this research were physical performance of the *Mudir* and teachers' age.

Keywords: discipline, leadership, *Mudir*, Islamic boarding school

Introduction

The success of a teacher in teaching can be influenced by the discipline of work of the teacher. With good discipline of work, the teacher usually shows his/her maximum performance, spirit of teaching, and persistence to face obstacles. *Mudir* as the leader of Islamic boarding schools (*Pesantren*) is responsible and having significant roles to help teachers in order to have good discipline of work (Sofwan & Habibi, 2016). Good leadership of *Mudir* will have a significant impact for teachers doing their activities with good discipline of work, whereas their poor leadership would have an adverse effect on teachers' discipline of work.

Discipline is adherence to rules or orders established by an organization (Sinambela, 2016). Discipline is a management activity to implement organizational standards. There are two types of disciplinary activities, namely preventive and corrective (Handoko, 2000). According to Davis, as cited in Mangkunegara (2000), the discipline of work can be interpreted as the implementation of management to strengthen the guidelines of an organization. In the context of human resource management, Siagian (2013) explained that discipline should be applied gradually, by taking disciplinary steps, from the lightest to the toughest, for example by verbal warning by supervisor, written statement of dissatisfaction by direct supervisors, and periodic payroll delays. The purpose of disciplining act by an

institution or organization for its employees/ staff is to ensure that their behaviors are consistent with the rules established by the organization (Simamora, 2001).

Mudir, as the leader of *Pesantren*, is certainly keen that the teachers who teach in the *Pesantren* they lead to have good discipline of work. Therefore, they should always nurture the teachers for the stability of discipline of work, and should also seek positive things to encourage teachers to work with good discipline. Field facts in the preliminary study indicated that illustrated condition of work discipline of teachers who teach at one *Pesantren* in Jambi was well-rated. It appeared from the discipline of work shown by the teachers, they looked diligent in running various teaching activities, they also looked patient with the various limitations that they faced.

The high discipline of work shown by the teachers is part of the reflection of the *Pesantren* leadership. This can be well-understood by the leadership of the *Pesantren*. So that, with good leadership, *Mudir* made the *Pesantren* teachers always have a good working discipline including in teaching. Concerning the background of the research, I decide to conduct research on the leadership of one *Pesantren* in Jambi which is guided by two research questions:

- 1) how is the *Mudir* leadership in improving the discipline of teachers?
- 2) what are the obstacles of *Mudir* leadership in improving teachers' discipline?

Methodology

This study used a qualitative design with a case study approach aiming to determine the principals (*Mudir*) leadership condition and obstacles in improving teachers' discipline at one Islamic boarding school (*Pesantren*) in the city of Jambi, Indonesia. Creswell (1994) said that qualitative approaches are generally used to understand human experience and to express their perspectives. The use of qualitative approach in this research is also based on the consideration that: (1) it is easier to adapt when faced with double reality; (2) it can present the direct nature of the relationship between the researcher and the respondents; (3) it is more sensitive and more adaptable to sharpening of shared influence and the patterns of values at hand.

This study started with an initial observation of the research site, intended to clearly identify where the research would be conducted. The study was conducted at one Islamic boarding school in Jambi, a provincial Indonesia located in the southern part of its archipelago. Specifically, on the source of the data in the form of subjects or human samples, the selection was purposively described by Lincoln and Guba, as cited in Moleong (2010), that I began the research with the assumption of the context related to contextual factors. Based on the sampling procedure, the subject of this research was the *Mudir* of the *Pesantren* as the key informant. In addition, I also invited 10 teachers as the participants to support the interview's main data of the *Mudir*. It functions as a counter balance of the findings from the *Mudir*'s point of view

Procedure of the research

This research was conducted through several stages; 1) Preparation stage: survey of literature, survey of research location, identification of initial data, and proposal submission, 2) Implementation phase: data collection, data processing, data analysis, and preparation of

preliminary reports, 3) Preparation of a research report: seminar preparation and seminar implementation, preparation of the final report, and submission of the final report.

