THE ROLE OF LEADER IN BUILDING MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

By:
MARJAM DESMA RAHADHINI
Economic Faculty of Slamet Riyadi University

Abstract: Multiculturalism include ideas, perspectives, policies, attitudes and actions by the diverse communities in terms of ethnicity, culture, religion, ideology and so forth; however aspires to develop the spirit of the same nationality and have pride to maintain plurality. It has two characteristics, namely the need for recognition and legitimacy of cultural diversity. Multicultural society is a society that understands diversity in the life of the world and accept their diversity, such as: values, systems, culture, customs, and political embraced. Leaders need to understand this diversity in creating a multicultural organization.In building a multicultural organization, leaders can use habituation and models, as well as education . Multicultural organizations can eliminate prejudice, improve the performance of members, optimize the potential of its members, and is able to develop a family atmosphere to achieve long-term goals. The success of building a multicultural organization indicated internalized the existing programs thoroughly on every member of the organization. Every leader needs to continue to build an organization in a multicultural perspective.

Keywords: leader, multicultural, organization, education, habituation

Introduction

The concept of multiculturalism is relatively late in comparing with the concept of plurality and diversity. According to Parekh (1998), during 1970s multicultural movement first emerged in Canada and Australia, and then in the United States, Britain, Germany, and others. The concept of plurality presumes the 'stuff is more than one' (many); diversity shows that the existence of 'more than one' is different, heterogeneous, and unequal. Multiculturalism confirms that all the differences that they are the same in the public space so that required the acceptance of other groups is the same as unity, regardless of cultural differences, ethnicity, gender, language, or religion.

Multiculturalism has began to emerge in Indonesia when the national system of authoritarian-militaristic becoming weaker with the end of the New Order. At that time, the country getting to chaos with various conflicts between ethnics and groups, which is leading to the fears of citizens; so need of a new concept in a plural society has to be studied. According Parsudi (2003), multiculturalism is an ideology that glorifies the differences of culture, or a

belief that recognize and promote cultural pluralism as a symbol of life. It is a binder and a connector that accommodates differences of ethnics and groups in an inclusive society. Those variances are embodied in public places, workplaces and markets, and the national system in equal degree of political, legal, economic, and social.

Multiculturalism Model

Multiculturalism is derived from "multi" and "cultural". It is an acknowledgment of the reality of cultural diversity, which means that, it covers the traditional differences such as race, ethnicity, religion, as well as life forms (sub-culture) that come up in every stage of the life history. Pluralism relates with the right of groups that exist in a community that has each other's culture. There are two main characteristics, which are "need for recognition" and "legitimacy of the cultural diversity or pluralism". It emphasizes cultural diversity in equality. Multiculturalism was born from the same concept as democracy, rule of law, human rights and ethical principles and egalitarian socio-political moral. The born of multicultural backgrounds need for recognition to cultural diversity, which is becoming an everyday reality of many nations, including Indonesia. It can be defined as a difference of certain culture with others. So, multicultural

society can be outlined as a group of people who live in a place that has its own characteristics and culture that is able to distinguish between one society to another. Each community will produce a culture to characterize their community.

There are many definitions of multiculturalism. One of those is a worldview that emphasizes on the acceptance of the reality of diversity, plurality and multicultural contained in people's lives. Multiculturalism refers to a worldview, which is then manifested in the "politics of recognition" (Azyumardi, 2007). Lawrence (2009) revealed that multiculturalism includes an understanding, appreciation and assessment of a person's culture, as well as respect and a curiosity about ethnic cultures of others. We can conclude that the core of multiculturalism is about acceptance and appreciation of the culture, both their own culture and the culture of others. Everyone have to be forced to respect each other and culture in the community. Regardless the form of a culture, it should be accepted by everyone without discriminating between one culture and another.

Parekh (1998) divided a concept and definition of multiculturalism into five types. It also quoted by Azyumardi (2007), namely:

1. **Isolationist** is a society of various cultural groups performs live

autonomously and engages in minimal interaction with each other.

2. **Accommodative** is a society that has a dominant culture that makes adjustments and property-specific accommodation to the needs of minority cultures.

3. **Autonomist** is a pluralistic society that cultural groups primarily seek equality with the dominant culture and want to live autonomously in collective political framework acceptable.

