

## THE ROLE OF EDUCATION FOUNDATION FOR THE SUCCESS OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN JAKARTA

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### ABSTRACT

*The research discussed the role of education foundation in the success of Catholic schools in Jakarta. Based on the memories of the school's success and the current facts about school quality degradation as the background, the research asked about the importance of the foundation's role and its performance for school achievement. The research applied a qualitative approach and collected data using a deep interview method. Ten respondents were interviewed, including foundation (executive board), school leaders, and other education actors. The research used the respondents' answers to analyze the effectiveness of foundation management in running and leading the development of Catholic schools. The research concludes that foundation management is essential in guiding and leading schools to achieve their vision, mission, and objectives. The problem arises when the people in the foundation are chosen not because of their ability and function but because of other not significant reasons. Many education foundation personnel lack the knowledge of education principles and have no time to do their duties.*

**Keywords:** *education foundation, school achievement, school management, private school*

### INTRODUCTION

The Law of Foundation article 16 of 2001 and article 28 of 2004 mention that the foundation embodies social, religious, and humanitarian activities. Because of its social, religious, and humanitarian goals, the foundation is a non-profit legal entity. Education institution is categorized as social and humanitarian body and should be managed under the foundation. Explicitly, education is a non-profit entity (Irwansyah, Ridwan, & Andrijani, 2016). As a legal entity that is a social, religious, and humanitarian entity, the foundation has three bodies consisting of the Governing Board (*Pembina*), Executive Board (*Pengurus*), and Supervisory Board (*Pengawas*). The separation of the functions, powers, and duties shows how professionalism and responsibility are expected in their work. The governing board is the vision holder; the executive board is the vision manager; the executive director, head office, headmaster, and teachers are closely related to the executive board.

They are called vision executors, while the supervisory board is a guard or vision controller (Irwansyah, Ridwan, & Andrijani, 2016).

The Law of 2004 article 31 states that the executive board is the entity that operates the foundation. Then, article 35 states that the executive board has full responsibility for the foundation's operation to reach its purpose and represent the foundation inside and outside the court. These laws confirm the central role of the executive board to take active initiatives for the success of the foundation. The executive board usually determines the policy and direction, the composition of human resources, finance, and the facilities (Irwansyah, Ridwan, & Andrijani, 2016). The executive board uses good management to implement the foundation program. The management is the heart of the educational institution because it becomes the center of life and determines whether or not a school is going forward. However, the executive board is known as the person behind the scenes and not the field executor. They are

known as policymakers, formulating and suggesting directions and ways to achieve directions. Leaders of educational institutions (school principals) are usually the ones who come forward and translate the policies and direction of the foundation into concrete activities (Sumarni, 2018).

Chatib (2011) has distinguished between context and content to explain the relationship between the foundation (especially the executive board) and the school management. The context refers to management in the foundation, while the content refers to the field executor. Thus, it is widespread that the context that executes the management is the foundation (executive board), while the content that is the executor in the field is the director or office head together with the principal and teacher. Chatib (2011) has mentioned two analogies that relate to the context and the content are: (a) dish as the context and food in the dish as the content; or (b) bird with two wings, with management wing (context) and school executive wing (content). The two analogies reflect the strong relationship between the executive board and the executive in the school (executive director and principal) (Chatib, 2011). However, despite having a very strategic position with enormous responsibilities, the foundation's post, specifically the executive board, is unique because it refers to some professionals who should not be paid (according to Foundation law). They are social workers like volunteers with huge responsibilities (Twebaze, 2015; Hollenbach, 2020; Zhao et al., 2020).

Because it emphasizes social aspects and must be a professional non-profit organization, Drucker (2016) has stated that the foundation has a much heavier duty. According to him, a non-profit organization must care about mission, performance, and achievement more than the business area. They have more difficulties than the business area because they have various stakeholders, and their result is outside (in the long-term process). The mission is its baseline. As a long-term project with the actual result, the mission must be followed by the short one: action and performance. Their main goal is to satisfy their great variety of stakeholders. Only through a clear mission, good action and performance, and the stakeholders' satisfaction a non-profit organization can survive (Drucker, 2016).

Some executive boards fail to perform their duties because of some difficulties, such as defining the meaning of social activities. It relates to the school fee. The schools must be cheap because they run social to be qualified. It is why they have to balance the cost with the high school fee. When the school fee becomes expensive, the school is immediately accused of being commercial and losing its social attribute (Irwansyah, Ridwan, & Andrijani, 2016; Lamba et al., 2017). A good education is expensive (Srivastava, 2016; Gurn, 2016). Another difficulty is the regulation that education could only be managed under the foundation as its legal entity. To be alive, the foundation must be managed professionally. As a result, although named

foundation, its management is like a company because of the demands of the situation. Furthermore, they face difficulties because the attribute as a foundation is only a cover. The school is commercial because the real intent of the management is to seek profit, either directly or indirectly (Borghain, 2016; Serdyukov, 2017; Hemlata & Sharma, 2019).

