

Parbahulbahul Nabolon (A Local Wisdom-Based Leadership Concept in the Batak Toba Ethnic Community)

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ABSTRACT:

This study investigates Parbahulbahul Nabolon, a leadership concept rooted in the local wisdom of the Batak Toba ethnic community. Although widely recognized in Batak culture as an ideal model of wise leadership, the concept has not previously been defined within an academic framework. The study aimed to formulate a conceptual definition of Parbahulbahul Nabolon and assess school principals' understanding of the concept. A mixed-methods approach was employed. Qualitative data were collected through interviews with 14 Batak Toba cultural leaders from four regencies in North Sumatra to identify the meaning and indicators of the concept. Quantitative data were obtained from a 30-item multiple-choice test administered to 49 senior high school principals in Regions VIII and IX of North Sumatra to measure their level of understanding. The findings reveal that Parbahulbahul Nabolon refers to a leader who is "rich in heart," possessing wisdom, patience, humility, care, vision, responsibility, and the ability to accept and manage diverse behaviors among subordinates. The concept is represented by 15 leadership indicators derived from Batak Toba cultural values. Quantitative results show that principals demonstrated a generally high level of understanding, with an average score of 72.9%; 61% of respondents were categorized as having high understanding, 33% moderate understanding, and 6% low understanding. The study concludes that Parbahulbahul Nabolon constitutes a comprehensive indigenous leadership framework that can enrich educational leadership practices. It recommends further theoretical development of the concept and the incorporation of Batak Toba local wisdom into leadership development programs for school principals.

Keywords: Leadership, local wisdom, Parbahulbahul Nabolon, school principals, Batak Toba ethnic community.

1. Introduction

Leadership refers to a leader's effort to realize organizational goals through others by means of communication, collaboration, and motivation, so that individuals are willing to act in alignment with the organization's objectives. Therefore, leadership requires a balance between the

individual needs of organizational members and the broader goals of the institution. Armstrong (2009) and Robbins and Judge (2015) define leadership as the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of a vision or predetermined goals. In this regard, a leader must be able to influence subordinates to achieve the organization's established vision and mission.

Moreover, a leader is expected to inspire employees to understand their roles and responsibilities in order to contribute effectively to organizational goal attainment.

Robbins (2015) introduces the concept of servant leadership, which emphasizes the leader's commitment to helping followers grow and develop. This form of leadership is characterized by leaders who go beyond their own self-interest and prioritize the interests and advancement of their followers. Servant leaders do not rely primarily on positional power to achieve organizational goals; rather, they emphasize persuasion, service, and the development of human potential. The behavioral characteristics of servant leadership include active listening, empathy, persuasion, service to followers, and active involvement in developing followers' potential. According to Dennis et al. (2010), Spears (2010), and Kreitner and Angelo (2014), the indicators of servant leadership include the following. First, love, which refers to the extent to which leaders do not merely regard others as instruments for achieving organizational goals, but treat them as human beings with needs, aspirations, and personal agency. Second, empowerment, which reflects collaborative leadership through the delegation of authority, trust in others, and openness to subordinates' suggestions. Third, vision, which describes the direction established by the organizational leader for the future; such vision inspires action and provides a constructive path forward. Fourth, humility, which refers to a leader's ability to maintain modesty, demonstrate mutual respect, and acknowledge the contributions of subordinates. Fifth, trust, which indicates that leaders are recognized and accepted because of their competence, integrity, and ability to earn the confidence of others.

The theories discussed above explain that a wise leader who is able to mobilize the work motivation of others toward the achievement of organizational goals should possess several key characteristics: 1) understanding the organization's vision and mission, 2) treating subordinates with compassion, 3) empowering

others, 4) demonstrating humility, 5) being trustworthy, 6) listening to subordinates' ideas, concerns, and complaints, 7) showing empathy, 8) acting as a healer who provides emotional reassurance to followers, 9) having awareness of duties and responsibilities, 10) exercising persuasion, 11) demonstrating conceptualization, 12) possessing foresight, 13) practicing stewardship, 14) showing commitment to the growth of organizational members, 15) building community, 16) demonstrating voluntary subordination, 17) possessing an authentic self, 18) respecting and fulfilling agreed work commitments through covenantal relationships, 19) upholding responsible morality, 20) believing in God as the source of strength and wisdom through transcendental spirituality, 21) and motivating, guiding, and transforming subordinates so that they can develop their careers and potentially become future leaders.

