

# **The Effect of Emotional Honesty, Interpersonal Skills, Task Structure and Directive Behaviour on Leadership Effectiveness**

**The Development of contingent leadership model on vocational school in Medan**

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**Abstract:** The objectives of the research were to investigate the effect of emotional honesty, interpersonal skills, task structure and directive behaviour on leadership effectiveness. This research was conducted at Vocational Schools (*Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan: SMK*) in Medan by using survey with 132 principals as population and the sample of 60 principals as respondents who were selected by applying proportional random sampling technique. The hypotheses were tested by using path analysis.

This research findings were as follows: (1) There was a direct significant positive effect of emotional honesty on interpersonal skills; (2) There was a direct significant positive effect of emotional honesty on task structure; (3) There was a direct significant positive effect of emotional honesty on directive behaviour; (4) There was a direct significant positive effect of interpersonal skills on directive behaviour; (5) There was a direct significant positive effect of task structure on directive behaviour; (6) There was a direct significant positive effect of interpersonal skills leadership effectiveness; (7) There was a direct significant positive effect of directive behaviour on leadership effectiveness.

**Key words:** Leadership Effectiveness, Emotional Honesty, Interpersonal Skills, Task Structure and Directive Behaviour

## **Introduction**

Nowadays, vocational school (*Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan: SMK*) has expansion opportunities and equal access, with the commencement of the policy of the central government in 2008. Bambang Indriyanto (2008, p. 10) describes the government's policy on the higher's educators are: (1) Expanding access vocational education in accordance with the needs and benefits of local, through the addition of vocational education programs more flexible according to the demands of the labor market; (2) Changing the ratio of high school to vocational students; (3) Efficacy of vocational school which can improve the competence of graduates so that it can reduce unemployment and supply the intermediate labour with the competitive advantage.

Vocational education institutions are no longer acting as middle-level manpower only to prepare skilled-labour but also simultaneously vocational institution which is able to reduce unemployment. The role of SMK in terms of reducing unemployment is not only to prepare graduates in entering the job market, but also to able to provide jobs. Jobs in this case means that it can be done through the management of School Unit Production (SUP) in each department professionally which implements the management functions as well.

This significant shift roles impacted vocational fundamental to the SMK's principals. Principals should be able to apply the management functions in leading their schools. The main challenge faced by them in changing is the need for effective leadership, so that the goal of vocational as a school organization can be achieved well. However, in reality, the general leadership of the principal is still problematized. Wahjosumidjo (2008, p. 460) explains that the principal leadership is still problematized in a sense, the achievements, contributions may be given by the principal in order to achieve the objectives of the school, sometimes don't always flow as expectedly. Furthermore, Wahjosumidjo explained that the main cause of a problem of the principals are organization, the personality of the principals and the subordinate of teachers' maturity level, laboratory assistants, librarians, administrative staffs and students.

The leadership effectiveness can be defined as the success of a leader to influence others, in order to reach the goal well. Leadership effectiveness can be influenced by several factors, namely emotional honesty, interpersonal skills, task structure and directive behavior.

### **Leadership Effectiveness**

Based on contingency theory of leadership, Hoy and Miskel (2008, p. 432) developed a contingency model of leadership in schools. According to this model, the behavior of leaders influenced the effectiveness of leadership, character and leadership skills, and characteristics of the situation. The natural factor of a leader is: self-confidence, stress tolerance, emotional maturity, integrity, and extraversion. The factor of leader's skills: technical skills, interpersonal skills, and conceptual skills. Characteristics factor of the situation are: subordinate, organization, the internal environment. and the external environment. The leader's behavior Factors are:

directive leader, supportive leader, participative leader, and achievement-oriented leader. While the factors of leadership effectiveness in the school are: personal, organizational and individual.

Based on the characteristics shown in advance, it can be seen that at a personal level, the effectiveness of educational leaders is by feeling that there is a perceived reputation and self-assessment; while the indicator of the effectiveness of educational leaders at the organizational level is organizational outcomes (goal attainment); and at the individual level, an indicator of the effectiveness of educational leaders is satisfaction and performance.