Trepci and Hasenauer (2018), Adi (2016), and Sumarni (2018) have mentioned some suggestions to the foundation's management to overcome the difficulties in handling social institutions. First, the executive board should abandon personal interests and work hard voluntarily to achieve the aims and objectives of the foundation. They have to understand the regulation of a foundation well, including its duties and functions. They also create creative and market-oriented programs. Second, the vision and mission of the foundation must be formulated clearly and firmly to be the basis and direction of the foundation. Third, the foundation is managed transparently because it often expects donors and other financial support from the government, church, and broader communities. They must manage funds from the community in a transparent, efficient, and effective manner. Fourth, the foundation's management should be professional despite the funds they get and should be used to achieve its purpose and objectives (not for them).

Catholic educational institutions can be classified as the social, religious, and humanitarian institutions established for noble purposes with charity by preparing the young generation and responding to society's need for a good education (Yulis & Goa, 2016; Vveinhardt & Zygmantaite, 2015). The Pastoral Memorandum in the year 2008 of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference (KWI) has confirmed the hope for the Catholic education, which should be qualified (4.3) but has the option for the poor (4.4). The education commission of KWI in 2016 has also mentioned that Catholic education must be qualified to achieve the commitment to integral human formation (Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia, 2016; Adi, 2016; Neidhart & Lamb, 2016; Whittle, 2018; Fuller & Johnson, 2014).

However, it is not easy to realize those expectations. The Pastoral Memorandum in 2008 from Indonesian Bishops' Conference (KWI) has mentioned the situation of foundations and Catholic schools need to understand the educational philosophy, lack of serving spirit in education, education politicization is poorly understood and addressed, the management is not professional, the quality of human resources is poor, and limited funds (Adi, 2016; Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia, 2016). Some of the causes are external challenges, not internal such as the unplanned curriculum changes, business corporations' presence in education, uncontrolled international school growth, gaps in education and job, and unclear identity of Catholic education (Gleeson et al., 2018; Whittle, 2018; Hollenbach, 2020).

The Pastoral Memorandum of 2008 has already mentioned the five recommendations for this problem: loyal to the uniqueness of Catholic

education, commitment to excellent service, education for the poor, improvement of the teachers' qualities, and availability of funding. In 2016, the Education Commission of KWI had also mentioned some solutions: clear mission and identity, governance and leadership, academic excellence, and good management of foundation (Cho, 2017).

The conditions of Catholic foundations, especially the performance of executive boards, are (a) below the standard of resource with three attributes named voluntary, low capacity, unmatched competency. (b) Low management capacity because they do the detailed operation activities overlaps with school management. They do not do their primary duties to make excellent and strategic planning. (c) There is no concept in human resources (lack of planning in recruitment and preparation for the next leaders). (d) There is out of date work process that is time-wasting for ineffective meetings, and the meeting is very physical. Sumarni (2018) has said that they do not meet and communicate regularly. (e) There is low exposure to global development and challenges (Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia, 2016; Ferguson, 2014; Gleeson et al., 2018).

In her research, Sumarni (2018) has found that the executive board usually does only the following things: renovation of the building, equipment, scholarship for the poor, and facilitation for teacher training. She has argued that the contextual situation requires the foundation to do the following things: managing foundation with professional standards; managing finance and assets, including ensuring the welfare of teachers and staff; professional development consciously, fully-planned, systematically, and continuously; management and system that eliminate the inefficiencies and waste of time and energy; do not exhaust the energy for routine operation affairs but develop a measurable and tangible growing school; good leadership including communication skills; and good recruitment (Sumarni, 2018).

Catholic education foundations are unique because they have many schools with good achievements. Memories put the Catholic schools as the top schools. Over time, despite the enormous progress of its competitors, the Catholic educational foundations are also considered to be declining. There are some conflicts over who is responsible for the quality declination. Generally, it is said that Catholic school teachers have lower quality than before, and it is the factor of the decrease of Catholic school quality.

