

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter starts with a brief review about the focus of this study. It then discusses the research findings and their implications. Finally, the chapter highlights the limitations of the study, proposes recommendations for future research, and provides a summary of the thesis.

5.2 Focus of This Study

This study was conducted to address four issues. The first issue was to identify the leadership style of the Kiyai, who is regarded as the leader in a *pesantren* (Hasbullah, 1999). Research related to leadership style in *pesantren* is essential because current perception about the subject in the literature has been inconsistent. For example, Nugraha (2010) and Rachmawati (2009) argued that *pesantren* leader applies the charismatic dominant leadership. However, Prabowo (2016) found that the leadership at *pesantren* tends to be an individual, limiting the roles and initiatives of subordinates. Other researchers (e.g., Abdullah et al, 2008, Anchok & Suroso, 2005) indicated that the leadership style in *pesantren* is generally religious leadership. These inconsistent arguments necessitate further research on the leadership style of the Kiyai.

The second issue addressed by this study was related to the relationship between leadership style, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Although previous studies have found a link between leadership and job satisfaction and organizational commitment (e.g., Azim, 2019; Siddiq & Sudin, 2013; Wardianto & Hendrati, 2014),

they have not shown that leadership style is positively associated with both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This study extends the literature by empirically examining the effects of three leadership styles (charismatic, transformational, and autocratic) on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Examining the three styles simultaneously can generate significant knowledge about their effects in a particular context.

The third issue covered in this study was the role of job satisfaction as a mediator. This study argues that job satisfaction could mediate between charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles with organizational commitment. This argument was based on three reasons. First, leadership style is positively related to job satisfaction (Azim, 2019; Siddiq & Sudin, 2013). Second, job satisfaction has a positive impact on organizational commitment (Mwesigwa, Tusiime & Ssekiziyivu, 2020). Third, past studies have shown the mediating effect of job satisfaction (e.g., Chan & Ao, 2019; Riyadi & Soeling, 2019).

The fourth issue related to the leadership issue in *pesantren*. Previous studies in this context have only focused on the moderate leadership model of the Kiyai (Hernawati, 2015), leadership model of the Kiyai in the strategic development of participants (Sukowati, Zunaih, Jalmikowati & Nelwan, 2019), effectiveness of the Kiyai's leadership (Taman, 2015), behavioral approaches in the context of *pesantren* leadership (Atiqullah, 2007), and strengthening leadership culture (Alam, 2018). This study extends the literature in this context by examining the level of charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles among the Kiyai. This study also examined the effects of charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles on job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the *pesantren* context.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

5.3.1 Leadership Style of the Kiyai at Pesantren Darunnajah

The first issue was to identify the leadership style of the Kiyai as a leader in *pesantren* (Hasbullah, 1999). Adequate understanding of this issue is essential because there is inconsistent perception about this subject in the literature.

The results showed that the charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles of the Kiyai at Pesantren Darunnajah were at a high level. These findings support previous studies that indicate that *pesantren* leaders apply charismatic leadership (Nugraha; 2010; Rachmawati, 2009), transformational leadership (Suradi & Surahman, 2020; Suradi, 2017), and autocratic leadership styles (Rachman, 2021).

The findings suggest the importance of these three leadership styles in an educational organization such as *pesantren*. With charismatic leadership, the leader formulates a strategic vision that is constantly presented in an inspiring way. The leader also assesses the environment for growth opportunities for the organization and carefully evaluates his followers' needs. In addition, he provides a role model by demonstrating personal risk and unconventional behavior to his followers (Conger, Kanungo, Menon & Mathur, 1997). Transformational leaders model the achievement, values, and behavior that followers perceive as having the potential to advance their careers (Joo & Lim, 2013). The leaders also serve as a model for followers to achieve their goals, and they clearly and confidently communicate their vision optimistically and with enthusiasm (Jyoti & Dev, 2015). In addition, the leaders encourage followers to question the values, way of thinking, and beliefs of themselves and their leader (Jyoti & Dev, 2015). The leaders also recognize the differences among followers and provide individualized attention that motivates them to exercise authority in decision-making (Ghadi et al., 2013; Teymournejad & Elghaei, 2017). Finally, autocratic leaders assert

strong authority and control over subordinates and demand unquestioned obedience from them (Farh & Cheng, 2000).