### **Emotional Honesty**

Cooper and Sawaf (1998, pp. 1-28) explains that emotions are a source of energy, influence and information that is inward. Emotion, whether good or bad, is present at birth. What distinguishes the result is what has been done with the usage of information and energy from it. Further, Cooper and Sawaf explain, in fact, the feeling to give an important and potential information benefits at any time. This feedback (from the heart, not from the head) ignites creativity, makes a man to be honest to himself, walks in a relationship of mutual trust, provides a guidance for life and career, leads human to the unintentional possibility, and could even save themselves or organizations from destruction. According to Goleman (2003, pp. 56-76) emotion can be an intelligent, if the "emotion" is inserted into the "intelligence" to make personal intelligence. Personal intelligence is the foundation of emotional intelligence, among others: recognizing emotions and managing emotions. Recognizing emotions means to recognize the feeling as the feeling that happens, it is called self-awareness emotional. Managing emotions deals with feelings that can be expressed with a feeling of fitting, and it depends on the skill of self-awareness emotional. Because of humans having the emotional self-awareness skills are capable of listening to your heart and understand the subconscious. Listening to the inner voice is the important role of feeling as a guide in taking the current private decisions which are constantly being made in life. Martin (2008, pp. 149-160) explains that an authentic self is an individual who understands the structure of the existence itself. Human life is basically made up of three layers, namely: 1) The first layer is a self-image, which is what is shown by someone socially and concerning judgment of others; 2) The second layer is self-concept, the self-assessment of self; and 3) The

third layer is the deeper layer is true self which is meant as the real man. An authentic personal is a truly personal based on the deepest layer that identity (true self). The identity of the individual is true.

### **Interpersonal skills**

An important but often missed in the field leadership in education is a skill of leader to set in a position. According to Hoy and Miskel Mumford (2008, p. 425), the latest model that positions the skills to solve problems, the skills to decide a case in social life, and knowledge making effective leadership in a reality. In line with Mumford, Yukl and Northouse in Hoy and Miskel explained that there are three important categories of skills associated with leadership effectiveness, namely: 1) Technical skills, 2) Interpersonal skills, and 3) Conceptual Skills (conceptual or cognitive skills). From the three levels of managers (top managers, middle managers, first-line managers), interpersonal skills (social) is very important shared by all levels of managers, namely 50%. Therefore, it can be concluded that interpersonal skills (interpersonal skills) got a very large portion of every leader at every level of leadership.

### **Task Structure**

According to Fiedler in Robbins and Coulter (2007, p. 524) that a pleasant situation for a leader is when the relationship among leaders and members is in the good rank, task structure is at the high rank, of both ranks, the structure of the task is at a high rank, and position power at the powerful rank.

In line with Fiedler, Wexley and Yukl (2005, p. 207) explains that the support of the leadership situation is determined by: 1) The structure of leadership working area, 2) The power of leadership positions, and 3) relationship with subordinate leaders. When the leader of a high structured work, it is possible to itemize precisely the behavior of subordinates and what it takes to carry out the job effectively, as well as easy to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the work of subordinates. If a leader has a strong position, then the leader can control the rewards and punishments that can be used to ensure adherence to the subordinate commands. And if the relationship among leader to his subordinates is good, the leader will have the power to supplement the power of the reference position. According to Wexley and Yukl, a situation supports leaders very much when the job is structured, the power of a strong

position, and a good relationship with a subordinate leader. Meanwhile, if the job situation does not support while they have unstructured work, weak leadership positions, and relationships among leaders and subordinates is not good.