Data collection

The research data were collected using three main techniques, namely observation, interview, and documentation study. Observation was carried out with ongoing basis to obtain information from the first party. I observed the conditions of the *Pesantren*, as well as the students' situation. Due to that reason, I did the observation with active and passive participation, in turns with respect to the nature of the situation, events observed, and the involvement with the participants.

The implementation of the interview was principally intended to obtain sufficient data with respect to the subject matter of the research that has been identified. This interview activity was carried out continuously with respondents in various situations, although sometimes it was done in special situations. In addition to observation and interviews, I also used data collection techniques through documentation studies. The data obtained from the documentation study were used as a material for triangulation to check the trustworthiness of data (Habibi, Mukminin, Sofwan, & Sulistiyo, 2017).

I did the process of data collection in this study by travelling through the orientation stage and overview, focused exploration, and member checking stage (Abrar, Mukminin, Habibi, Asyraf, Makmur, & Marzulina, 2018; Mukminin, Muazza, Hustarna, & Sari, 2015; Mukminin & McMahon, 2013). The first stage, orientation and overview are the stages where I searched and collected needed information aiming to establish the focus of the study. In this stage, I sharpened the focus of the research in order to collect more targeted and specific data. In the second stage, member checking, I checked the correctness of data or information. This stage aimed to gain the trustworthiness of the research findings (Habibi et al., 2017).

I did triangulation, member checking, and reflexivity to strengthen the trustworthiness. Triangulation is a method used by qualitative researchers to check and establish validity in their studies by analyzing a research question from multiple perspectives. Habibi, Mukminin, Riyanto, Prasajo, Sulistiyo, Sofwan, & Saudagar (2018) and Mukminin Rohayati, Putra, Habibi, and Aina (2017) cautions that it is a common misconception that the goal of triangulation is to arrive at consistency across data sources or approaches; in fact, such inconsistencies may be likely given the relative strengths of different approaches. In Patton's view (2002), these inconsistencies should not be seen as weakening the evidence, but should be viewed as an opportunity to uncover deeper meaning in the data.

I transcribed the interview excerpts. I gave it back to the participants that have been interviewed to make sure what they said are right, as a system of checks of the data or member checking (Patton, 2002). In this research, names of the participants are a pseudonym, that's to keep the participants confidentially and makes them feel well-being as a human participants (Mukminin, Ali, & Ashari, 2015).

Data analysis

The data analysis that I did was to follow the process as suggested by Moleong (2010) and Mukminin, Ali, & Ashari, (2015), which started by reviewing all available data from various sources, namely from interviews and observations written in field notes, personal

documents, official documents, pictures, photos, and the other data sources. The data analysis procedure that I did in this study consisted of four steps that are data reduction done by selecting the data that had been compiled in the report and rearranged in the form of detailed descriptions. In this stage, I set limits for each data unit, then coded them so that the data which were already obtained were transformed and organized into units based on their characteristics. In the categorization stage of the data, I sorted out the number of units into one particular category based on the similarity of the characteristics (mukminin et al., 2017). The interpretation is an effort to interpret the interpretation of data categorized and described in the analytic meaning of the units (Habibi et al., 2018).

Findings

Mudir leadership in improving the discipline of the teachers

Based on the results of observations and interviews, it revealed that *Mudir* of the *Pesantren* stated that they kept attempting the effort to improve the teachers' discipline through some ways, among others are:

Being an exemplary as a discipline person

Based on the results of the interview with the *Mudir*, he informed that one way to improve the discipline of work of the teachers was to invite and encourage the teachers to become an exemplary person during not only their teaching and learning but also their daily life. He informed us,

The efforts I have made in order to improve the discipline of teachers is to invite the teachers to put forward exemplary acts in terms of work discipline because they will be the highlight and role model for their students. Therefore, the teachers are encouraged to give examples of good work of discipline to be emulated by the students.

Further, the *Mudir* explained that on several occasions such as in the activities of flag ceremonies, regular meetings, or other meetings, he always reminded the teachers to keep the discipline of work, because the *Pesantren* improvement would be highly dependant on the discipline of all stakeholders. When I did the observation on the field, I saw and heard directly that the *Mudir* conveyed his appeal to the teachers in a monthly meeting to work with full discipline, because according to him "discipline is one of the key of success in a job".