5.3.2 Charismatic Leadership was Positively Related to Job Satisfaction

Charismatic leadership was posited to be positively related to job satisfaction. This study found that charismatic leadership contributed to higher job satisfaction. This result is in line with previous studies (e.g., Vlachos et al., 2013; Shah et al., 2021; Hiton et al., 2019; Bazawi, 2019) regarding the significant effect of charismatic leadership on employee job satisfaction. The result is also consistent with Lindblom et al. (2016), that charismatic leadership has a strong positive effect on job satisfaction. This finding supports Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), which argues that job satisfaction is determined by hygiene factors (factors relating to the context of the job), such as supervisor (Amah, 2009).

Employees feel satisfied with a charismatic leader because the leader is able to provide them with strategic goals and inspiring visions (Vlachos et al., 2013), which improve the trust, motivation (Jay & Conger, 2000), and performance of employees (Javidan & Waldman, 2003). According to Latif (2011), charismatic leaders may improve the satisfaction of their followers because they feel valued and their needs are fulfilled. The characteristics of a charismatic leader, including educational background, length of tenure, gender, and culture could influence an employee's perception of job satisfaction (Amburgey, 2005). The quality of charismatic leadership to inspire and motivate employees to perform at a great level and remain committed could also enhance their job satisfaction (Taghipour & Dejban, 2013). Uplifting inspiration is among the most important quality of charismatic leadership that boosts employee work fulfillment in private and open organizations (Omar & Hussin, 2013). Charismatic

leaders can urge employees to prioritize their enthusiasm for the group or organization's interests, offering them a moving mission and vision and giving them personality (Metwally et al., 2014). The charismatic leader pays more thought to supporters, transmits venture work to them, and feels that they can get more involvement by doing this activity (Ahmad et al., 2014).

5.3.3 Transformational Leadership was Positively Related to Job Satisfaction

Transformational leadership was expected to be positively related to job satisfaction. This study found that there was a positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. In other words, those leaders who demonstrate four characteristics (i.e., individual influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) are able to improve the job satisfaction of their subordinates.

This result is consistent with previous studies (e.g., Sarwar et al., 2015; Eliyana, Maarif & Muzakki, 2019; Dung et. Al., 2021). This finding verifies the link between transformational leadership and job satisfaction in a new context, which is the *pesantren* in Indonesia. Previously, the relationship has been determined in non-Indonesian contexts, such as Norway (Hetland & Sandal, 2003), Cyprus (Mine, 2008), Libya (Zahari, 2012), India (Gill et al., 2010), Pakistan (Bushra et al., 2011), and Taiwan (Chi et. al., 2009). The relationship has also been empirically found in various sectors, such as public (Parry & Proctor-Thompson, 2003), education (Mine, 2008), private (Hetland & Sandal, 2003), oil (Zahari, 2012), healthcare (Nielsen et al., 2009), banking (Bushra et al., 2011), non-profit organization (Chi et. al., 2009), and restaurant (Gill et al., 2010). The finding also supports the Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), which argues that job satisfaction is determined by hygiene factors (Amah, 2009).

This result may be because transformational leaders are best at inspiring and communicating organizational vision (Houghton & Yoho, 2005). Transformational leaders are also concerned with individual- and group-level development (Wang & Howell, 2010). Another reason is that the leader in this study, the Kiyai, has implemented transformational leadership. According to Bashori (2019), the Kiyai is a role model for all *pesantren* communities (idealized influence), inspires and motivates them (inspirational motivation), stimulates ideas and thoughts to the subordinates to develop the *pesantren* (intellectual motivation), and listens to their suggestions and aspirations (individualized consideration).