The research confirms the critical role of two wings for the success of Catholic education: foundations and schools. Chatib (2011) has described it as two wings that must walk together. So far, there have been many discussions for the wing of school: principals and teacher quality. However, there is not much discussion about the role of the foundation. It has been stated that the foundation is the key to school progress. Moreover, the foundation is described as the heart of the school. The foundation determines whether or not a school will be developed because the

executive board has significant authority and is almost only the decision-makers (Chatib, 2011).

Therefore, the issue discussed in the research is whether the foundation has a leading role in developing Catholic schools? What is the role? The research aims to analyze the influence of the foundation's board (executive board) on the success of the Catholic school, the obstacles to be more effective, and what factors must be changed.

The outputs of the research are awakening the awareness of the big and significant role of the foundation in the success of a school; to give a good understanding of the essential tasks of the foundation; to identify the factors that inhibit the foundation to work optimally; to identify the ideal profile of the foundation board; and to identify the breakthrough that the foundation can make to develop the school.

Five questions have been prepared so that the specified output can be achieved (1) how is the respondents' perspective on the significant role of the foundation in the success or failure of Catholic schools? (2) What is the evaluation of the effectiveness of the executive board? Describe its strengths and weaknesses. (3) What factors hamper the executive board from carrying out its tasks optimally? (4) What kind of foundation personnel can guarantee the success of Catholic schools? (5) What factors should be corrected related to the existence of the management in the Catholic education foundation?

## METHODS

The research applies a qualitative case study and explores 'how' and 'why' main questions to understand the role of the education foundation in the success of Catholic schools. The research population is the Catholic schools in West Jakarta. The researcher conducts in-depth interviews with four school leaders of Catholic schools in West Jakarta, three chairmen or members of the executive board of other Catholic schools in West Jakarta, and three educational trainers or educational consultants who have experiences to support the development of the Catholic schools in West Jakarta. The researcher has planned to interview five persons in every element (school leader, executive board, and educational consultant/trainer) and the respondents who respond to the request. The researcher sends follow-up questions for the unclear answers to ensure deeper and more accurate information. The researcher analyzes the data by comparing, integrating, and summarizing the data from respondents, then compares the findings with the theories to describe the gap.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

All respondents (100%) have acknowledged the considerable authority of the executive board to lead and direct the foundation, including setting the



policies and strategizing the planning. Regarding the school policies and strategic activities, all respondents confess that they only obey the executive board as the only and highest decision-maker. The four respondents from school management have mentioned their respect and complete obedience to the foundation board. A school leader respondent has said that the executive board members are usually present in important events such as determining school leaders and determining programs and budgets.

Besides respect and obedience, the respondents who have a background as school leaders have said, "We have high expectations for the executive board to use their authority maximally to develop the school." Sumarni (2018) has already mentioned the important role of the board. "They usually come from church leaders or company executives. Good work ethic and service can improve school quality", said an education consultant who also becomes a respondent.

The respondents explain that the foundation's authority is visible in the essential and decisive decision. The executive boards show their authority in determining budgets, choosing school leaders and teachers, determining which facilities can be met, and determining the cooperation and partnership. "We understand that foundation plays a central role in human resources issues, facilities, infrastructure, and finance. These things determine the progress of the school significantly", said a respondent who is also a school principal.

In evaluating the foundation's role, 80% of respondents have said that the executive board consists of a good person but not the right person. All respondents have mentioned that the executive board is usually well-established in economic status and has become top management in a company. Their status will be an obstacle if they do not understand the principles and values of education. They are good managers in their company but are incompetent if they do not understand the principles of education or the foundation's duties. The three respondents from the executive board confess that they are plunged and assigned in their role, but they do not understand the ins and outs of education and foundation. "I feel like I do not understand the world of education, but the parish priest has appointed me, and I cannot refuse," said a respondent, head of a foundation. "Maybe due to time constraints, we only appear at ceremonial events. We should have studied how to manage the education management", said another respondent.

Some have tried to do their best, but there are many conflicts in the implementation when they run the foundation. There are some conflicts in values. Some respondents (especially school management) have mentioned the unclear delegation. The executive board delegates some tasks to the school management, but they often interfere as they withdraw the delegation. "We often demand real work targets. In contrast, the world of education emphasizes the process and cannot see results in a short time. That is often a problem", said an executive board with a leadership background

in business.

Some respondents choose the executive board from the senior church personnel who are usually very active in church ministry. They typically have difficulties managing the school like a ministry. They do their tasks only after finishing their preliminary work and do not care if they are busy. It is only another ministry that is handled as a side job and if they have time. A respondent says the ministry in the church becomes the sidelines of his professional work. He realizes that the position as the foundation board must be a first, not second, or third priority.