4. **Critical/interactive**is the plural society cultural groups are not too focused (concerned) with the autonomous cultural life, but rather form a collective creation that reflects and confirms their distinctive perspectives.

5. **Cosmopolitan** is a pluralistic society that attempted to delete a cultural boundaries altogether to create a society where every individual is no longer tied to a particular culture .

Multiculturalism in Indonesia

Multiculturalism in Indonesia is formed as a result of socio-cultural and geographical, which are diverse and extensive. In term of geographical conditions, Indonesia has many islands that each island is inhabited by a group of people who form a society. Each community formed a culture of the

society itself. In the concept of multiculturalism, there is a strong correlation of establishment of a society based on diversity in unity (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika) as well as the realization of a national culture that serves to unify the nation. However, there are many obstacles in practice that prevent the formation of multiculturalism in society.

To turn into Indonesian-ness sort of thing, what we can do is continuously lifted all forms of culture, warmed it, so the local culture truly become part of Indonesia to then strengthen the Indonesian nation. From the difference itself, we can see their similarities and dissimilarities. The form of New Indonesia that expected to be born of the reform is "multicultural Indonesian society", or Indonesian people that stand the ideology of multiculturalism: the willingness and awareness to acknowledge and magnify differences in equality, both individually and as a culture. Based on the principle of multiculturalism, Indonesian people basically acknowledge and generally accepted a cultural construct or patterned like a mosaic. It covers all the cultures of the societies from smallform that realize into great community.

The principle of multiculturalism was actually a reference to the founding fathers of Indonesia in designed a national culture, such as in the explanation of Article 32 of the 1945

Constitution which reads: "the culture of the nation (Indonesia) are the tops of the culture in the area". Therefore, the principle of multiculturalism can be used as a strategy and approach of relationship between citizens latter is easily carried in an atmosphere of conflict as a side effect of the era of openness. Multiculturalism also used as a tool of analysis or perspective to understand the dynamics of the diversity of cultural backgrounds, history differentiation, ethnicity, race, racial, class, and religion. As a strategy of social integration, multiculturalism recognizes and respects cultural differences. It carries the implication that a social reality in which highly polymorphic or compound will not become an obstacle in establishing the pattern of social relations between individuals of tolerance. In fact, will grow an attitude that accepts to live in peace (peace co-existence) of each other with the differences inherent in every social and political entity. Thus, multiculturalism is a concept that wants to bring the community in harmony and peace, without conflict and violence, despite the complexity in which there is a difference.

The condition of Indonesia that is still limited make a multicultural nation state becomes a challenge and obstacle in building Indonesia. Multicultural state will be a challenge for several reasons, as follow:

1. The strong understanding of ethnocentrism.
2. Lack of functioning of the three elements of democracy.
3. There are still provocative elements that triggered the conflict.
4. Lack of strengthening the nation's character from inside by all elements of society. (Buladjaroberto, 2014)

Multicultural organizations

Multicultural organizations consists not only a work force, but also human resources with a racial background, religion, and gender. The minority also integrated at every level of organization, including the management and executive positions. "*Multicultural organization is an organization whose work force not only includes people from diverse racial, religious and gender backgrounds, but is one in the which minorities are well integrated across all levels of the company, Including management and executive positions*" (Investopedia, 2016)

Multicultural organizations showed to their employees with diverse cultural backgrounds, ethnicity, experiences that can be used to contribute to the organization, and achievement or benefit to individuals and organizations. In this case disclosed

multicultural organization is "*where employees of varied backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, and experiences can contribute freely, and achieve reviews their individual potentials for reviews their own and their organization's benefit*" (Business Dictionary, 2016). Another definition expresses "*Multicultural Organization (MCO) is an organization that seeks to improve itself or enhance its competitive advantage by advocating and practicing social justice and social diversity internally and external to the organizations"* (Jackson, 2006). MCO is an organization that aims to improve or enhance competitive advantage by advocating and practicing social justice and social diversity of internal and external organization. Based on that statement, can be concluded that the organizational with multicultural perspective is a container or a place where people carry out the management process with diverse racial background, religion, gender and different experiences, and attention to justice and social diversity to support the achievement of organizational goals in the long period of time. Development of multicultural organization turns through a phase-by-phase in continuum. Jackson (2006) illustrated in Figure 1 below:
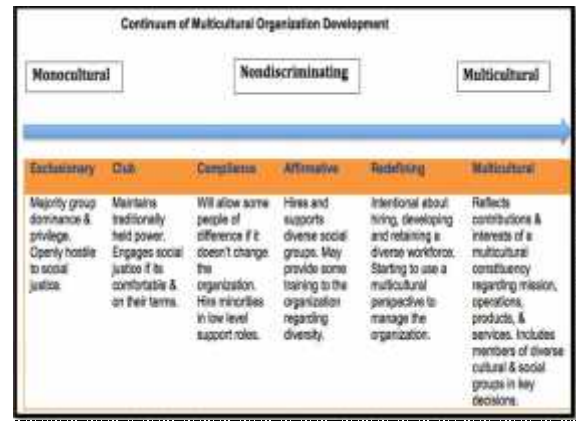