5.3.4 Autocratic Leadership was Positively Related to Job Satisfaction

Autocratic leadership was expected to be positively related with job satisfaction. The analysis revealed the positive and significant effect of autocratic leadership on job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with previous studies (e.g., Ardiansyah, 2012; Putra, Permana & Fadilah, 2020) that found the significant effect of the authoritarian leadership style on employee job satisfaction. This finding extends previous evidence because it was verified in the context of *pesantren* in Indonesia. Previously, this relationship has been verified in non-*pesantren* contexts, such as the public and private school (Bhatti et al., 2012) and retail project environment (Zhang, 2018). The finding also supports the Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), which argues that job satisfaction is determined by hygiene factors (Amah, 2009).

Under autocratic leadership, subordinates, employees and team members feel that they are not given trust by the leader because there is no room for opinions and opportunity for them to develop cooperation, innovation, and career (Pratama, 2012; Robbin & Judge, 2014). All policies, procedures, and activities are determined by the

leader, and the subordinates are obliged to follow these decisions (Tumbol, Tewal & Sepang, 2014). This style of leadership assumes all obligations in making decisions, carrying out actions, directing, motivating, and supervising subordinates (Winardi, 2000). This could be the quality accepted by subordinates, which ultimately improved their job satisfaction.

5.3.5 Charismatic Leadership was Positively Related to Organizational Commitment

Charismatic leadership was expected to be positively related to organizational commitment. The analysis shows that the charismatic leadership was positively and significantly related to organizational commitment. This finding is consistent with previous findings (e.g., Huang, Cheng & Chou, 2005; Shah, et. Al., 2021) regarding the positive relationship between charismatic leadership and organizational commitment.

There are numerous possible reasons to explain the link between charismatic leadership and organizational commitment. Charismatic leaders are able to induce organizational change by creating more committed workforce (Kahtani, 2013). Charismatic leaders are also capable of delivering remarkable changes in the organization's systems (Kakavogianni, 2009). A charismatic leader is able to make their followers trust them and want to be identified with the leader (Bass, 1991; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Charismatic leadership is also positively related to work organizational citizenship behavior and perception of job security (Wang, Zhou & Wen, 2014). More importantly, a charismatic leader is able to yield a greater impact on the organization's members (Lubatkin, Simsek, Ling, & Veiga, 2006) and the transformational process (Appelbaum, Berke, Taylor & Vazquez, 2008; Griffith-Cooper & King, 2007).

5.3.6 Transformational Leadership was Positively Related to Organizational Commitment

Transformational leadership was posited to be positively related to organizational commitment. The result confirmed that there was a positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment. This finding is in line with previous studies (e.g., Park & Pierce, 2020; Eliyana, Ma'arif & Muzakki, 2019; Anderson & Sun, 2017) regarding the positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment. In one study, transformational leadership explains 48.2 percent of the variance in organizational commitment (Sahrar, Mumtaz, Batoll & Ikram, 2017). Walumbwa et al. (2005) argued that transformational leadership influences organizational commitment in various cultures. This relationship has been also recognized in the education sector and in different contexts (Pratama, Sunaryo & Yusnita, 2020; Normianti, Aslamiah & Suhaimi, 2019).

There are several possible reasons to explain the link between transformational leadership and organizational commitment. It could be that a transformation leader is able to improve employee empowerment, satisfaction, trust, self-efficiency, belief, and motivation (Thomson et al., 2016). Mathew and Gupta (2015) also indicated that the transformational leadership style drives the emotions of followers and influences them to go beyond expectations. In addition, McCaffrey and Reinoso (2017) suggested that transformational leadership motivates people to the desired change using a strong vision, inspirational guidance, and intellectual stimulation. In other words, transformational leaders are associated with new idea creation, fundamental changes in complex situations, and conflict resolution (McCaffrey & Reinoso, 2017).

5.3.7 Autocratic Leadership was Positively Related to Organizational Commitment

Autocratic leadership was posited to be positively related to organizational commitment. The result supports the hypothesis as there was a positive and significant relationship between autocratic leadership and organizational commitment. This finding is in line with Radwan (2020).

Autocratic leaders prefer to establish strict regulations and control processes and to remain in a formal and professional relationship with their subordinates. However, these leaders give their subordinates clear and short instructions on what to do and how to do it, which helps to perform tasks effectively, solve identified problems, and meet targets or deadlines when time is a critical factor (Malos, 2012). Another possible reason to explain this relationship is that the autocratic leader facilitates the subordinates by making all strategic decisions for them (Gill, 2014). This positive behavior has a significant positive effect on employees' loyalty (Sari, 2016) and organizational performance (Bhargavi & Yaseen, 2016).