Research Questions

1. What is the conceptual of Parbahulbahul Nabolon as a local wisdom-based leadership concept in the Batak Toba ethnic community?
2. What is the level of school principals' understanding of the Parbahulbahul Nabolon leadership concept in the Batak Toba ethnic community?

Research Objectives

1. To formulate the conceptual definition and identify the leadership indicators of Parbahulbahul Nabolon as a local wisdom-based leadership concept in the Batak Toba ethnic community.
2. To examine the level of school principals' understanding of the Parbahulbahul Nabolon leadership concept in the Batak Toba ethnic community.

School Principal Leadership

A school principal is a professional teacher who is assigned the additional responsibility of leading a school. Effective school principal leadership requires a set of essential characteristics. Danim (2006, p. 65) states that the qualities expected of

a school principal include having clear and consistent goals, so that the principal is not easily influenced by shifting circumstances, but instead carries out duties in accordance with government expectations and the needs of the school, both in terms of quality and quantity development. A principal is also expected to develop well-structured plans that can be understood and implemented by teachers and students, continuously communicate school progress to all members of the school community, and treat teachers as professional educators rather than as individuals who can be ordered arbitrarily. In addition, a principal should be able to bring the school toward continuous improvement and understand that the success or failure of school leadership is not determined solely by the principal, but also by the combined contribution of various subsystems, including the principal's competencies, the characteristics of subordinates, the organizational conditions of the school, cooperation among school members, and the surrounding environment.

The task of an educational leader is complex and demanding, requiring a principal to demonstrate broad professional capability. As a leader, the principal's roles and responsibilities are crucial for achieving school quality. Mulyasa (2009) explains that the functions of a school principal include several interrelated roles. As an educator, the principal is responsible for improving the professionalism of educational personnel, creating a conducive school climate, providing guidance to members of the school community, motivating educational staff, encouraging attractive learning models, and facilitating acceleration programs for students with above-average abilities. As a manager, the principal empowers educational personnel through cooperation, provides opportunities for professional development, and encourages the active involvement of all school personnel. As an administrator, the principal manages the curriculum, students, personnel, facilities and infrastructure, archives, and finances. As an innovator, the principal develops strategies to build harmonious relationships with the environment, seeks new ideas, serves as a model

for teachers and educational staff, and promotes innovation in learning. As a leader, the principal provides direction and supervision, strengthens the motivation of educational personnel, opens two-way communication, and delegates tasks appropriately. As a motivator, the principal applies appropriate strategies to encourage educational personnel in carrying out their duties and functions.

These leadership functions encourage principals to enhance their creativity in developing schools and to inspire and motivate their subordinates to overcome various forms of stagnation and decline. In the educational context, the school principal occupies the highest leadership position within the school and serves as the central figure in managing the school community. A principal is the highest leader responsible for organizing the entire process of school activities by involving various stakeholders to achieve school goals. Therefore, the principal must perform leadership functions effectively in order to guide the school toward its intended objectives. The position of school principal cannot be held by just anyone without meeting certain procedures and requirements, such as educational background, professional experience, age, rank, and integrity (Wahjosumidjo, 2011, p. 84). The principal's function has a significant influence on the overall quality of school processes and outcomes. As the person primarily responsible for the school, the principal plays a decisive role in determining school progress. The principal's roles and responsibilities include being an educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator, commonly abbreviated as EMASLIM (Mulyasa, 2009).

The position of principal is an additional assignment given to a teacher who meets the qualifications for school principals as stipulated by government regulations, particularly the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 13 of 2007 concerning Standards for School/Madrasah Principals. In addition to meeting formal requirements established by the government, a school principal also needs to understand local

wisdom-based leadership in the area where they serve. This understanding is important because it enables principals to comprehend the cultural characteristics of the community, teachers, and students they lead. Such cultural understanding can facilitate adaptation, strengthen communication, and improve the management of the school they lead.

