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Improving the Quality of Social Life in Asia Pacific: a Challenge for Sociology

The 9th Conference

of the Asia Pacific
Sociological Association

June 13 - 15, 2009

Discovery Kartika Plaza Hotel
Kuta, Bali, Indonesia

 Asia Pacific Sociological Association
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Certificate of Commemoration

THIS CERTIFIES THAT

Sifi Irene Astuti

has attended at

**THE 9TH CONFERENCE
OF THE ASIA PACIFIC SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**

WITH THE THEME

**IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF SOCIAL LIFE IN ASIA PACIFIC:
A CHALLENGE FOR SOCIOLOGY**

THE CONFERENCE WAS HELD AT

THE DISCOVERY KARTIKA PLAZA HOTEL, BALI, INDONESIA FROM JUNE 13 TO 15, 2009

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Department of Sociology
University of Indonesia

THE 9TH CONFERENCE OF
ASIA-PACIFIC SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APSA)
June 13 - 15, 2009
KUTA-BALI, INDONESIA



ASIA-PACIFIC
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ASSOCIATION

INVITATION LETTER

Dear Ms. Irene Astuti D,
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We cordially invite you to present your paper entitled "Social Culture Transformation in Improving School's Quality" in the 9th APSA (Asia Pacific Sociological Association) International Conference which will be held in Bali, Indonesia, June 13-15, 2009. The theme of the conference: Improving the Quality of Social Life in Asia Pacific: A Challenge for Sociology.

Your participation will contribute to the success of the conference.

Thank you for your participation and cooperation.
Looking forward to see you in Bali!

Best regards,
Organizing Committee for 9th APSA Conference

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SOCIAL CULTURAL TRANSFORMARTION IN IMPROVING SCHOOL'S QUALITY

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Abstract

Decentralized policy in education which aims to balance the education opportunity and the improvement of education quality will not work well without people participation. MBS is still a new paradigm in education management that cannot be fulfilled, and it is even considered failed in some regions. How do the schools do social cultural transformation to improve their quality?

This research takes place in three Junior High Schools in the Regency of Sleman, namely 4 State Junior High School Pakem (SMP N 4 Pakem), 1 State Junior High School Depok (SMP N 1 Depok), and 1 State Junior High School Ngaglik (SMP N 1 Ngaglik). The study applies qualitative approach which employs descriptive qualitative analysis. The data are obtained through in-depth interview, active participation, documentation, and FGD. The data are analyzed descriptively-qualitatively in narrative form. They are processed through reduction and classification to build theoretical abstraction.

According to MBS, there are differences in school dynamics which result from the interaction of some aspects, those are: input, process, and output. Input deals with students' characteristics, teachers' characteristics, and leadership. Process deals with cultural system, individual system, political system and bureaucratic system. The last aspect, output, is characterized by "school performance". Dynamics in school improvement has to conform to the conditions and the potencies of the educational unit. There is a tendency to develop "school performance" which is in line with the capital capacity of education in each educational unit, such as social , cultural capital, intellectual capital, and economic capital.

Keywords: transformation, MBS

Introduction

One of the fundamental problems of education in Indonesia is the low quality of each educational unit especially in the elementary and secondary levels. There are at least three main factors which are the culprit of unequal improvement of educational quality. The first factor is the Policy of National Education applying *education production function* approach or *input-output* analysis which is not consequently executed on field. The second factor is The implementation of National Education Policy which is carried out so bureaucratically centralized that the schools as the education implementer heavily depend on the bureaucratic decisions which should go through a long way to realize, and the results sometimes do not even fit the school situations and conditions. Consequently, the schools lose their independence, motivation, and initiatives to develop and advance their institutions including the quality of the education as one of National Education objectives. The third factor is the

minimum involvement of the community, especially the parents of the students, in the implementation of the education. The community participation is more emphasized only on the budget input, not on the educational process, such as decision making, monitoring, evaluation, dan accountability¹. Therefore, there is a need to study the educational problems in the framework of sociology perspectives, considering that education is not merely 'a product' but also 'a process' related to the results of social interactions among elements in the community.

The development of quality strategy carried out by schools is determined by teaching-learning process at school which requires the synergy of some roles in the level of educational units as reflected in MBS mechanism and school culture. The phenomena of quality strategy developed by schools vary related to the school's programs of quality improvement. One of the most important aspects in quality strategy is school culture. Culture is the philosophy of life which is verified together and accepted among the member of a group in community. It involves the way of thinking, behavior, attitude, and physical and abstract values. Culture can be seen as behavior, values, attitude, and the way of life in adapting with the environment and the way of seeing and solving problems as well. School is a prominent institution which is designed to make the transmission process between generations run smoothly².

