Honed Leadership Skills: An Experience Based Approach

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Abstract. Leadership is a vital skill in a variety of life contexts, including education, business, and society. This scientific article presents a comprehensive review of how to hone leadership skills through an experience-based approach. The research method used is a qualitative approach. The data used is data sourced from literature review. We explain key concepts in leadership, outline experience-based approaches, and identify the benefits and challenges associated with these approaches. Additionally, we offer practical strategies for implementing experience-based approaches in educational and leadership development contexts. This scientific article aims to provide a deeper understanding of how direct experience can be a strong foundation in developing effective leadership skills.

Keywods: Leadership, Experience based approach,Learning

INTRODUCTION

Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment so that it becomes an exciting, interesting and enjoyable learning condition. Apart from that, it can actively increase students' potential in terms of spirituality, control, personality, morals, intelligence and skills. Education includes teaching special skills and invisible but profound things such as knowledge, judgment and wisdom(Pristiwanti et al., 2022).

According toFaidal & Anshori (2011)Human resource development can actually be done in many ways. Two things that are very important for developing human resources are through education and training and increasing work experience. However, education is the main factor in improving human quality in the country. Sufficient human resources are a factor in the success of development in a country. School is a place/institution that functions to carry out education. Schools play a role in improving the quality and quality of education(Rahmawati & Supriyanto, 2020).

During school, students need to have various skills that must be equipped for the future. One of the skills needed is leadership skills. The study of topics related to leadership is always interesting to study and research. Because it is the most widely observed and least understood phenomenon. The problem arises whether the dynamics bring improvement or decline. Therefore, it is necessary to anticipate efforts if setbacks occur through leadership education from an early age(Rodiyana & Puspitasari, 2019).

A leader who can lead his members well, is responsible for his duties and obligations, is honest, speaks well in public, is intelligent and reliable is a person's leadership spirit.(Dwita

et al., 2023). Different fromPramudya et al. (2023)which states that a leader is a person who is capable and has added value in one area. Generally able to influence other people and be invited to take part in joint activities to achieve goals.

This type of leadership can originate from birth and be created intentionally (education and training). It cannot be denied that the spirit of leadership can come from heredity, it can come from development, and it can come from experience(Zulianto, 2016).

Teachers are not only tasked with teaching, but also teaching. Where learning becomes a process in achieving goals, through experiences that have been designed. The experience in question is experience from the five senses which is processed by the creation of thoughts. The learning process can take the form of seeing, hearing, observing and understanding the surroundings(Ridwan & Rizal, 2019).

The experience-based learning method is a "student centered" learning model. Teachers as facilitators, collaborative systems, and knowledge construction processes, as well as actual competency development. Therefore, it is hoped that the demands for competencies in the curriculum can be developed well. In this experience-based learning, students are brought to understand things from simple to complex. It can be in the form of one's own scope so that it extends from concrete to abstract(Amir et al., 2015).

Based on the data above, we tried to examine how to hone leadership skills through an experiential approach. Through this experience-based learning approach, students are expected to be able to learn, understand and hone leadership skills.

METHOD

The writing of this scientific work is the result of an in-depth literature review, using a qualitative approach. This approach produces descriptive data consisting of written words regarding the research object, supported by literature studies based on literature review, including relevant written data and numbers. The data collection technique used is documentation, by collecting information from various literature sources related to the research theme.

Data analysis was carried out descriptively with the aim of finding information that was relevant and related to the research theme, after data was collected from various library sources. The research process includes topic selection, data collection, analysis, report preparation, and presentation of research results. The research instruments used come from library sources such as books, journals, articles and bibliography.

Data validity is guaranteed through selection and verification from library sources that are relevant to the research theme, to ensure the accuracy and validity of the data. The validity of this research is supported by reliable references from educational and academic sources. With this method, it is hoped that the research results can provide an accurate contribution and become a reference in developing leadership skills through an experience-based approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Leadership Skills

According to research byRodiyana & Puspitasari (2019), leadership is considered a shared responsibility because individual behavior has the potential to influence others. While obeyingAmalia et al., (2023)Leadership is defined as a complex process in which a leader influences his subordinates in achieving the vision, mission and goals of the organization, so that the organization can develop and unite.

Today's students live in the digital era, where technological transparency and interpersonal interaction have become a reality. They have access to extensive information, which opens the door to acceleration in understanding science, beyond previous generations. The key to success in the 21st century lies in a person's ability to lead, adapt in an increasingly broad, diverse and open network.

It is important for students to learn leadership values such as mutual respect, building trust, and establishing emotional relationships and commitment in completing tasks.(Rodiyana & Puspitasari, 2019). The development of leadership skills can start from an early age, where students are taught to understand and communicate with other people, as well as understand the roles in a group(Bakhtiar, 2022).

Leadership Model Concept

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership has an important role in influencing the attitudes, perceptions, behavior and performance of teachers and employees in a school organization. This includes increasing trust in leaders, motivation, job satisfaction, as well as reducing internal conflict(Sunarno, Dr., 2021). According toZin et al. (2023), transformational leadership builds closer relationships between leaders and their subordinates. Furthermore, this type of leadership is able to encourage schools as learning communities to achieve goals that have never been achieved before(Sunarno, Dr., 2021).