### **Directive behavior**

Directive behavior is one of the leader's behavior based on contingency theory. According to the path-goal theory of House in Robbins and Coulter (2007, p. 529), there are four leader behaviors, namely: 1) Directive that allows subordinates know what is expected of them, schedule the work to be done and provide specific guidance on how to complete the task; 2) The behavior support (supportive) that is to be friendly and care about the needs of subordinates; 3) Conduct a participatory (participative) which consults with subordinates and uses their suggestions before making a decision; and 4) achievement-oriented behavior (achievement oriented) which determines the challenging goals and expects subordinates to work at the highest level. According to the path-goal theory, directive behavior will be more effective for employees who have an ambiguous task compared to employees who have a high structured task, as it results in higher job satisfaction. Directive behavior will give result in higher employee's satisfaction, if there is a conflict when in the working group.

Yukl (2007, p. 259) explains that there are three ways to do so that leaders can enhance efforts to direct the behavior of subordinates, namely: reducing role ambiguity, increase the amount of incentives, rewards and reinforces dependency.

### **Conceptual Framework**

#### **The Effect of Emotional Honesty on Interpersonal Skills**

Interpersonal skills are the skills of a leader in order to work with the individual and make a cooperative working relationship. If it is associated with emotional honesty, the principals are always liked by the teachers and staff because the principal cares of teachers and staff, and empathy, then the principal's relationships with teachers and staff will be maintained. This opinion is based on the premise that emotional honesty of a school principal would allow principals to establish effective interpersonal relationships with teachers and staff, but if the emotional dishonesty that often arises from a principal, it is often a latent problem in the organization of the school that results in principals' interpersonal relationships

with teachers and staff will be tenuous. Based on this argument, it can be presumed that emotional honesty directly effect on interpersonal skills.

### **The Effect of Emotional Honesty on Task Structure**

The structure of the task is the high- low level of formalization of work tasks of a leader in performing their duties. The formalization of the principal tasks is how to regulate the behavior of teachers and staff. In organizations with high formalization, there are explicit job descriptions, lots of organizational rules, and clearly defined procedures that include a variety of work processes. Whereas, if the formalization is low, the working behaviour tends to be unstructured and the employees have a lot of freedom in terms of how they perform a task. The structure of the task consists of dimensions: clarity of purpose, diversity of the destination path, being able to justify a decision-making and specificity. The higher the rank structure of the principal tasks to be performed would be more enjoyable in his leadership situation. Conversely, the lower the rank structure of the principal duties will make unenjoyable leadership. If it is associated with emotional honesty, the honesty of the principal which has high emotion will be able to orient themselves to face the structured task, because the principal has been able to be more realistic and authentic in performing their duties. In the high task structure, then the situation of school leadership will be more enjoyable. Otherwise, if the principal's task structure is low then the leadership situation would not be fun. Thus, the principal's emotional honesty regarded as high and the task structure is high, then the principal's leadership will be more effective.

### **The Effect of Emotional Honesty on Directive Behaviour**

If the school principals are honest to themselves, care for others, empathy, act based on conscience, and have the emotional energy, then the principal will be more acceptable to teachers and staff, so that teachers and staff will follow the principal sincerely and directions received by the teachers and staff can be executed properly. On the other hand, if a principal does not thank the teachers and staff, the teachers and staff will not follow the principal sincerely, but follow only by a force. These conditions make the principal would be difficult to regulate and direct the teachers and staff, which will produce ineffective leadership. Principals who are able to empathize with other people will feel what he was experiencing. With the ability to empathize with others, then the principal will be able to direct the teachers and staff

as what he wants. This condition indicates that the strong emotional honesty influences on directive behaviour.

### **The Effect of Interpersonal Skills on Directive Behavior**

Directive behavior is a way of a leaders behaves to influence subordinates, by giving guidance and direction to subordinates. If it is associated with interpersonal skills, the interpersonal skills will enable principals to establish good relationship with teachers and staffs. If the relationship among principal, teachers and staffs has already been well-established, the communication line among teachers and staffs will be smooth, so it will be more successful in influencing them. The importance of maintaining interpersonal relationships by the principal is an appropriate strategy to be able to influence the teachers and staff in doing a briefing.