Local Wisdom-Based Leadership of the Batak Ethnic Community

The Batak ethnic group is one of the largest ethnic groups in Indonesia and originates from North Sumatra. It consists of several sub-ethnic groups, including Batak Toba, Batak Karo, Batak Pakpak, Batak Simalungun, Batak Angkola, and Batak Mandailing. These groups inhabit several regencies in North Sumatra, such as Karo, Simalungun, Dairi, North Tapanuli, and Asahan. Each sub-ethnic group has its own language, traditional attire, customs, and cultural practices.

According to several Batak cultural figures who are members of the Independent Batak Committee (Komite Independen Batak or KIB), the Batak community has a number of local wisdom-based concepts concerning the ideal character of a leader, particularly within the Batak Toba community. One of these concepts is Parbahulbahul Nabolon, which refers to a wise leader who possesses patience in dealing with organizational problems and consistently seeks to resolve them properly. Another concept is Uluan, which means that a wise leader must be aware of their position as a leader, be able to position themselves proportionally, provide direction and guidance, offer solutions to organizational problems, mobilize members to work collaboratively, and possess charisma, authority, and recognition from their followers. Another important concept is Raja Panungkunan, which refers to a leader who becomes a source of consultation and problem-solving because of their broad knowledge of work-related matters, organizational duties and responsibilities, and even personal issues. Paninggala Sibola Tali describes a wise leader as someone who can be trusted because they consistently uphold honesty. Parhata Oloan refers to a leader whose words and

communication can convince others. Partataring Na Sora Mintop describes a leader who is generous and attentive to the needs of their members. Paramak Na So Balunon refers to a humble leader who is always willing to receive suggestions and input from subordinates.

Furthermore, Raja Pargomgom describes a wise leader who protects and shelters subordinates when they face problems that they cannot solve on their own. Parhata Siat Jala Pamonari refers to a leader whose advice is listened to and trusted because it is grounded in truth. Partahi Na Sora Mattak Sior describes a leader who is rich in ideas, continuously generates new insights, and promotes innovation. Raja Na So Habolusan refers to an exceptional leader who is difficult to surpass in many respects, including the ability to generate reliable and effective ideas. Such a leader is also able to understand the talents of subordinates, provide direction, motivate them, and become a positive model for others. Meanwhile, Marpanatapan Tu Jolo refers to a leader who understands the vision, mission, goals, and targets of the organization. In carrying out duties and responsibilities, such a leader acts with careful consideration for the benefit and advancement of the organization.

A similar perspective was also presented by Prof. Dr. Albiner Siagian, Chairperson of the Batak Cultural Preservation Foundation, who explained several Batak local wisdom concepts that should be understood, internalized, and practiced by the community, especially by leaders. One of these is Burju Na Tolu, which refers to three important moral principles that characterize the Batak people and should be applied in life: naburju marroha or having a kind heart, naburju mulaulaon or being diligent in work, and naburju singkola or being diligent in learning. Another concept is Sarihon Ari Marsogot, which means preparing for a better future. This principle emphasizes endurance, patience, and frugality, as well as the ability to remain resilient in difficult situations and not complain when facing heavy burdens or life challenges.

The concept of Sisolisoli implies that a wise leader must realize that human life is based on

mutual dependence. Through the achievement of organizational goals, both leaders and members may also achieve their personal goals, such as receiving salaries, benefits, or other forms of welfare. Therefore, they must help one another. Pangema means that a leader should not boast about their greatness, power, authority, or even good deeds. Parbahulbahul Nabolon refers to a wise leader who has the patience to face organizational problems and continuously seeks to resolve them properly. Lam Torop Botohon Lam Neang Ulaon means that a wise leader must recognize the importance of working together with all subordinates to achieve organizational goals. A leader should not divide the organization but should maintain harmony within it.

The Batak value of Maila Salah means that a wise leader must realize that committing wrongdoing brings disgrace not only to the individual but also to the organization. Therefore, a leader must always carry out duties and responsibilities in accordance with established procedures. Gadombus means that a leader must be careful in speaking or discussing matters, because inappropriate speech may hurt others and have long-term consequences, such as damaging trust and weakening cooperation within the organization. Molo Mamolus Raja Tano Na Tungil Gabe Napu means that a wise leader realizes that their presence is greatly needed by others to solve problems faced by members of the organization, such as finding solutions to limited work facilities or other organizational challenges.