Figure 1. Multicultural Organization Development /MCOD (Jackson, 2006)

Based on Figure 1, it is known that the development of the organization has been started from mono-cultural organization, non-discriminating, and multicultural developing continuum. Monocultural organization is characterized by their dominant majority group and has their privileges. In addition, it has a power in keeping things that traditionally should be maintained. And it is developing from mono-cultural organization into a non-discriminatory organization. People in the organization, including its leader had noticed the difference and appreciate the variety of unique human being in the working environment. Multicultural organization seems to be highlight of the organization's development. Multicultural organization characterized by its reflection, contribution and concern for diversity or multicultural members. It includes cultural differences

and social groups in decision-making organization.

Leaders in Multicultural Organizations

The leader strives to build an organization through the achievement of vision, mission, goals and targets set. One effort that has to be done by leader is understand the multicultural human resources (HR), which is owned by its members. They are not homogeneous because the current organization is already open, come from various regions, a different race, ethnicity, religion, and a diverse culture. Leaders who succeed in building the organization should treat their subordinates equally in each run day-to-day activities. Leader also should understand that every human were born as a unique creature. One individual with another are not the same. The uniqueness is shown in the individual characteristics of the visible and invisible things. Hearts, thoughts, and actions of the creature in its activities into a dynamic and varied on earth and various organizations. Religion, values, customs, race, skin color, hair, and anything that is inseparable from the individual themselves when entered in an organization (institution or educational unit). Those diverse cultures cannot be separated from him/her because it is already exist before entering the

organization. Their uniqueness become a challenge to be empowered to build an organizations. Debates, disagreements, and anarchism by their multicultural always occur in a variety of organizations in this country. In fact, if ethnocentrism (a view which is based on one's own society or culture) is so strong that sometimes lack of respect for the culture or religion of the other, it is very easy to ignite hatred then end up with anarchists. Nevertheless, multicultural is also a positive impact on existing communities, mutual respect, and also a national asset that should be preserved for the nation's future. This condition is necessary as an attempt to build multicultural becomes more meaningful as well as the negative impact of multicultural solutions for all parties, especially the leaders who are building-based multicultural organization. Leaders need to explore the concept of multicultural organization, implementation strategy, and the key to success in its implementation.

Leaders in a multicultural organization should be able to understand the state of each member in the organization. There are some wisdoms of a leader based on multicultural: *Firstly*, an understanding of intercultural communication, cross-cultural communication, or communication cross culture is absolutely necessary for leaders, through

the process of learning throughout life (life long education), enrichment, cross-cultural experience, and culture dialog (various areas) then the members of the organization will become more tolerant, open, caring, confident, and have respect and airy in the face of injustice, incongruity, arbitrariness to then seek a resolution. Through a process of experience and formal study of the concept of culture will increase awareness and get a new view (new vision) to improve communication. The process of learning, enrichment, and experience for the leaders could and should be carried out continuously in accordance with the developments and advances in communications technology globally. *Secondly*, strength and weakness to preserve the organizational culture. The strength of cultural preservation organizations such as: mutual admiration, mutual respect, openness, good communication, discipline, loyalty, adequate facilities, meeting to share experiences, harmonious relationships, infrastructure, organizational support, awareness to love others, and maintain rules/norms.

On the other hand, the weakness of cultural preservation organizations such as: human resource development, education background, there is no attempt to obtain funds, weak role of the organization, and low salary. The leader must be able to minimize the weaknesses

and strengths in order to maximize the organization's culture become sustainable. With a better understanding and breadth of knowledge about intercultural communication, which means that leaders have the ability and managerial skills, and still be able to maintain the organizational culture (adaptability, tolerance, harmony and synergy of culture).