### **The Effects of Task Structure on Directive Behaviour**

The structure of the task is the high- low level of formalization of work tasks of a leader in performing their duties. The formalization of the principal tasks is how to regulate the behavior of teachers and staff. In organizations with high formalization, there are explicit job descriptions, lots of organizational rules, and clearly defined procedures that include a variety of work processes. Whereas, if the formalization is low, the working behaviour tends to be unstructured and the employees have a lot of freedom in terms of how they perform a task. If it is associated with directive behavior, then the principal's successfulness in directing the implementation of high or low subordinates' task depends on the rank structure of the task to be performed. The higher the rank structure of the principal tasks to be performed would be more enjoyable leadership situation crated. Otherwise, the lower the rank structure of the principal task, the leadership situation is getting to be unpleasant situation. Therefore, the high and low rank structure of the principal tasks will be able to influence the redirect behavior, because the directive given by principals will be effective if it is supported by fun leadership situation.

### **The Effect of Interpersonal Skills on Leadership Effectiveness**

Leadership effectiveness is the successfulness of a leader to influence others, so that organizational goals can be achieved well. Interpersonal skills are the skills of a leader in order to work with the individual and make a cooperative working relationship. The skilled- principals who establish relationships with teachers and

staff tends to be more successful in influencing teachers and staff than the principals who are less-skilled in constructing relationship. If a school principal has been successful in influencing teachers and staff to achieve the goals of the organization of the school, the leadership is stated as effective leadership.

### **The Effects of Task Structure on Leadership Effectiveness**

The structure of the task is the high-low level of formalization of work tasks of a leader in performing their duties. The formalization of the principal tasks is how to regulate the behavior of teachers and staff. In organizations with high formalization, there are explicit job descriptions, lots of organizational rules, and clearly defined procedures that include a variety of work processes. Whereas, if the formalization is low, the working behaviour tends to be unstructured and the employees have a lot of freedom in terms of how they perform a task. Then the focus of the leadership effectiveness is the successfulness of a leader in influencing others in order to achieve the organizational purpose well. Then the principal's successfulness in leading depends on the high-low rank structure of the task to be performed. The higher the rank structure of the principal tasks, the more enjoyable leadership situation will be created. On the other hand, the lower the rank structure of the principal task, the unenjoyable leadership situation will appear. Therefore, the high and low rank structure of the principal tasks will be able to influence the leadership effectiveness.

### **The Effect of Directive Behaviour on the Leadership Effectiveness**

The leadership effectiveness can be defined as the successfulness of a leader to influence others, so that organizational goals can be achieved well. If it is associated with directive behavior, the clarity of the direction of the principal will be able to enlighten the understanding of teachers and staffs about the tasks to be done. Thus, teachers and staff will be able to assess themselves whether they are able to perform the task or not, or should require more specific guidance from the principal. If the teachers and staff have felt being able to do a good job, of his work would be good. Their successfulness in performing their duties will achieve school organizational goals well while teachers and staff themselves will have job satisfaction.



## **Hypotheses**

Based on the conceptual framework that has been described in advance, it can be drawn several hypotheses as follows: First, emotional honesty has direct positive effect on interpersonal skills. Second, emotional honesty has direct positive effect on the structure of the task. Third, emotional honesty has direct positive effect on directive behaviour. Fourth, interpersonal skills have direct positive effect on directive behaviour. Fifth, the task structure has direct positive effect on directive behaviour. Sixth, interpersonal skills have direct positive effect on leadership effectiveness. Seventh, the task structure has direct positive effect on leadership effectiveness. Eighth, directive behaviour has direct positive effect on leadership effectiveness.

## **Method**

The study was conducted at sixty vocational schools (SMK) in the Medan. The research was conducted by applying survey. The instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire. The number of respondents in this study was 60 principals and 180 teachers randomly drawn proportionately from the sampling frame for 132 SMK. The requirements of analysis include: (1) normality test error estimation, (2) testing the linearity of regression, (3) the terms of the residual assumptions, causal flow, and the scale interval. Normality test is done with the Lilliefors test and linearity test used regression models. To test the model developed in this study used path analysis with the help of a computer program namely AMOS.