The findings above are also in line with one explanation of one teacher, Rahmawati (anonym) who informed,

On various occasions, especially in meetings attended by the *Mudir*, he always advised us, teachers, to give good examples to students about discipline in working. Of course, we are very grateful because he is the highest leader in the *Pesantren* as well as a person who has been well-educated; he has shown his concern for teachers to work with discipline.

Evaluating teachers' attendance documents

In addition to encouraging teachers to put forward the exemplary acts of discipline, it turned out another form of *Mudir* leadership in improving the discipline of teachers was in the form of evaluating attendance at the end of each month. This was based on the interview with the *Mudir*,

To improve teacher discipline, I also evaluated the teachers' attendance, observed how discipline the teachers thorough their attendance cheks, starting from how many times they attended the school and how many times they did not attend in accordance with their obligation, what time they came and what time they went home. All activities are well-monitored on the attendance documents/books. Based on my evaluation, it gives both rewarding feedback to the discipline and the admonition to the less disciplined.

To clarify *Mudir* information, I asked for confirmation to the administrative section staff for the availability of the attendance book where I found out that the attendace book looks well kept neatly on the bookcase provided. Not only the daily attendance documents, but there is also a monthly attendance documents typed neatly by the administration signed by the *Mudir* and stamped. The result of observation and the result of interview are also in accordance with the narration of M. Yusuf as the administrative division personnel of the *Pesantren*,

He routinely conducts regular evaluation on the attendance documents in the human resources division for both teachers and other administrative personnel. It is part of administrative procedures that are applied in this *Pesantren*. We make a daily tally of the attendance documents submitted to the *Mudir* and ask for his signature to legitimate the documents. Therefore, based on the evaluation, he can know the level of discipline of each teacher or other administrative personnel.

Giving reward and punishment

In addition to these two themes, I aslo obtained information that to improve the discipline of teachers; the *Mudir* provided reward for those with good discipline and punishment for the ones with bad discipline. He informed in this following excerpt,

The other thing that I did in order to improve the discipline of the teachers is by giving them positive feedbacks when they regularly do well in discipline and give punishment when some teachers committed to doing bad discipline.

Masithah, pseudonym as one of the teachers at the *Pesantren* justified what has been explained by the *Mudir*. She said that at a certain moment, the *Mudir* on behalf of the *Pesantren* gave award to some teachers who were deemed worthy to receive it, but he once also gave a punishment to some teachers who neglected the tasks or committed to some mistakes.

Doing class visits

Doing regular class visits was also one of the ways the *Mudir* do to keep maintaining the discipline of the *Pesantren* teachers as it was stated by the *Mudir*,

I occasionally make a class visit, a kind of sudden inspection to the teachers. The goal is to inspect teachers to always be ready to provide the best service to the students when teaching in the class. The class visit was selected randomly, and the visit time is sudden. In this way, it is expected that all teachers are always ready to be visited at any time, so that discipline in carrying out the task is high.

The above *Mudir* explanation is in line with the explanation given by Rini, one of the teachers,

The board members of the *Pesantren* occasionally make visits to classes, their arrivals are not notified, so it is sudden. So, the teachers, including me, should always be ready to that kind of visit as a professional teacher.

Obstacles in Mudir leadership

Besides the efforts made by the *Mudir* to improving the teachers' discipline of the *Pesantren*, from the interview, some problems also emerged. I obtained the information that *Mudir* leadership obstacles in improving the discipline of teachers at the *Pesantren* were physical performance of the *Mudir* and teachers' age.

Physical performance

When I interviewed the *Mudir*, he explained that one of the obstacles of her leadership in improving the discipline of teachers was teachers' physical performance. He informed,

In improving the work of teachers to be discipline, one obstacle we encountered in this *Pesantren* is when there are sick teachers. We have to consider the situation as a normal thing, since human being must have the condition sometime. I believed that if this physical performance can be improved by giving the teachers extra pay cash for their health, it will not be a big problem for us.

The observations also showed that some teachers were having permission due to the illness they had. In addition to that, there were also administrative records of sick reports from doctors about the illness that especially senior teachers suffered from.