Multicultural Education in Organization

Great Schools Partnership (2014) stated "*multicultural education refers to any form of education or teaching that incorporates the histories, texts, values, beliefs, and perspectives of people from different cultural backgrounds*." Multicultural education in organization is a form of education and learning that unites history, text, values, beliefs and perspectives of individuals with cultural background. Leader shows its implementation in the organization by modifying or integrating learning to reflect the cultural diversity of members. In other words, a leader in building multicultural organizations needs to understand and adopts the success of multicultural education. Multicultural education in this organization refers to a study that aims to educate and equitably treats members who have a different background of race, ethnicity, social

class, culture, including members with special needs in the organization.

The important point in multicultural education refers to the linkage between education and learning that is designed for the diverse cultures of the various races in organizational systems. The approach is based on an agreement, respect one another, and awareness of cultural diversity in the community. Educational atmosphere in the organization needs to be based on the overall diversity possessed members positively (Wilson, 2007). In addition, Howard (2003) argues that multicultural education gives multicultural competence. Errors in transforming values, aspirations, etiquette of a particular culture, often affected the primordial ethnicity, religion, and class is excessive. This factor causes an ethnic tensions and class. Through multicultural education from the start as the members were able to accept and understand the cultural differences that affect the differences in usage (how people behave), folkways (habits in the community), mores (code of conduct in the community), and customs (customs a community). Multicultural education organization with members able to accept differences, criticism, and have a sense of empathy, tolerance for others regardless of class, status, gender, and academic skills (Farida, 2005).

Habituation In Building Multicultural Organization

Habituation means adapt to, with, or for something; adjustments in order to become accustomed (trained) on habitat and so forth (KBBI, 2016). Habituation in this context refers to the activity of the leaders and members in building a multicultural organization everyday in the long-termperiod. A leader in a multicultural organization is not enough to make the education strategy, but need to be strengthened with other strategies, namely habituation. Each department or work unit with each other as much as possible given the chance to compete in the conditioning run programs, multicultural perspective. Doing habituation in preparing something (programs of each unit of work), implement, and evaluate it with a multicultural perspective. Middle management and all members are given discretion in establishing sub-based organization with multicultural in performing daily activities on a competitive basis. The implementation needs to be monitored periodically and incidental to obtain a variety of success and constraints. Once constraint is happened, it needs to be resolved in order not to be a greater problem.

Success in building a multicultural organization indicated by internalized habituation programs that exist throughout the whole of each

member. Once they do not implement this program, which they feel that there is something wrong and fix it immediately. In contrast, if it successes, leaders must give an award in accordance with the level of success and circumstances of the organization. Anyone or any work unit must be treated fairly in terms of habituation and awards.

Role Model In Building Multicultural Organization

Role model means for things to be imitated or emulated (KBBI, 2016). The example of a leader is indispensable in building a multicultural organization. If the members of the organization depend on the leader, he can take advantage of the maturity level of subordinates by showing leadership in a multicultural everyday practice of leadership in the organization. Leaders of the organization's success in building a multicultural based organizations typically be an example for members or subordinates. All thoughts, words, and actions should inspire members to be able to process integrated in the box and multicultural organizations. The main aspects related to leadership that has always shown a sense of justice for every member in every activity of organization. Avoiding political organization that is more concerned with one group than the other groups, treated

differently to members, and do not show justice to every member of the organization would be difficult for him and the organization led. If you want to build multicultural-based organizations with the best results, leaders must demonstrate exemplary to all members in a consistent, transparent, consistent and fair manner.

Conclusion

Awareness of the diversity of cultural life called multicultural. But any awareness of the diversity should be increased further and elaborated in a positive appreciation and understanding of this so-called multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is different with pluralism. Multiculturalism is a relationship in which there is a plurality of problems of minorities (minority groups) versus majority (majority group), in which there is an existential struggle for recognition, equality, equivalence, and justice. Multiculturalism requires people life in tolerance, mutual understanding between cultures and between nations in building a new world (Syahrial & Rusdiyanta, 2009)

Any organization that is built with a multicultural perspective must pay attention to the differences in backgrounds of its members. Leaders need to understand in using a strategy to realize the expected multicultural

organization. Leaders can build by education, habituation, and exemplary. Multicultural organization is proven to eliminate prejudice, racial pressure, improve the performance of minority members, and able to build an organization like the family atmosphere to achieve long-term goals. Every leader needs to continue to build the organization he leads with a multicultural perspective. Existing strategy can be adopted and developed continuously so that the organization is always ready to achieve its objectives by optimizing all potential members are multicultural.