## **Results**

### **Emotional Honesty (X1) has direct positive effect on Interpersonal Skills (X2)**

The first hypothesis stated emotional honesty (X1) has a direct positive effect on interpersonal skills (X2). Based on the calculation,  $t = 3.794 > t_{table} = 2.002$  so that H1 is accepted. The test results showed that the research hypothesis  $\rho_{21} > 0$  and path coefficient from X1 to X2 of 0.446 is significant with a value of ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ). It was concluded that emotional honesty has direct positive effect on interpersonal skills in the vocational schools in Medan.

**Emotional Honesty (X1) has direct positive effect on the structure of the task (X3)**

The second hypothesis stated emotional honesty (X1) has a direct positive effect on the structure of the task (X3). Based on the calculation,  $t = 4.005 > t_{table} = 2.002$  so that H1 is accepted. The test results showed that the research hypothesis  $\rho_{31} > 0$  and path coefficient from X1 to X3 for 0.465 is significant with a value of ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ). It was concluded that emotional honesty has direct positive effect on the structure of the task at vocational schools in Medan.

**Emotional Honesty (X1) has direct positive effect on Directive Behaviour (X4)**

The third hypothesis stated emotional honesty (X1) has a direct positive effect on the directive behaviour (X4). Based on the calculation,  $t = 2.174 > t_{table} = 2.003$  so that H1 is accepted. The test results showed that the research hypothesis  $\rho_{41} > 0$  and path coefficient from X1 to X4 of 0.206 is significant with a value of ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ). It was concluded that emotional honesty has direct positive effect on the directive behaviour at vocational schools in Medan.

**Interpersonal Skills (X2) has direct positive effect on Directing Behavior (X4)**

The fourth hypothesis interpersonal skills (X2) has a direct positive effect on the directive behaviour (X4). Based on the calculation,  $t = 5.010 > t_{table} = 2.003$  so that H1 is accepted. The test results showed that the research hypothesis  $\rho_{42} > 0$  and a path coefficient of .477 X2 to X4 is significant for the value ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ). It was concluded that the positive effect of interpersonal skills has direct positive effect on directive behaviour at vocational schools in Medan.

**Task Structure (X3) has direct positive effect on Directing Behavior (X4)**

The fifth hypothesis stated task structure (X3) has a direct positive effect on the directive behaviour (X4). Based on the calculation,  $t = 2.350 > t_{table} = 2.003$  so that H1 is accepted. The test results showed that the research hypothesis  $\rho_{43} > 0$  and path coefficient from X3 to X4 of 0.223 is significant with a value of ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ). It was concluded that the structure of the task has direct positive effect on directive behaviour at vocational schools in Medan.

**Interpersonal Skills (X2) direct positive effect on Leadership Effectiveness (X5)**

The sixth hypothesis stated interpersonal skills (X2) has a direct positive effect on leadership effectiveness (X5). Based on the calculation,  $t = 3.258 > t_{table} =$

2.003 so that H1 is accepted. The test results showed that the research hypothesis  $\rho_{52} > 0$  and a path coefficient of 0.334 for X2 to X5 are significant with a value of ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ). It was concluded that the interpersonal skills has direct positive effect on leadership effectiveness in vocational schools in the city of Medan.

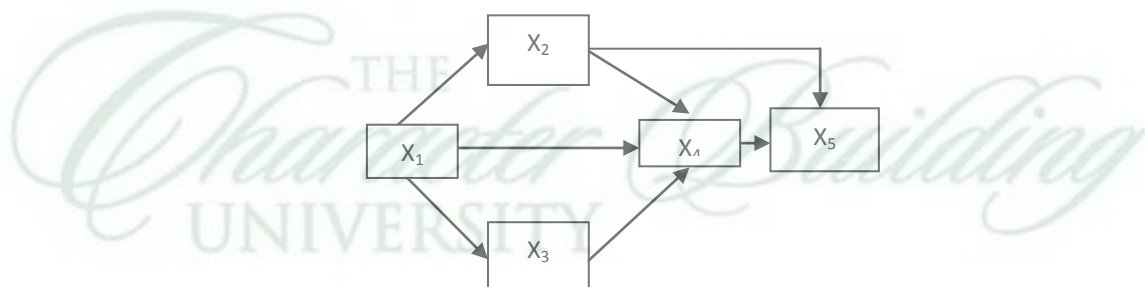
**Task Structure (X3) has direct positive effect on Leadership Effectiveness (X5)**