School as social system has the ability in management process in educational unit. Wayne Hoy states that "*open social system framework of school organization uses input, transformation, and output component*", that later can conceptually explain the differentiation process among schools. According to social system model analysis, the transformation process consists of five related components to support the effective school, those are: *learning-teaching, school-structure, individuals, culture and climate, and power and politics*³. In Hoy's analysis, the picture of transformation process at school is systematically influenced by components as follows.

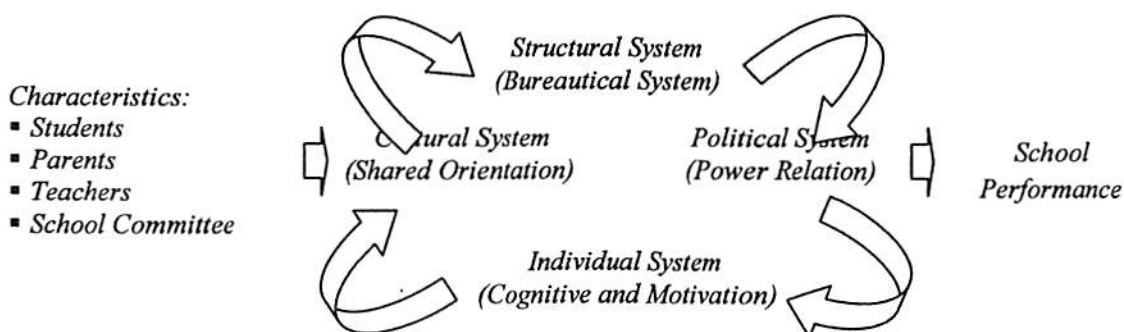


Figure 1. School Characteristics and Transformation (Hoy, 2005: 271)

¹ *Management of School-based Quality Improvement: Concept and Implementation*, Ministry of National Education, 2001: 1-2.

² "School Culture and Student Achievement". www.geocities.com/pakguruonline/pragigma-pdd-depan. Diaunduh 1 Juni 2009.

³ Hoy, Wayne K. (2005). *Educational Administration*, Toronto: McGraw Hill, p. 271.

Process of transformation in education management is influenced by system mechanism in educational unit, to name but a few, *cultural system*, *structural system*, *political system*, and *individual system* as objective reality. Meanwhile, the teaching-learning process, which is determined by the characteristics of students and teachers, in internalization process will describe the way of teaching, the way of students' learning to reach the achievement as the results of social understanding institutionalized by school. Nevertheless, the quality improvement and development among schools tend to vary describing inequality. In fact, one of the educational reconstruction objectives stated in decentralized policy of education is the attempt to improve the school quality. Based on the discussion above, the research question of this study is how do schools apply the social cultural transformation in improving their quality in the unit level?

Method

The research is carried out in three State Junior High Schools in the regency of Sleman, namely SMP N 4 Pakem (SBI), SMP N 1 Depok (SSN), and SMP N 1 Ngaglik (SN). The choice is based on the uniqueness and the specifications owned by each school such as the school status, the level of academic achievement, and the school location. Furthermore, the uniqueness and the characteristics of the schools are mentioned as follows.

- a. 4 State Junior High School Pakem (SMP N 4 Pakem), located in sub-urban area with the status International Standardized School (SBI), is the school with outstanding achievement in National Exam. The average score of each subject tested in National Exam is 9. This school ranked the second best for its academic achievement of all schools in the Province of Yogyakarta in 2006.
- b. 1 State Junior High School Depok (SMP N 1 Depok), located in urban area with the status National Standardized School (SSN), is the school with the average achievement in National Exam. The average score of each subject tested in National Exam is 7. This school ranked 78 for its academic achievement of all schools in the Province of Jogjakarta.
- c. 1 State Junior High School Ngaglik (SMP N 1 Ngaglik), located in rural area with the status State School (SN) is the school which tends to have low achievement in National Exam. The average score of each subject tested in National Exam is 5, and it ranked 285 of all schools in the Province of Jogjakarta.

The approach used in this study is qualitative research combined with grounded research using case study on those three schools. The methodology of this research varies from in-depth interview, observation, FDG, participation, questionnaire, and documentation. The key people involved are teachers, headmasters, students, parents, and school committee. The analysis is carried out using some activities such as data reduction, data display, and conclusion/verification.