Bass (1985)states that an effective leader can not only influence other people positively, but is also able to inspire and create significant change in an organization or group.

According toZin et al. (2023), there are four factors of transformational leadership style, namely:

1. Idealized influence, which involves the emotional aspect of leadership in which the leader acts as a strong role model for followers.

2. Inspiring motivation, where leaders communicate high expectations for employees to be part of a shared vision within the organization.

3. Intellectual stimulation, which stimulates creativity and innovation and strengthens individual and organizational values and beliefs.

4. Adapted consideration, where the leader listens attentively to the needs of each follower and acts as a coach and advisor to help them achieve their goals(Zin et al., 2023).

Situational Leadership Theory

According to situational theory, leadership effectiveness depends on the situation or context in which the leader finds himself. Fiedler (1967) highlighted that no single leadership style is effective in all situations. Leadership success depends on the extent to which a person's leadership style fits the needs and characteristics of a particular situation(Fiedler, 1967).

Hersey and Blanchard developed the situational leadership model. According to Robbins and Judge (2007), Hersey and Blanchard's approach identifies four leadership behaviors: highly directive, participative, supportive, and laissez-faire. The effectiveness of which behavior is chosen depends on the follower's ability and readiness. Readiness in this context refers to the extent to which followers have the ability and willingness to complete a particular task(Sunarno, 2021).

Factors that influence students' leadership skills

The role of teachers has a big impact in shaping students' personalities at school. They are an important factor in educational success at all levels, helping students in personality development that includes social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, physical and moral aspects (Sabir et al., 2022). It provides students with the skills necessary to become leaders in the future. These skills are acquired through education, training, and experience, appropriate to the individual's level of expertise (Sabir and Hakiki, 2020). Therefore, character education, both academic and non-academic, is important in schools so that students have strong leadership skills.

Competent teachers produce quality students. Leadership skills play an important role in the school environment because they contribute greatly to improving student learning

achievement. Leadership skills motivate and provide direction to the entire school community to improve learning achievement(Jayanti Tanama et al., 2020).

Apart from teachers, school principals also have a big role in developing students' leadership skills. As a central figure in the implementation of education in schools, the principal is responsible for the smooth running of the educational process. The quality of a school principal's leadership greatly determines the success of an educational institution, because effective leadership is able to manage change, overcome shortcomings, and bring the institution towards its stated goals.(Zulkhaidir et al., 2024).

The principal's leadership also requires a situational approach, where the leader uses an approach that suits the school's needs. Principals must be able to empower staff members in their organizations(Asnawati et al., 2024). The principal's leadership style, including participative, can provide motivation for teachers to improve their performance. When school principals are able to accommodate teacher aspirations, teacher performance can improve significantly(Juliana et al., 2024).

Honing Leadership Skills Through an Experience-Based Approach

An experience-based approach is an approach that places direct experience at the heart of the learning process, allowing individuals to acquire and develop leadership skills through direct experience and reflection on those experiences. Experience itself can be interpreted in various forms according to the views of experts. In all activities, experience has an important role because "experience is the best teacher", which means that a person learns from the experiences they have had(Ilim et al., 2024).

Experience-based education means that learning achieves its goals through real experience and comprehensive involvement according to the student's individual context. Initiatives that arise from within students are considered the most effective way to ensure their success in achieving maturity by exploring their potential, affective expression, psychomotor skills, and other aspects, so as to form positive attitudes and behavior. Because learning involves thinking, doing, moving and enriching experiences, learning design must be able to combine them and be built by the students themselves(Rosyadi, 2017).

Experience-based learning, or experiential learning, was developed based on Kolb's theory which emphasizes the central role of experience in the learning process. This approach also emphasizes student-centered learning. Teachers act as facilitators, supporting collaborative systems, facilitating the process of knowledge construction by students, and developing their

actual productive competencies. The hope is that this will strengthen the required competencies(Amir et al., 2015).

Research results byPuspitowati (2019)shows that the application of an experience-based learning model can create a conducive learning environment. This is because this learning model is rarely used by teachers. When teachers apply this learning model, students feel the difference in the learning atmosphere. A conducive learning environment has a positive impact on students' enthusiasm for learning. They become more motivated to seek new learning experiences without sacrificing understanding of the material. Increasing students' motivation and enthusiasm for learning greatly influences the development of creative thinking. This creative thinking process is important in learning so that students are more active and understand the material well

Here are some key principles of this approach:

- **Assignment of Responsibilities:**Assigning responsibilities to individuals in contexts relevant to leadership, such as leading a project, organizing an event, or being a leader in a team or group.

- **Collaborative Experience:**Encourage individuals to work in teams and lead collaborative projects. This helps them learn about group dynamics, teamwork, and situational leadership.

- **Reflection and Active Learning:**Provides opportunities for individuals to reflect on their experiences as leaders, identify lessons learned, and plan next actions. This can be done through reflection, journaling, group discussions, or guided learning sessions.