Another concept, Sibaran Lapalapa, implies that a leader should be aware that the people who work with them should experience improvement in their lives. Parlambas Roha means that a leader must be patient in listening to complaints and providing explanations, even when similar problems arise repeatedly. Pangido Las Tuktuki Ma refers to a leader who continuously strives and works hard to solve organizational problems until good solutions are found for the organization and all people involved. Finally, Mangalehon Tingki Marnonang Di Bagasta, which may be understood as providing time and

emotional space for discussion and shared understanding, means that a leader should provide time and a comfortable space for open discussion about obstacles and possible solutions for organizational development and progress.

The local wisdom-based leadership concepts of the Batak ethnic community described above contain positive values for shaping the character of wise leaders across generations. Therefore, these values are important to study, understand, and implement in leadership practice, including in the field of education. In particular, school principals who serve in Batak Toba cultural areas need to understand such local wisdom so that they can lead with cultural sensitivity, build harmonious relationships with teachers and students, and manage schools in ways that are consistent with the values of the local community.

The local wisdom-based leadership concepts of the Batak ethnic community described above contain highly positive values for developing the character of wise leaders across generations. Therefore, these concepts are important to study, understand, and implement in leadership practice in order to achieve organizational goals, including in the field of education, particularly in the leadership of school principals. In the broader field of leadership studies, Hutajulu and Srimulyani (2017), Tatilu et al. (2014), and Ritaudin (2016) found that leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Leadership behaviours that appreciate employees' work and trust their abilities through empowerment, when supported by satisfaction with job content and promotion opportunities, may encourage employees' voluntary behaviour or conscientiousness. Employees who experience such leadership tend to feel challenged to continue achieving, developing their potential, and even performing beyond expected work standards. Similarly, leaders who possess a clear long-term vision, supported by satisfaction with management practices, can foster responsibility, active participation, and commitment among organizational members. Furthermore,

respectful, humble, and trustworthy leadership behaviours may strengthen tolerance, cooperation, and positive relationships within the organization. Rantung (2015) and Sahem et al. (2021) also revealed that leadership has a positive and significant influence on employee job satisfaction.

Meanwhile, in the context of local wisdom-based leadership, no specific study has been found that examines Parbahulbahul Nabolon as a distinctive Batak Toba leadership concept. Existing studies have generally discussed local wisdom in broader leadership contexts. For instance, Sahertian et al. (2022) found that local wisdom significantly enhances the dimensions of leadership excellence and strengthens the influence of leadership capacity development on leadership excellence.

In addition, the integration of local wisdom has been shown to have a positive impact on the effectiveness of school leadership. Syaifullah et al. (2020) found that local wisdom-based training had a positive effect on school principal leadership, particularly in improving teachers' professionalism through culturally grounded professional development. Similarly, Windu Gumati (2021) found that the role of school principals in religious educational institutions is influenced by local wisdom, especially in their functions as motivators, mediators, and communicators. These findings provide strong evidence that research on the development of local wisdom in leadership is important because it contributes meaningfully to strengthening school principal leadership.

2. Methodology

Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, which integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem. According to John W. Creswell and Vicki L. Plano Clark, mixed-methods research combines the strengths of qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve a more complete interpretation of findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). In this study, the

qualitative component was used to formulate the conceptual meaning and indicators of Parbahulbahul Nabolon, while the quantitative component was used to measure school principals' understanding of the concept.

Participants/Sample

The qualitative phase involved purposively selected Batak Toba cultural figures and community leaders. Purposive sampling was employed because it enables researchers to select participants who possess rich information relevant to the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2015). The participants included representatives of the Dalihan Natolu Customary Institution (LADN), FORKALA, Parmalim community leaders, representatives of the Batak Cultural Preservation Foundation, and community leaders from North Tapanuli.

The quantitative phase involved 49 senior high school principals from Educational Regions VIII and IX of North Sumatra Province. These participants were selected because they serve as educational leaders within areas where Batak Toba cultural values remain influential.

Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study:

1. Semi-structured interview guide, which according to Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann allows researchers to obtain in-depth information while maintaining flexibility during the interview process (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).
2. A 30-item multiple-choice comprehension test, administered through Google Forms, to assess principals' understanding of the meaning, values, and leadership indicators of Parbahulbahul Nabolon.