Results and Discussions

Each school has different ways in developing school culture in *Social-Systems Model for School*, and it can be seen from the difference of ability of each school, as disclosed in the case study of SMP N 4 Pakem, SMP N 1 Depok, and SMP N 1 Ngaglik in applying MBS as one approach in school management. It can be understandable from some aspects, namely *structural aspect*, *individual aspect*, *cultural aspect*, and *political aspect*, as well as the process aspects, those are *teaching aspect* and *learning aspect*. Below is the description of school conditions based on the aforementioned considerations in the system analysis.

Table 1. School in Social System Analysis

Dimension	Description		
	SMP N 4 Pakem	SMP N 1 Depok	SMP N 1 Ngaglik
<p>Structural: Bureaucratic exceptions are formal demands and obligations set by the organizations. Bureaucratic roles are defined by sets of expectations</p>	<p>Strong motivation to be the best school in Jogjakarta is continuously grown by the school bureaucracy. It is in the ongoing process of designing internationally standardized school with the most complete facility and dormitory facility for full-day students.</p>	<p>The motivation founded by the school bureaucracy is to bring the school to be one of prominent and popular schools. It is still in the process of being nationally standardized school.</p>	<p>The motivation built by the school bureaucracy is to make the school as the eligible and accountable school which is accepted by the community as a reliable school to educate them.</p>
<p>Individual: The fact that a social unit has been formally established does not mean that all activities & interaction of its members conform strictly to structural requirement. Motivation and cognition are influenced by such factors as belief about personal control and competence, individual goals, personal expectations for failure and success, and work motives. In brief, the salient aspects of the individual system are personal needs, belief, goals, and cognitive orientation to work.</p>	<p>The headmaster continuously builds the commitment on all school components, secures and keeps developing the school quality. The teachers are proud of the school status and challenged to develop themselves optimally in order to be able to fit the status of internationally standardized school. The students are motivated to stand out and compete with other graduates from other schools in town to be able to get the best/favorite school in the next level.</p>	<p>The headmaster keeps improving the school quality by improving the academic and non-academic achievements. The teachers keep trying to improve their skills and abilities to motivate their students to be able to get more achievements. The students are motivated to develop their potency to be optimum.</p>	<p>The headmaster keeps building the students' awareness to study and learn. The teachers keep working hard to motivate their students to be willing and eager to study. The students are kept motivated by the headmaster and the teachers to study eagerly, to be disciplined and to be self confident in facing the future.</p>
<p>Cultural: Organization develops their own distinctive cultures. As organizational members interact, shared values, norms, beliefs, and way of thinking emerge. Culture distinguishes one organization from another and provides members with a sense of organizational identity. Culture represents the</p>	<p>Discipline is an important aspect that is developed by the school including: ways to dress, to learn, and to participate in various academic development programs. Learning environment is conditioned in such a way that it encourages students to love to learn in a discipline way at school by greening the school classes and environment. The school provides</p>	<p>Discipline is implemented consistently at the school although results have not optimum yet. Learning situation should be conducive although several students still expect greener environment for fresher condition. The school facilities are</p>	<p>Discipline is still a crucial aspect to be established by this school. Additionally, there are many ways and strategies to be implemented at the school. The school continues to create interesting learning atmosphere by designing more convenient places. The school is trying to</p>

Dimension	Description		
	SMP N 4 Pakem	SMP N 1 Depok	SMP N 1 Ngaglik
unwritten, feeling part of organization. Communication of feeling is easy among peers, especially friends.	various facilities such as laboratory to support learning processes. Communication among school principles, teachers, students, and staffs is being encouraged and established in friendly, formal, and informal ways such as greeting and shaking hands when they are meeting.	to be completed to meet the need of learning process. Communication among school principles, teachers, students, and staffs is encouraged to be more communicative, trustworthy, and friendly by intensively greet one another.	create exciting learning environment so that students do not feel imposed to study at the school. Communication among school principles, teachers, students, and staffs is still encouraged to be more friendly, open and trustworthy. Conflicts are minimized and togetherness is established.
Political: Politics is typically informal, often clandestine, and frequently illegitimate. Politics is an inevitable part of organizational life. There are always those who want to seize power for their own personal ends.	When making decisions concerning with school future existence development, the school principle requires establishing networking and relationship with the local and central government particularly in obtaining information that relates with funds. The school gives suggestion to the school stakeholders in decision and public policy making processes in the field of education.	The school principle is trying to influence the local government in making public decision such as there are two positions of school principles. The school tries to establish the society trust by making good use of social assets.	The school principle is struggling for introducing the school to the society as the school that once was top-ranked and qualified school in 1950s. The school tries to establish the society trust by making good use of social assets.

