PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AND CREATIVITY: A STUDY OF ISLAMIC SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN JORDAN

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This thesis is dedicated to:

The memory of my ever-loving father,
Mohammad Jubran Saleh;
Who remained a source of inspiration for my success,

My ever-loving mother, Badi'a Ata Jabr;
Who has remained a source of motivation and caring throughout my life,

And my dear wife, Nisreen Al-Natour;
Who kept encouraging me towards excellence

ABSTRACT

This study intended to explore the leadership practices and creativity traits of Islamic school principals in Jordan. Specifically, the study examined whether Islamic school principals in Jordan display (i) leadership behavior as categorized by Kouzes and Posner (1987), that is Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, Modeling the Way, and Encouraging the Heart, as well as Observing Islamic Value System, Building a Positive Culture, Managing and Leading, Relating with Students, Relating with Community, as identified by the researcher, and (ii) Creativity traits of Passion for Work, Independence, Goal Setting, Originality, Flexibility, Wide Range of Interests, Intelligence, and Motivation, by Goertz (1993).

In addition, the study attempted to identify the main features of educational leadership and creativity from an Islamic perspective. An in-depth analytical examination of original Islamic texts, traditions and practices was done for the purpose. It was found that Islamic educational leadership is more comprehensive in nature, incorporating both moral and spiritual dimensions. The Islamic tradition is rich in ideas that are important in developing an Islamic understanding of educational leadership and creativity. The concepts of *shura* (mutual consultation), sincerity, loyalty, Islamic brotherhood, morality, comprehensiveness, justice and equality, spiritual supervision, self-accountability, a high level of responsibility, commanding what is good and forbidding what is evil, and the methodology of *ijtihad* are discussed in detail.

Data was collected using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Leadership practices were measured using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI-Self and LPI-Observer), developed by Kouzes and Posner, (1987) with self-developed items on the Islamic component by the researcher, and creativity traits were measured using the Creativity Self-Perception Questionnaire and the Creativity Teacher Observation Questionnaire developed by Goertz (1993). Qualitative data was obtained through interviews with the principals, to gain in-depth information on their practices, and creativity traits.

Findings of the study revealed that the principals demonstrated positive leadership behavior in all the dimensions studied. They were also found to be creative, as they were perceived to possess all the creativity traits, both by the principals themselves as well as by the teachers.

The study also showed that there was a significant correlation between the leadership dimensions and the creativity traits of principals. Specifically, the study showed that the more they demonstrated positive leadership behavior, the more creative principals were.

Analysis of data pertaining to demographic variables revealed that (i) gender influenced principals' perception of leadership practices significantly only for the dimension of 'Modeling the Way', whilst for teachers, gender was found to significantly affect their perceptions in eight of the ten leadership dimensions. (ii) age had no effect on perceptions of both principals and teachers as did type of school.

The results of the research on the creativity traits showed that (i) gender did not influence the principals' perceptions, but it did affect the perception of the teachers in

six of the eight categories, (ii) age was found to affect the principals' perception in only one, that is 'Wide Range of Interests', whilst influencing the teachers' perceptions in 'Independence' and 'Originality', (iii) and type of school did not affect both principals' and teachers' perceptions.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki amalan-amalan kepimpinan dan ciri-ciri kreatif pengetua-pengetua Sekolah Agama di Jordan.

Secara khusus ini bertujuan untuk menyelidik sama ada pengetua-pengetua tersebut menunjukkan (i) sepuluh dimensi tingkahlaku kepimpinan, iaitu lima kategori yang dikenalapasti oleh Kouzes dan Posner (1987) - Mencabar Kelaziman, Membina Visi Sepunya, Mengupayakan Orang Lain Bertindak, Bertindak Memberi Teladan, dan Memberansangkan Perasaan; dan lima dimensi yang dikenalpasti oleh pengkaji – Berinterak Secara Positif, Mengurus dan Memimpin, Berhubung Dengan Pelajar, dan Berhubung dengan Masyarakat. (ii) Ciri-ciri kreatif "Kesungguhan Bekerja", "Berdikari", Menentukan Matlamat, Keaslian, Fleksibiliti, Minat yang pelbagai, Kecerdasan, dan Motivasi, oleh Goertz (1993).

Di samping itu, kajian ini juga berusaha untuk mengenalpasti sifat-sifat utama kepimpinan dan kreativiti dalam pendidikan daripada perspektif Islam. Untuk tujuan itu, analisis yang mendalam telah dibuat terhadap teks Islam asli amalan dalam Islam. Didapati bahawa, kepimpinan pendidikan dalam Islam lebih menyeluruh, yang menggabungkan kedua-dua dimensi moral dan spiritual. Tradisi dan amalan dalam Islam mencakupi idea yang bermakna, dan penting untuk memahami kepimpinan dan kreativiti dalam pendidikan.

Justeru kajian ini membincangkan dengan terperinci konsep syura (mesyuwarah), keikhlasan, ketaatan, persaudaraan Islam, akhlak dan kesusilaan, kesempurnaan kepimpinan yang menyeluruh dalam Islam, keadilan dan kesaksamaan, disiplin diri bersifat spiritual,, akauntabiliti diri, kebertanggungjawaban yang tinggi, menyeru kebaikan dan melarang kebatilan serta kaedah ijtihad.

Pengumpulan data dibuat menggunakan kedua-dua kaedah kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Amalan-amalan kepimpinan diukur dengan menggunakan Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), Untuk Diri (LPI- Self) dan Untuk Pemerhati (LPI – Observe) yang direkabentuk oleh Kauzes dan Posner (1987).

Ciri-ciri kreativi pula diukur dengan menggunakan (Creativity Self Perception Questionnaire) dan (Creativity Teacher Observation Questionnaire), yang direkabentuk oleh Goertz (1993). Data kualitatif diperoleh melalui temuramah insentif dengan beberapa orang pengetua. Untuk mendapatkan maklumat yang lebih bermakna tentang amalan-amalan kepimpinan dan sifat kreativiti mereka.

Hasil kajian mendapati pengetua menunjukkan tingkahalaku kepimpinan yang positif dalam semua dimensi yang dikaji. Mereka juga didapati memiliki sifat dan tingkahlaku yang kreatif, baik dari perspektif mereka sendiri, mahupun dari perspektif guru.

Kajian ini juga mendapati terdapat wujud pertalian yang signifikan antara sifat-sifat kepimpinan dan ciri-ciri kreativiti para pengetua. Khususnya, lebih banyak tingkahlaku kepimpinan yang banyak lebih menonjol sifat kreativiti mereka.

Analisis data berkaitan dengan variabel demografi menunjukkan (i) tanggapan pengetua dipengaruhi oleh gender hanya bagi aspek Tindakan yang memberi teladan; bagi guru-

guru pula lapan daripada sepuluh senarai dimensi kepimpinan yang dikaji, dipengaruhi oleh gender, (ii) fakta umur memberi kesan, bagi kedua-dua pengetua dan guru, dan begitu juga jenis sekolah.

Dari segi ciri kreativiti pula, kajian ini menunjukkan (i) gender tidak mempengaruhi tanggapan pengetua tetapi mempengaruhi tanggapan guru bagi enam daripada lapan ciri yang dikaji; (ii) faktor umur didapati mempengaruhi satu siri, iaitu kepelbagaian minat bagi pengetua; dan bagi guru, mempengaruhi persepsi terhadap dua, iaitu kebudikarian, dan keaslian (iii) faktor jenis sekolah tidak mempengaruhi persepsi kedua-dua pengetua dan guru.

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