There is also a case when the executive board works only in some routine activities, not innovative ones. They only do the work of the school management, and their functions overlap with the principal. A principal says, "The foundation board members are usually involved in school operations. We would like to remind them that they have already taken a portion of our work. However, we are confused about rejecting this intervention".

Regarding the obstacles to the development of the foundation, some respondents have mentioned the ambiguity in the regulation and its implementation. First is the ambiguity between the professional and social aspects of the foundation. Professional institution refers to the quality and the payment, while social institution refers to volunteers, a ministry without payment, but they work if they have time. The executive board can work well if they are paid as a professional. "We are required to work professionally. However, we have to take care of our main business where we live", said a respondent. The second ambiguity is the school management can handle the school without foundation. The principals and teachers have the competence, time, and knowledge to run the school and do daily activities. However, they have to be directed and led by the executive board, who are usually incompetent (in terms of education matters) and have no time to work for the development of the school. "Imagine, the foundation members do not explore the function of the foundation but have enormous power. They can decide things they do not understand well", said a respondent with a background as a consultant. The third ambiguity is the executive board consists of a volunteer who does not want to participate in the ministry but is plunged into it. They do not have a concept of the development of the school; even they do not know about their functions. "Foundations run like social institutions that run as they are. This is just part of the extra work that is done when time and energy are left", said a respondent who works as a consultant. The fourth ambiguity, they do not understand the Church's teachings in education, whereas they must run the vision and mission of the Church.

The executive board has to solve the personal obstacles. Besides the external factors (including the unclear foundation concept that brings dilemma), some personal barriers (including limited time, lack of knowledge, and personal interest) prevent the

executive board from doing their tasks optimally. The executive board must have time to work. Some respondents mention the clergy as the ideal personnel because they have no family, so they have no burden and have more time to be involved. The executive board must have knowledge and competency in regulation and foundation management to direct the foundation's significant and essential policies and strategies. The executive board has a spirit of service. They are ready to work hard and suffer, although they are not paid. If they receive the appointment as the executive board, they must commit to the tasks because many activities in the school depend on their decision, and the school management waits for their action. The executive board has initiative, creativity, and innovation because they are leaders, and school management can follow them. The executive board has the commitment and competency to collaborate with the school management as the organization's picture with two wings. Without good collaboration, the organization and the school will fly slowly or even cannot fly. The executive board is a social worker but must work professionally. Even in the concept of Drucker, they have to work better than in the company because the bottom line of the foundation is intangible that can be seen in the long term. The executive board must have strong leadership but cares for the teachers. As the decision-maker, they sometimes are too easy to blame the teachers if the problem occurs. A wise executive board is needed to collaborate with the principal and teachers. The last, the research shows the weakness of private schools, especially Catholic schools, and how to overcome the weakness (Von Stumm & Plomin, 2020).

## CONCLUSIONS

The research confirms the prominent role of the foundation in the success of a school. The foundation's role is significant because it is almost the only decision-maker. All school stakeholders recognize the role and always give the place to the executive board in front. The problem is in the implementation. Their limited time, lack of knowledge, a different concept of a social aspect of foundation prevent them from leading in the institution. The executive board does not respond well to the need for the foundation to place them in front, take the lead, take the initiative, and start the innovation. Besides the internal factors, there are also some ambiguities in the community regarding the concept of foundation, like social vs. commercial institution, professional or side job, the part of ministry, so they are only involved if they have the time or focus on it.

There is a need to change the mindset that the social institution cannot work professionally. The executive board must realize their authority and how to use it and take the lead and initiative. They do not limit their role in ceremonial events. The economic aspects must be considered because some executive board is

ready to take the lead, but there will be a problem if they suffer in the economy. They lack time and energy because they have to focus on work and get a good salary and the educational institution is only their third or fourth priority.

The qualitative research can improve the quality of private educational institutions based on its suggestion to stabilize the institution's strength: the executive board and the principal as two wings. The school cannot perform well if it only depends on the quality of the principal or teachers. The foundation's executive board must be solid and same quality as the principal because they look like a bird with two wings. The research shows the weakness of private schools, especially Catholic schools, and how to overcome the weakness.

The research contributes to the improvement of the quality of the personnel in the foundation. They have to realize their critical role and give time and energy to do their role. The research has limitations because only get the data in the small scope, in West Jakarta as the case study, although the respondents are the practitioners and implementers of the field. It is essential to get the broader perspective of the respondents in wider areas and maybe some provinces. The researcher can also consider the rural and urban areas. It becomes a consideration for future research to get the data from some provinces and reach the rural and urban areas to know the quality of their management.

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