Source: analyzed from primary data, 2007

Based on the description, it can be concluded that within the process of transformation, the dynamics of schools are similarly determined by several aspects such as *structural*, *individual*, *cultural*, and *political*. However, in social reality each school shows different dynamics. It is the difference that makes dynamics among schools tend to be dissimilar in term of developing the qualified strategy at the level of education unit.

Furthermore, the strategy of school quality development is particularly determined by the school culture. This is supported by several strategic theory of quality development such as the theory of *The Total Quality Management*, *Organizing Bussines for Excelent* and Four Factor Quality Development Model that places school culture as a crucial variable for quality strategy.⁴ This argument is supported by Arcaro who specifically describes criteria for integrated qualified schools that are characterized by five-pillar quality and the foundation

⁴ Read further the theory differences in Zamroni (2005). *Meningkatkan Mutu Sekolah: Teori, Strategi dan Prosedur*. Page 2-12.

including vision-mission, belief and values of school, objectives and critical objective factors that determine the strength and success of transformation quality.

In this context, each school has its own culture differences and experiences in establishing the school culture. The different experiences describe the "uniqueness" in the school culture dynamics. However, the condition is normal, as explained by Beare who stated that there are several characteristics of anthropology approach in understanding school culture. They are:

"A unique mixing of ethnicity, values, experience, skills, and aspiration; special rituals and ceremonies; unique history of achievement and tradition; unique socio-economic and geographic location".

The school cultures of those three schools are different. The following are cultural phenomena of the schools that relate with the school quality development:

Table 2 . The Reality of School Culture

Aspect	Description			Capital
	SMP N 4 Pakem	SMP N 1 Depok	SMP N 1 Ngaglik	
School Status	International Standard School that commences to use english in the writings and symbols. (SBI)	National Standard Schools (SSN)	Public School	Intellectual, Social
School Location	Located in a suburb area of which the society occupations are agriculture goods and services.	Located in a suburb of dense population with middle to high end class of society and heterogeneous occupations and education.	Located in a countryside with the majority of farmer inhabitants.	Social
School Principle Leadership	The school principle leadership style tends to be authoritarian democratic and has started to implelement <i>transformational leadership</i> .	The school principle leadership style tends to be authoritarian democratic, yet has not started to implelement <i>transformational leadership</i> .	The school principle leadership style tends to be " <i>democratic, patron-client</i> "	Intellectual, Culture, Social
Ideology of Organization	Visionary: The school has had clear targets for the next five years and strongly confident to achieve them.	Not yet visionary: The school has not had clear targets for the next five years.	Not yet visionary: The school has not had clear targets for the next five years.	Culture
Appreciation to outstanding teachers	There is quite high appreciation in the form of monthly incentive reward for each teacher although different subjects may mean different incentives.	There has not been routine/monthly incentive reward program with fixed amount.	There has not been routine/monthly incentive reward program with fixed amount.	Social
Appreciation to outstanding students	The school provides special services for students' academic performance with special program and weekly	There has not been special program and services to develop students academic performance.	There has not been special program and services to develop students academic performance.	Social