Implementing an experience-based approach to leadership development has a number of significant benefits, including: Deep hands-on experience in real leadership contexts, Development of practical skills and a better understanding of leadership, Increased individual self-confidence and motivation in leadership roles.

However, there are also several challenges associated with this approach, including: Requires time and resources to support adequate hands-on experiences. Requires appropriate support and guidance to ensure effective learning from the experience. Not all individuals may feel comfortable or ready to take on leadership responsibilities.

Implementation Strategy Sharpens Leadership Skills Experience-Based Approach

To implement an experience-based approach in leadership development, the following are several strategies that can be used: Building an experience-based leadership development program in the formal education curriculum. Integrate leadership experience in extracurricular activities or collaborative projects in schools or organizations. Supports effective coaching and

mentoring for individuals taking on leadership responsibilities. Encourage regular reflection and evaluation to ensure ongoing learning from leadership experiences.

Experiential learning as a systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended and structured process of inquiry among complex, authentic questions and carefully designed projects and assignments(Arvianto et al., 2023).

The following describes the school's implementation of an experience-based approach to hone leadership skills in students. One of the activities carried out is the formation of a student council which is tasked with organizing school events, managing social projects, and conveying student aspirations to the school. Through this experience, students have the opportunity to take an active role in leading and managing school activities, as well as learning about teamwork, decision making, and effective communication.

Apart from that, schools also integrate extracurricular activities that emphasize leadership development, such as debate clubs, choirs, or volunteer organizations. In this activity, students are given the responsibility to lead discussions, plan performances, or organize social activities. Through this experience, students can hone their leadership skills in interesting and different contexts, as well as learn about situational leadership and adaptation to various challenges.

Then schools can also implement a mentoring program between senior students and junior students, where senior students act as mentors. Through this program, senior students provide guidance, support, and inspiration to junior students in developing their leadership skills. Through direct interaction between fellow students, both mentors and mentees have the opportunity to learn and grow together, as well as hone their leadership skills through deep and meaningful experiences.

Through an experience-based approach at this school, students have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills holistically. They not only learn about leadership theory in the classroom, but are also given the opportunity to apply these concepts in real situations. This hands-on experience gives them the space to experiment, make mistakes, and learn from the experience, which is an important process in the formation of effective leadership.

In addition, an experience-based approach also allows students to discover their interests and talents in leadership. By participating in a variety of activities and projects that allow them to lead, students have the opportunity to explore various leadership styles and discover what best suits their personality and interests. This can help them build confidence and motivation in their leadership role.

Thus, an experience-based approach in honing leadership skills in schools not only provides students with the practical knowledge and skills necessary to become effective leaders, but also helps them grow as resilient, adaptive, and empathetic individuals. Through these experiences, students are not only prepared to become leaders in the future, but also to become citizens who contribute positively to society.Top of Form

Relevance to the Independent Learning Curriculum

One of the program initiatives from the Minister of Education and Culture, Mr Nadiem Makarim, is Merdeka Belajar which aims to create a happy learning atmosphere. The aim of Merdeka Belajar is so that teachers, students and parents can experience a pleasant learning atmosphere. The implementation of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum is based on the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 56/M/2022 concerning guidelines for implementing the curriculum in the context of learning recovery. This curriculum is a continuation of the emergency curriculum used during the Covid-19 pandemic. Previously, the curriculum used in Indonesia was the 2013 Curriculum or Integrative Thematic Curriculum(Alimuddin, 2023).

The Independent Learning Curriculum as an alternative curriculum aims to overcome learning setbacks during the pandemic by providing the freedom of "free learning" to learning implementers, namely teachers and school principals, to organize, implement the learning process, and develop the curriculum in schools by paying attention to students' needs and potential.(Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo, 2022).

In the coming years, the teaching system will also experience changes from initially focusing on inside the classroom to outside the classroom. The atmosphere of learning will become more comfortable because students can discuss more with the teacher, learn through activities outside the classroom, and not only listen to the teacher's explanations, but also form the character of students who are brave, independent, intelligent in socializing, civilized, polite, competent, and not just rely on a ranking system that, according to some surveys, only makes children and parents feel anxious(Nasution, 2022).

The Merdeka Belajar curriculum emphasizes student-centered learning and real experiences. This approach is in line with the principle of Freedom of Learning because it provides students with the opportunity to learn through direct experience and reflect on that experience. In the context of the Independent Learning Curriculum, students have the freedom to determine the course of their own learning, including developing leadership skills(Hanipah et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

An experience-based approach is an effective way to hone leadership skills through experience. By giving individuals the opportunity to be actively involved in real situations that require leadership, this approach allows them to learn through direct experience, experience challenges and successes, and reflect on the lessons learned. In this way, individuals can develop the skills, attitudes, and knowledge necessary to become effective and influential leaders.

With proper implementation and adequate support, an experience-based approach has the potential to produce future leaders who have a deep understanding of leadership roles and responsibilities, as well as the skills needed to face complex challenges in various life contexts. Therefore, it is important to continue to develop and expand this approach in an effort to create quality and ethical leaders for a better future.

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