Procedure

The study was conducted in the following stages:

1. Identifying and selecting cultural informants through purposive sampling.
2. Conducting semi-structured interviews with Batak Toba cultural figures and

- community leaders in the Batak Toba language.
3. Transcribing and translating the interview data into Indonesian.
 4. Analysing the interview data to identify themes related to leadership values and local wisdom.
 5. Formulating the conceptual framework and indicators of Parbahulbahul Nabolon.
 6. Developing a 30-item comprehension test based on the identified indicators.
 7. Distributing the test to 49 senior high school principals via Google Forms.
 8. Collecting and organizing the responses for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data were analysed using thematic descriptive analysis, which involves identifying, categorising, and interpreting patterns of meaning within qualitative data. According to Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, thematic analysis is an effective method for identifying and reporting themes in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The findings were used to formulate the conceptual definition and indicators of Parbahulbahul Nabolon.

The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and categorisation of understanding levels. According to Alan Bryman, descriptive statistics are useful for summarising and presenting numerical data in a meaningful and interpretable form (Bryman, 2016). These analyses were used to determine the extent to which school principals understood the concept and leadership values of Parbahulbahul Nabolon.

3. Results

1. Qualitative Description of the Concept of Parbahulbahul Nabolon and Its Indicators

Based on the narratives and explanations provided by the informants, this study concludes that Parbahulbahul Nabolon refers to a leader who is “rich in heart,” meaning a leader who

possesses abundant positive character traits. Such a leader has the capacity to accept, accommodate, and wisely manage both positive and negative behaviours shown by subordinates and colleagues. Through this moral and relational capacity, the leader becomes accepted, respected, and appreciated by subordinates and other individuals who work with them. Ultimately, this leadership character contributes positively to the achievement of organizational or institutional goals.

The concept of Parbahulbahul Nabolon is reflected in the following 15 indicators: 1) Parlambas roha, which refers to a leader who is broad-hearted, open-minded, patient, and able to respond wisely to various problems and situations, 2) Partataring na sora mintop; paramak so ra balunon; parsakkalan na so ra mahiang, which describes a leader with a high level of care and concern, who is willing to provide solutions to the difficulties faced by subordinates, 3) Partahi sora mattak sior; parmahan so ra mantak batahi, which refers to a leader who does not rely on violence or coercion, but instead motivates, guides, and encourages subordinates in a constructive manner, 4) Marpanatapan tu jolo, which describes a leader who has a clear vision, mission, goals, and organizational strategy, and who is capable of realizing them in leadership practice, 5) Pargomgom, which refers to a leader who protects, nurtures, takes responsibility for, and provides a sense of security for subordinates, 6) Mapanarihon ari marsogot, which describes a leader who is prudent, economical, and possesses good managerial ability to ensure organizational sustainability, 7) Marpanatapan tu jolo, which also emphasizes the leader’s ability to establish and implement the organization’s vision, mission, goals, and strategies in a consistent and purposeful manner, 8) Panungkunan, which refers to a leader who becomes a reliable source of consultation because of their broad knowledge, wisdom, and insight, 9) Parhata oloan; parhata siat; parhata sabungan, which describes a leader whose words are accepted by others because of their effective communication skills, systematic way of speaking, charisma, and logical and rational arguments, 10) Marroha

uluan; parmahan hoda ndang parmahan horbo, which refers to a leader who has the heart of a true leader rather than that of a ruler, and who provides examples and moral guidance through both words and actions., 11) Raja na so habolusan, which describes a leader who possesses strong authority and dignity before subordinates, so that they are respected and highly regarded, 12) Na so pangema, which refers to a leader who does not boast about their greatness, wealth, achievements, or good deeds before others, 13) Marpangalaho mamolus raja tano na tungil gabe napu, which describes a leader whose presence brings progress, positive transformation, and significant improvement to the institution they lead, 14) Mangalehon tingki marnonang di bagasna, which refers to a leader who makes time to nurture and guide their family, thereby becoming a role model in the wider community, 15) Marroha sisolisoli, which describes a leader who understands that leadership positions are temporary, and therefore does not act arrogantly, boastfully, or treat subordinates arbitrarily.