Aspect	Description			Capital
	SMP N 4 Pakem	SMP N 1 Depok	SMP N 1 Ngaglik	
	evaluation.			
Teacher's aspiration of school quality	Teachers have high aspiration by participating in skill development program such as computer and English.	Not all teachers are willing to improve the school quality due to skill differences.	Not all teachers are willing to improve the school quality due to skill differences.	Intellectual, Culture, and Social
Parents' aspiration of school quality	Parents have high aspiration by supporting structured school programs. The School Committee fully supports the school programs.	Not all parents are involved in the process of creating quality development program for the school. The School Committee gives direction to the school program.	It is hard to involve parents in improving the school quality through the development of students' academic performance. The School Committee give suggestions to the school program.	Social
Fun student aspirations	Student aspirations have been fulfilled although students think they are lack of time to play and feel tired of various school activities. Cool environment, large clean school canteen, and clean toilets are as much as expected by the students.	Students expect to have cool environment, cool classrooms, and clean toilets. Canteen is not appropriate and during resting time there are snack and food sellers in the school yard instead.	Students expect clean school environment and complete sport equipments. Students are allowed to buy food outside the school area.	Culture
Teachers' performance at school	Not all teachers can teach in interesting ways and perform well in classrooms.	Not all teachers can teach in interesting ways and perform well in classrooms.	Not all teachers can teach in interesting ways and perform well in classrooms.	Culture
Students' performance	The school uniforms are typical for Junior High School students with standardized model, however, discipline is still strongly enforced for example the use of black shoes. On average, students wear their uniforms tidily.	The school uniforms are typical for Junior High School students with trendy teenager accessories and the color of the shoes does not have to be black.	The school uniforms are typical for Junior High School students with various model and trendy teenager accessories. The color of the shoes does not have to be black.	Culture
Exciting school	The school environment is full with media and infrastructures, however, international standard school atmosphere has not been represented yet in both the environment and classrooms.	The school environment has not full with media and infrastructures. In addition, the learning situation is hot due to the lack of green areas.	The school has not had sufficient media and infrastructures yet.	Social
Teaching Methods	Teachers have implemented <i>student centered learning</i> , but have not applied variative learning methods.	Teachers make efforts to implement <i>student centered learning</i> , but not all teachers have applied variative learning methods.	Teachers have not succeeded in implementing <i>student centered learning</i> . Many teachers still use teacher centered learning and have not applied variative learning methods yet.	Culture and Intellectual

Aspect	Description			Capital
	SMP N 4 Pakem	SMP N 1 Depok	SMP N 1 Ngaglik	
Favorite school program	Students are targeted to obtain the passing grade of 7 and are obliged to develop their writing ability through students' paper.	The school develops "English Day" program from Monday to Saturday and "Javanese Day" on Thursdays.	The school develops extracurricular program of sports and drumband.	Culture, Intellectual, and Social
School Programs that are less preferred	Boy Scout, Martial Arts, Tonti/PBB, Exercises, Teenager Scientific Writing	Tonti/PBB, Boy Scout, Teenager Red Cross, Private Courses, <i>Marching Band</i>	Boy Scout, Tonti/PBB, Sport, <i>Drumband</i> , Dancing	Intellectual, Culture
School Programs that must be routinely followed	Compulsory Extracurricular, Boy Scout, Boy Scout, Morning Exercises, <i>English Conversation Club</i> , Teenager Scientific Writing	Boy Scout, Extra Courses, Extracurricular, Tonti/ PBB, Basket Extracurricular	Boy Scout, Extracurricular, Private Courses, <i>Drumband</i> , Tonti/PBB	Intellectual, Culture

Source: calculated from primary data, 2007

Based on the above explanation, it can be concluded that a school covers some important aspects in the process of its performance improvement. It may be illustrated as follows:

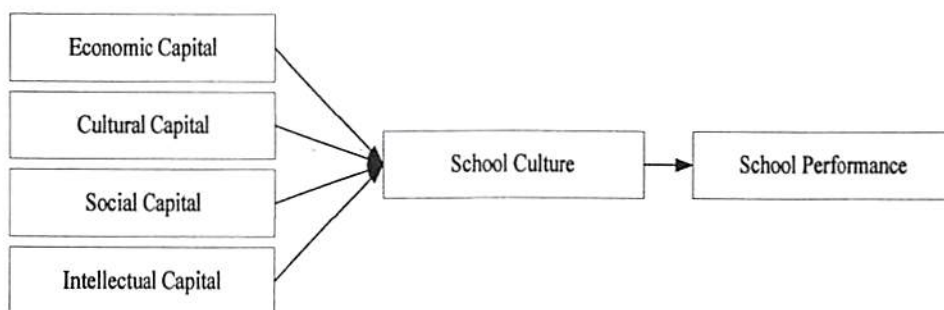


Figure 2. Capital of School Culture and School Performance

Thus, school culture is important in a school quality development on education unit level. This is in line with Fred C. Lunnerburg opinion's on the existence of culture in the organization of school ⁵ which states that:

"Culture represent the organization's cumulative learning, as reflected in organization structure, people, administrative processes, and external environment. This trends to pereputuate beliefs and behaviour and specifies, the goals, values, and mission of the organization and the criteria by which to measure the organization the organization's success".

⁵ Lunnerberg, Fred C., dkk. (2000). *Educational Administration*. Australia: Wadsworth, pg. 61.

Further, there is a tendency that a school culture is not similar to other education units. The culture difference can be analyzed through the understanding on the existence of subculture and dominant culture in the education unit as stated by Fred and friends⁶. Culture difference is natural because in a real school culture related to the value climate as stated by Jeanne H. Ballantine it influences the motivation, aspiration, and achievement. In this context the researcher supports Ballantine statement which states that⁷

“A school’s value climate results from the combination of student , family background, and socioeconomic status; that is, the composition of school’s student body”.