5.3.8 Job Satisfaction was Positively Related to Organizational Commitment

Job satisfaction was posited to be positively related to organizational commitment. The analysis supported this hypothesis because it found a positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The result is similar to previous studies (e.g., Akbar et al., 2016; Devi & Adnyani, 2015; Dewi & Suwandana, 2016; Pradhiptya, 2013; Shah, et al., 2021), which also revealed the positive and significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

The finding of this study extends the literature by verifying the relationship in the context of *pesantren* in Indonesia, particularly at Pesantren Darunnajah. Previous studies have verified the relationship in non-*pesantren* and non-Indonesian contexts, such as public and private sectors in Belgium (Caroline et al., 2015), social work organization (Jonathan et al., 2010), non-profit organizations in the United States (Hyenjin et al., 2012), and the retail (Miguel et al., 2014), health care (Redfern et al., 2002), restaurant (Kim et al., 2005), and high-technology sectors (Luthans, 2002).

A possible reason for this relationship is that job satisfaction would enable the organization to retain experienced, trained, and competent employees (Ahmad et al., 2012; Damiano & Nunzia, 2014; Elizeberth & Zakkariya 2015; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2013; Abu, 2013; Sarlaksha & Mangadu, 2014; Chih-Cheng et al., 2015). In addition, job satisfaction enhances the motivation, job quality, and productivity of employees (Ahmad et al., 2012; Arif & Ilyas, 2013; Aaron et al., 2015). Job satisfaction also improves loyalty, confidence, and commitment to the organization (Kasim & Ghaffar, 2012), leading to higher productivity and lower negative behaviors such as absenteeism and turnover (Linda & Michael, 2014).

5.3.9 Job Satisfaction as A Mediator

This study posited that job satisfaction could mediate between leadership styles (i.e. charismatic leadership, transformational leadership, autocratic leadership) and organizational commitment. The analysis confirmed the mediating role of job satisfaction. Charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles can increase the job satisfaction of employees, ultimately enhancing their level of organizational commitment.

These findings are significant because no study has verified the role of job satisfaction as a mediator between charismatic leadership, transformational leadership, and autocratic leadership with organizational commitment. Previous studies have only validated the mediating role of job satisfaction in different relationships. For example, recent studies showed that job satisfaction mediates between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (Ahmad & Jameel, 2020) and between safety climate and turnover intention (Balogun, Ansel & Smith, 2020). In addition, Chan and Ao (2019) indicated that job satisfaction mediates the effect of pay satisfaction and work family conflict on turnover intention. Riyadi and Soeling (2019) revealed that job satisfaction mediates between leadership and employee performance.

This mediation effect can be explained through the social exchange theory (SET). SET describes unspecified obligations; when one person does another a favor, there is an expectation of some future return (Blau 1964). In other words, SET argues that people will follow the norm of reciprocity, in which people respond to each other in kind, returning benefits for benefits. In this study, when employees perceive that their leader applies the charismatic (i.e. able to formulate a strategic vision which is constantly presented in an inspiring way), transformational (i.e. serve as a model for followers to achieve goals and clearly and confidently communicate vision optimistically and with enthusiasm), and autocratic leadership styles (i.e. asserts strong authority and control over subordinates and demanding unquestioned obedience from them), they are more likely to feel obligated to engage in behaviors that are beneficial to their organizations. In this case, the employees feel obligated to increase their commitment to the organization.

5.4 Implications of the Research

5.4.1 Theoretical Implications

There are three theoretical implications of this study. First, the empirical findings enrich the existing literature on factors that influence organizational commitment. Specifically, this study contributed new findings about the relationships between charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership with organizational commitment in the context of *pesantren* in Indonesia. Studies that examine the effects of these leadership styles simultaneously on organizational commitment are lacking. Current studies largely assess the effect of those leadership styles on organizational commitment separately and in different contexts (Malik, Javed & Hassan, 2017; Adadevoh, 2003).