Overall, these indicators demonstrate that Parbahulbahul Nabolon is not merely a cultural expression, but a comprehensive local wisdom-based leadership concept. It emphasizes moral

maturity, patience, care, humility, vision, responsibility, wisdom, communicative ability, and social sensitivity. In the context of school leadership, this concept can serve as an indigenous leadership framework that strengthens principals' ability to lead educational institutions with wisdom, humanity, and cultura.

2. Description of Data on the Understanding of the Local Wisdom-Based Leadership Concept (Parbahulbahul Nabolon)

The conceptual understanding of Parbahulbahul Nabolon among 49 school principals from Regions VIII and IX of North Sumatra Province reached an average score of 72.9%, indicating that, overall, respondents' understanding was within the high category. Specifically, 30 principals, or 61% of the respondents, demonstrated a high level of understanding ($\geq 70\%$); 16 principals, or 33%, were classified in the moderate category; and 3 principals, or 6%, were categorized as having a low level of understanding. These findings suggest that the majority of school principals possessed a substantial conceptual grasp of local-wisdom-based leadership as embodied in the Parbahulbahul Nabolon philosophy.

Table 1. Classification of Score Tendencies in the Understanding of the Local Wisdom-Based Leadership Concept (Parbahulbahul Nabolon = PBN)

Variable	Category	Score Range	Frequency
X1 (<i>Understanding of PBN</i>)	High	$X \geq 70$	30
	Moderate	$40 \leq X < 70$	16
	Low	$X < 40$	3

The table above indicates the tendency of school principals' conceptual understanding of local-wisdom-based leadership, specifically Parbahulbahul Nabolon. The mean score obtained was 72.59, which falls within the interval of $X \geq 70$. This finding demonstrates that the principals' level of conceptual understanding of local-wisdom-based leadership, as represented by Parbahulbahul Nabolon, is categorized as high.

More specifically, 30 principals were classified in the high category, 16 principals in the moderate category, and 3 principals in the low category. The percentage distribution of the data is presented in the following bar:

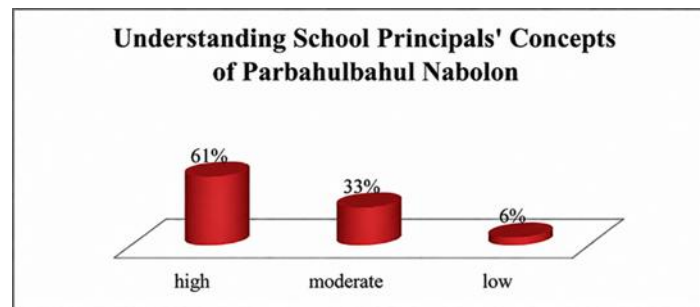


Figure 1. School Principal Concepts

Thus, it can be concluded that the school principals' conceptual understanding of Parbahulbahul Nabolon within Senior High Schools in Regions VIII and IX of North Sumatra Province, covering North Tapanuli, Toba, Humbang Hasundutan, and Samosir Regencies, was predominantly categorized as high. Specifically, 61% of the principals demonstrated a high level of understanding, 33% were classified in the moderate category, and only 6% were in the low category. These results indicate that most principals possessed a strong conceptual grasp of Parbahulbahul Nabolon as a form of local-wisdom-based leadership, suggesting that this indigenous leadership concept has been relatively well internalized within educational leadership practices in the studied regions.

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed. First, further research is needed to develop a broader, more rigorous, and theoretically refined understanding of Parbahulbahul na Bolon as well as other local-wisdom-based leadership concepts rooted in Batak Toba cultural traditions. Such studies are expected to enrich the theoretical discourse on indigenous leadership and contribute to the development of culturally responsive educational leadership frameworks. Second, the findings indicate that a small proportion of school principals still demonstrated a low level of understanding of the Parbahulbahul na Bolon concept. Therefore, the North Sumatra Provincial Education Office, particularly through its regional branch offices, is encouraged to organize seminars, workshops, and professional development programs on local-wisdom-based leadership for both serving principals and

prospective principals. These initiatives are essential to strengthen the quality of educational services and to enhance leadership practices in schools through the internalization of indigenous cultural values.