Besides, the difference in the culture building is determined by the capability of the headmaster as the “locomotive” in the quality change on the education unit. Based on the research results, the capability of the headmaster can be explained as follows:

Table 3. Personal Capability of the Headmaster, 2007

Objective Dimension	Headmaster Subjective Dimension		
	SMP N 4 Pakem	SMP N 1 Depok	SMP N 1 Ngaglik
Capacity	Programming basic Diagnostic Test to improve students’ capability.	Developing the role of “peers”.	Motivating students to love going to school.
Achievement	Futuristic and visionary in five year program.	Improving DIY Ranking.	Making the school as the champion in non-academic field (sports, drum band).
Responsibility	Developing Special Service Program.	Developing Superior Class Program and “Creativity Sparkling”.	Building “the trust” of the school neighborhood.
Status	As a leader supported by a success team to perform his function.	As a leader supported by a development team which is not optimal in their work yet.	As a leader, he has not had a solid quality development team.
Participant	Efficient in time and selective in attending meetings.	Active in attending any forum of teachers and headmasters.	Active in attending any forum of teachers and headmasters.

Source: processed from primary data, 2007

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that in the system analysis, the process of transformation conducted to develop the quality on the unit level is determined by the personal capability of the headmaster in building the school culture especially on the education unit level.

Based on the findings, there are two interesting things to be discussed in social-culture transformation process in the quality strategy, i.e. the problem of “how to build a school culture” and “who will play the important role in building a school culture”. It is interesting to discuss because firstly, building a school culture is not easy, even the process is considered as the most difficult one in the strategy of developing the quality. While, the most difficult

⁶ Ibid, pg. 61.

⁷ Ballantine, Jeanne H. (1998). Opcit, pg. 199.

process in building a school culture is the implementation of discipline. Whereas it is as a part of a school culture which is considered as the main point of education related to the principal of learning process which is the main part of education. Furthermore, in the learning process, discipline has three forms: 1) discipline is a habit which is done in daily activities; 2) discipline is a self-awareness to do something based on the rules determined by the policy maker; and 3) discipline is a mental behavior and a moral position to determine something right or wrong, and always say right for the right thing and wrong for the wrong one just the way it is⁸.

Discipline is not easy to be realized by a school because there are some causal motives, such as students are not ready to go to school; rules which are inconsistently applied; teachers are permissive; there is no control from parents; parents do not care about education. On the other hand, the motive purposes of discipline are: clear rules; gradual socialization; clear punishment for the rule breaker; to include students as the associates for students with problems; the teachers actively give appreciation for students. The difficulties in building learning discipline cause the difficulties improving the academic achievement. To improve academic achievement, the school tries to build the school culture which positively gives influences to students' achievement improvement.

In this study it is revealed that the power of headmaster in forming a school culture is relatively varied, especially in the internalization process on education unit level. This supports Coleman's opinion which recommends that the components in "value climate" including leadership, staff cooperation, student behavior, teacher control over school and classroom policy, and teacher morale⁹ will influence the behavior at school. In this case, the capability of headmaster is not similar one to another in creating a formula in the strategy of quality improvement especially in the academic achievement. Specifically, in creating a formula of quality improvement conducted by school, it tends adjusted to the school's potency and condition so that it presents the different learning climate at each school. This is in line with Coleman's opinion about the components in value climate which are determined by the accuracy of a school in creating a formula.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that:

The transformation of process in each school tends to describes different phenomena in each education unit. The difference is caused by the difference of school characteristics. The dynamics in the transformation of process of social-culture on the education unit are determined by *structural, individual, cultural, and political* aspects.

The improvement of quality on the education level is determined by the capability of school in building the culture. The dynamics in building the school culture is determined by the dynamics of the relationship various culture and role (headmaster, student, teacher, parents) aspects which are synergic in the school improvement through its performance. The obstacle in building the culture is the discipline application on the education unit level.

⁸Zamroni. (2001). Opcit, pg. 90.

⁹ Ibid, pg 200.

The power of building the school culture is determined by the headmaster's personal capability. Dynamics in school improvement has to conform to the conditions and the potencies of the educational unit. There is a tendency to develop "school performance" which is in line with the capital capacity of education in each educational unit, such as social , cultural capital, intellectual capital, and economic capital.

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