Reference

Azyumardi Azra, (2007), "Identitas dan Krisis Budaya, Membangun Multikulturalisme Indonesia", http://www.kongresbud.budpar.go.id/58%20ayyumardi%20azra.html.

Bagus, I.G.N., (2013), "Hidup Bersama dan Etik Multikultural: Peluang dan Tantangannya dalam Hidup Berbangsa", *Makalah* disampaikan pada Seminar Nasional Hidup Berbangsa dan Etik Multikultural, di Surabaya pada tanggal 24-25 Mei 2013.

Banks, J. A., (2005), "Multicultural education: Characteristics and goals" in J.A. Banks and C.A., Macmillan, New York.

Banks, J. A., (1997b), Multicultural education: Characteristics and goals. In J. A. Banks and C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives,* 3rd ed., Allyn and Bacon, Boston, pp. 385-407.

Business Dictionary, (2016), *Multicultural Organization*, (online), (http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/multiculturalorganization.html#ixzz4127Ts RAI), diakses 18 Januari 2016.

Francisco Hidalgo, (2003), *Multicultural Education Landscape for Reform in Twenty First Century*, New Mexico State University, September 11th, 2003.

Gay, L.R., (1997), *Educational Research: Competence for Analysis and Application,* 3rd edition, Merril Publishing Company, Columbus.

Great Schools Partnership, (2014), *Multicultural Education*, (online), (http://edglossary.org/multicultural-education), diakses 20 Januari 2015.

Investopedia, (2016), *Multicultural Organization Definition*. (Online). (http:/www.investopedia.com/terms/m/multicultural-organization.asp), diakses 28 Pebruari 2016.

Jackson, B., (2006), *Theory and Practice of Multicultural Organization Development, The NTL Handbook of Organization Development and Change Principles, Practices, and Perspectives*, Pfeiffer, San Francisco, pp. 139-154.

KBBI, (2016), *Teladan*, (online), (http://kbbi.web.id/teladan), diakses 26 Pebruari 2016.

KBBI, (2016), *Pembiasaan*, (online), (http://kbbi.web.id/pembiasaan), diakses 26 Pebruari 2016.

Syafi'i Ma'arif, (2005), *Pendidikan Pluralisme di Indonesia,* Penerbit Logung Pustaka. Yogyakarta.

Parsudi Suparlan, "Menuju Masyarakat Indonesia yang Multikultural", Simposium Internasional Bali ke-3, Jurnal Antropologi Indonesia, Denpasar, 16-21 Juli 2002.

Robbins, S.P., (1998), *Perilaku Organisasi Konsep, Kontroversi, Aplikasi,* Terjemahan, Prenhallindo, Jakarta.

Sonhadji, K.H.A., (2003), "Pemanfaatan Teknologi Informasi dalam Pendidikan Multikultural". *Makalah* dipresentasikan dalam Kongres Ilmu Pengetahuan Nasional (KIPNAS) VIII, Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia bekerjasama dengan Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi, Depdiknas, Jakarta.

Tilaar, H.A.R., (2005a), *Manifesto Pendidikan Nasional: Tinjauan dari Perspektif Post Modernisme dan Studi Kultural,* Penerbit Buku Kompas, Jakarta.

Tilaar, H.A.R., (2005b), *Multicultural Education and ITS Challengers in Indonesia,* Penerbit Buku Kompas, Jakarta.

Yaqin, Ainul, (2005), *Pendidikan Multikultural: Cross-Cultural Understanding untuk Demokrasi dan Keadilan,* Penerbit Pilar Media, Yogyakarta.

http://geoenviron.blogspot.co.id/2013/04 masyarakat-multicultural-dan_1110.html

http://priyobaliyono.blogspot.co.id/2013/03/masyarakat-multikultural-indonesia.html

https://buladjaroberto.wordpress.com/2014/10/04/keadaan-masyarakat-indonesia-yg-multikulturalisme/