4. Discussion

Interpretation of the Results in Relation to the Objectives and Literature

The primary objective of this study was to formulate the concept of Parbahulbahul Nabolon and to examine the extent to which senior high school principals in Regions VIII and IX of North Sumatra understood this indigenous leadership concept. The qualitative findings revealed that Parbahulbahul Nabolon embodies a leadership philosophy rooted in Batak Toba local wisdom, emphasizing responsibility, wisdom, service, integrity, communal harmony, and the ability to guide and empower others. These values are closely aligned with indigenous leadership perspectives that view leadership as a culturally embedded social practice rather than merely an administrative function.

The findings support the view of Geert Hofstede that leadership practices are strongly influenced by cultural values and social norms. Similarly, the concept resonates with the culturally responsive leadership framework proposed by Muhammad Khalifa, which emphasizes the importance of integrating local cultural knowledge into educational leadership. The formulation of Parbahulbahul Nabolon demonstrates that indigenous wisdom can provide a meaningful foundation for leadership practices within educational settings.

The quantitative findings indicated that most school principals demonstrated a moderate to high level of understanding of the concept. This suggests that although the terminology may not be formally incorporated into educational leadership training, many principals are already familiar with its underlying values through their cultural and social experiences. These findings are consistent with the argument of John W. Creswell that local knowledge systems often influence professional practices even when they are not explicitly recognized within formal institutional frameworks.

Implications for Theory, Practice, and Policy

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on indigenous and culturally grounded leadership by introducing Parbahulbahul Nabolon as a conceptual model derived from Batak Toba local wisdom. The study expands existing leadership theories by demonstrating that leadership effectiveness can be understood through culturally specific values and community-based perspectives rather than relying exclusively on Western leadership paradigms.

In practice, the findings suggest that educational leadership development programs should incorporate local cultural values into training and professional development activities. School principals who understand and apply the values of Parbahulbahul Nabolon may be better equipped to foster trust, collaboration, social responsibility, and cultural sensitivity within their schools. Integrating indigenous leadership values can also strengthen relationships between schools and local communities.

From a policy perspective, educational authorities in North Sumatra may consider incorporating local wisdom-based leadership concepts into principal preparation programs, leadership standards, and professional development initiatives. Such efforts would support the preservation of cultural heritage while promoting leadership practices that are relevant to local social and cultural contexts.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study was conducted only in Educational Regions VIII and IX of North Sumatra, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or cultural groups. Second, the quantitative component involved a relatively small sample of 49 school principals, which may not fully represent all educational leaders in the province.

Third, the study focused primarily on measuring principals' understanding of Parbahulbahul Nabolon rather than examining how the concept is implemented in actual leadership practices. Consequently, the findings do not provide evidence regarding the relationship between understanding the concept and leadership effectiveness. Finally, because the concept was derived from interviews with cultural informants, the interpretation of meanings and values may be influenced by the perspectives and experiences of the selected participants.

Future studies could involve larger and more diverse samples, compare indigenous leadership concepts across different ethnic groups, and investigate the practical implementation and impact of Parbahulbahul Nabolon on school leadership effectiveness, organizational culture, and educational outcomes.

5. Conclusion

This study successfully formulated the concept of Parbahulbahul Nabolon as an indigenous leadership model rooted in Batak Toba local wisdom. The qualitative findings revealed that Parbahulbahul Nabolon encompasses core leadership values such as wisdom, responsibility, integrity, service, social harmony, and commitment to the collective well-being of the community. These values reflect the cultural principles of Batak Toba society and provide a culturally grounded perspective on leadership.

The quantitative findings showed that senior high school principals in Regions VIII and IX of North Sumatra generally demonstrated a moderate to high level of understanding of the

concept and its leadership indicators. This suggests that the values embedded in Parbahulbahul Nabolon remain relevant and recognizable among educational leaders in the Batak Toba cultural region. The findings also indicate that indigenous leadership concepts can serve as valuable resources for strengthening educational leadership practices within culturally diverse contexts.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that educational institutions and policymakers incorporate local wisdom-based leadership values into principal training programs, leadership development initiatives, and educational

management practices. Such efforts may enhance culturally responsive leadership while preserving indigenous cultural heritage.

Future research should examine the implementation of Parbahulbahul Nabolon in actual school leadership practices and investigate its relationship with leadership effectiveness, school culture, teacher performance, and student outcomes. Further studies involving larger samples and different cultural settings are also recommended to validate and expand the applicability of this indigenous leadership model in broader educational contexts.

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