Second, this study includes individual factors, specifically job satisfaction. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence about the mediating role of job satisfaction between charismatic, transformational, and transactional leadership styles with organizational commitment. Several studies have highlighted the mediating role of job satisfaction but in different relationships (Chan & Ao, 2019; Riyadi & Soeling, 2019).

Third, the empirical findings also offer additional verification about the leadership style of the Kiyai at *pesantren* in Indonesia, particularly Pesantren Darunnajah. This issue must be understood further because current findings have been inconsistent (Nugraha, 2010; Rachmawati, 2009; Prabowo, 2016; Abdullah et al, 2008; Anchok & Suroso, 2005).

5.4.2 Practical Implications

First, the findings of current study can provide useful information to *pesantren* leaders or Kiyai, particularly at Pesantren Darunnajah, Jakarta. This study proves that the art to manage a *pesantren* does not entirely follow a single style of leadership, rather the style should depend on the situation and context. The Kiyai may, at times, apply the charismatic leadership style to influence the educators at the *pesantren*. This practice is aligned with the Islamic concept of leadership, that a leader must set a good example for himself and his subordinates: “Surely in the messenger of Allah there is an excellent example for you” (Al-Ahzab: 21). This verse tells the believers that the Prophet Muhammad pbuh is the role model for believers. His way of conduct, or sunnah, must be followed by those who wish to please God and attain success in the world and the hereafter. This study proved that charismatic leadership has a positive effect, either directly or indirectly, on job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

At the same time, the Kiyai may also apply the transformational leadership style to influence the teachers at *pesantren*. This is likewise in line with the Islamic concept of consultation: “And consult with them in (certain) matters” (Al Imran: 159). Consulting others and taking their opinions reveals a level of trust and respect for them. This has many benefits, as stated in the holy Quran: And (mention, O Muhammad), when your Lord said to the angels, “Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority,” they said, “Will you place upon it who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify you ?” Allah said, “Indeed, I know that which you do not know.” (Al-Baqarah: 30). Based on these verses, the Kiyai discusses with others the goal of the *pesantren* and other aspects for the betterment of organization.

The Kiyai may also influence educators through an autocratic leadership style. This type of leadership prefers to establish strict regulation on what to do and how to do it, solve identified problems, and meet targets or deadlines. This means that the Kiyai shows his authority as Allah has shown His authority. This is a form of management from a theological conception. Allah says in the holy Quran: “I did not create jinn and humans except to worship me” (Al-Dzariyat: 56). It can then be understood that Allah at times shows His authority without any room for discussion.

The findings highlight the importance of job satisfaction on organizational commitment. Therefore, the Kiyai should be aware of the elements in the *pesantren* that can influence the organizational commitment of the educators. These elements include salary, promotion, supervision, benefits, reward, co-workers, communication, and nature of work.

5.5 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

First, this study was cross-sectional in terms of its design. The cross-sectional design collects data in a single point of time, which makes it unable to capture any pattern of change and magnitude of causal relationships between the examined variables (Chiaburu et al., 2010). Therefore, future work can validate this study by applying the longitudinal design.

Second, this study applied the quantitative research design, where the data were collected through a survey. Future studies should consider collecting in-depth qualitative data from respondents. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods would provide an opportunity for more in-depth and richer explanation on how leadership styles enhance job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Third, this study only applies to the sample organization and not to other organizations. The data were collected from Pesantren Darunnajah in Indonesia. Thus, future studies could replicate the proposed conceptual framework in other types of organizations in the public, private, and non-government sectors to validate the findings of this study.

5.6 Conclusion

This study provides significant understanding about the leadership style of the Kiyai at *pesantren* in Indonesia. To be precise, the Kiyai at Pesantren Darunnajah applies three types of leadership, which are charismatic, transformational, and autocratic. This study also contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence about the relationships between charismatic, transformational, and autocratic leadership styles with job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the context of an Indonesian *pesantren*. Finally, this study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence about the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationships between charismatic, transformational, and transactional leadership with organizational commitment.