Teachers' age

Information from the *Mudir* explained that the other obstacle found in improving the discipline of teachers at the *Pesantren* was that some teachers are senior citizens and are in pension age. It can be observed from this interview statement,

Another obstacle that I experienced in improving the discipline of teachers at the *Pesantren* is when I dealt with teachers who have been in their pension age. It is quite dilemmatic, on one hand, the teachers who are senior citizens who we expect their existence, because we expect the endowment of science and knowledge. With their presence, it adds the brand of the *Pesantren* among the community. On the other hand, due to their capability and work ethics, it is difficult to set the standard of discipline compared to young teachers .

Furthermore, *Mudir* said that in this case, he gave tolerance to the teachers who have been in old age or senior. He also said that it did not matter if the teacher in the old age category was late to come to the *Pesantren*, because he respected the teachers, and he felt very happy when he saw the senior teachers come to teach.

When doing observations, I found a number of teachers who were listed in the category of senior citizens (60 years old or more), and on average they were not given full teaching hours every day, but ranged from three or four days a week. These teachers taught Islamic-based courses, such as *Fiqh*, *Tafseer*, and *Hadith*.

Discussion

Based on the results of this study, it can be understood that what has been done by the *Mudir* in order to improve the discipline of teachers' work has been appropriate. The efforts need to be maintained and it would be better if it is improved in the future. As efforts to improve the discipline of teachers' work done, it can provide a better effect on teachers' performance. It has been proven from what has been found in the *Pesantren* which until today the *Pesantren* (research site) is the most successful *Pesantren* in Jambi.

Being an exemplary person with discipline, exemplary act is important in getting discipline, exemplary means trying to give a good example to be followed by others. The *Mudir* has done this attitude so that the teachers in the *Pesantren* followed what he did in his daily and academic activity. *Mudir* did not only state of being a discipline person but also he did things with discipline. Uriatman (2015) in the results of his research at on vocational school in Tugumulyo said that one of the efforts of the principal to improve teachers' discipline is by giving exemplary act to the teachers for discipline in work, as well as by inviting the teachers to give exemplary discipline to the students. Altar (2014) also stated that based on the results of his research, the example of the principal can improve teachers' discipline in the presence of teaching in the classroom, it is seen that 80% of the respondents stated that the role of the principal is very important in improving teacher discipline, especially his presence in the teaching and learning process in class.

Evaluating teachers' attendance documents, evaluation of the attendance of the teachers conducted by *Mudir* at the end of each month was evidence that it was one important aspect that made teachers work with good discipline. Evaluation of the attendance aims to monitor and to know the presences of the teachers and to identify less disciplined teachers.

Reward and punishment are important parts of the efforts to enforce discipline within an organization. Sumarso (2010) and Haryati (2016) through their research said that the application of reward and punishment is effective to improve the discipline of teachers' attendance in class in teaching and learning activities. Nugroho (2006) explained that reward and punishment are two forms of methods in motivating a person to do well and improve his

performance. In the concept of management, reward is one tool to increase motivation and discipline of employees. Punishment is a consequence that must be accounted for someone for not doing his duty.

Conducting class visits in order to monitor teachers' teaching activities is evidence of the commitment of the *Mudir* in carrying out his function as the leader of the *Pesantren*. This is certainly a creative act of a leader, and the action has been proven to be able to improve teachers' discipline of work. Conducting class visits is part of direct monitoring conducted by the *Mudir*. Supervision is very necessary which according to Terry and Rue (2011), supervision provides a way to measure the performance of the entire organization, to ensure the overall performance which is consistent with the overall plan, and to supervise the semi-autonomous units.

Conclusion

Based on the description that has been mentioned on the previous pages, it can be concluded that the *Mudir* leadership in enhancing the discipline of teachers in the *Pesantren* are by being an exemplary person with discipline, evaluating teachers' discipline, giving reward, and punishment, and doing class visits. Some obstacles revealed in this research were physical performance of the *Mudir* and teachers' age. Based on the results of this study, the author suggests to the *Mudir* to do variations in terms of improving work discipline of the teachers, so that it results on some better effects.

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