The seventh hypothesis stated task structure (X3) has a direct positive effect on leadership effectiveness (X5). The value of the t table for  $\alpha = 0.05$  and  $df = 58$  is 2.003. Based on the calculation,  $t = -0.542 < t \text{ table} = 2.003$  thus  $H_0$  is accepted. The test results showed that the research hypothesis  $\rho_{53} < 0$  and path coefficient of -0.056 for the X3 to the X5 with a value is not significant ( $\alpha > 0.05$ ). It was concluded that the structure of the task doesn't have direct positive effect on the leadership effectiveness in vocational schools in Medan.

**Directive Behavior (X4) has direct positive effect on Leadership Effectiveness (X5)**

The eighth hypothesis stated directive behaviour (X4) has a direct positive effect on leadership effectiveness (X5). The value of the t table for  $\alpha = 0.05$  and  $df = 58$  is 2.003. Based on the calculation,  $t = 3.930 > t \text{ table} = 2.003$  so that H1 is accepted. The test results showed that the research hypothesis  $\rho_{54} > 0$  and a path coefficient of 0.395 for X4 to X5 are significant with a value of ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ). It was concluded that directive behaviour has direct positive effect on the leadership effectiveness in vocational schools in Medan.

Vocational Education Leadership Model can be found in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Vocational Education Leadership Model

## **Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations**

The leadership effectiveness has been affected by interpersonal skills and directive behaviour. Meanwhile, directive behaviour has been directly influenced by emotional honesty, interpersonal skills, and task structure.

### **Efforts to Improve Emotional Honesty**

The Principal's emotional honesty of SMK in Medan is in the category of enough. Emotional honesty has direct positive effect on interpersonal skills, task structure, and directive behavior. Therefore, efforts need to be undertaken to improve the emotional honesty principals by conducting emotional honesty training.

### **Efforts to Enhance Leadership Effectiveness in SMK**

The Principal's task structure of SMK in Medan has reach high category, then this meant that the situation of leadership principal in Medan has been classified as fun or enjoyable. The structure of the task has direct positive effect on directive behaviour and indirect influence on leadership effectiveness through directive behavior. Therefore, to improve leadership effectiveness at SMK can be done by increasing the principal's interpersonal skills, better directive behavior, high emotional honesty and pleasant task structure.

### **Suggestion**

In order to improve the at SMK, then the principal must have good interpersonal skills. Things that should be considered include: use proper grammar and correct oral and written, able to cooperate with others, and social sensitivity towards others, and furthermore, the good implementation of principal's directive behavior to subordinates. Obvious direction will reduce the ambiguous notion of subordinates. Things that should be considered include: provide specific guidance on how to complete the task, making work schedules, directing subordinates in order to follow all the procedures, inform subordinates about what is expected of them and carry out strict supervision.

To the Ministry of Education and Culture, Regency / City, Government, it is advised to take into account the emotional honesty factor in the appointment of principals, among other things: entering emotional honesty in the training curriculum and training prospective principals. It is based on empirical evidence in this study

that emotional honesty influences leadership effectiveness through direct interpersonal skills and behavior.

Because of the limitations of this study focused on testing the effect of variable emotional honesty, interpersonal skills, task structure, directive behaviour toward leadership effectiveness further research is still needed, because based on the hypothesis testing conducted by researcher, there are still other variables (epsilon) that influence the leadership effectiveness.

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