

Applied Neuroleadership in Indonesia

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Abstract

The relationship between brain and behaviour has perplexed philosophers and recent technological advances have allowed neuroscience to flourish, alongside growing romanticism that reductionist studies will allow us to understand complex interpersonal behaviours. Organizational cognitive neuroscience and neuroleadership are newly established interdisciplinary fields that use neuroscientific techniques to answer questions about behaviours within organizations. Neuroleadership aims to discover screening tools for good leaders, to improve leadership skills, and to identify unconscious factors affecting behaviour in hopes of improving management and leadership practices. Indonesian democracy is currently in a positive developmental condition and deserves to be appreciated. This opinion refers to several political realities such as the implementation of elections that develop from the district /city, provincial level, and finally at the national level, which takes place in relatively safe and controlled environment, without causing turmoil or violence and does not cause chaos. A successful democracy and great leaders have brought Indonesia to have economic growth and has provided it the resources and clout to exercise a greater regional and global role.

Keyword: Neuroleadership, sociocultural, community, cognitive, decision making, responsibility, democracy of Indonesia.

Background

Indonesia is a very large country with an area that stretches between two oceans (Pacific and Indian), is located between two continents (Asia and Australia), and consists of more than 17 thousand islands. It is inhabited by hundreds of ethnic groups that speak in thousands of different languages. Indonesian democracy is currently in a positive developmental condition and deserves to be appreciated. This opinion refers to several political realities such as the implementation of elections that develop from the district /city, provincial level, and finally at the national level, which takes place in a relatively safe and controlled environment, without causing turmoil or violence and does not cause chaos (Ikrar T., 2019:1-340).

Furthermore, in terms of the economy, has also experienced remarkable progress. In fact, Indonesia will become the fourth largest economy in the world in 2050, jumping from eighth position in 2016. Before reaching that position, Indonesia will be in fifth position in 2030. This prediction was written by one of the world's leading consulting companies, Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC), which, among others, cites data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). According to the PWC, in 2016, Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was recorded at 3 trillion USD and will surge to 5.4 trillion USD in 2030 and 10.5 trillion USD in 2050. In 2030, the Indonesian economy will shift the position of Russia and Brazil, and in 2050, will shift the position of Japan. The three countries that will be bigger than Indonesia in a row are China, India and the United States. (Ikrar T., 2019:1-340; Argang Ghadiri et al, 2012:1-155).

Indonesia's rapidly growing success in all sectors including politics and economy, is largely attributed to better leadership. Indonesia's leadership can be seen in a neuroscience perspective called Neuroleadership.

Growth Mindset

This fact gives new hope in almost all lines of human life, including leadership. If somebody can learn and grow without limits, so can a community, organization, or a nation. In the prologue, we mentioned "reasons for optimism", herein lies the most basic scientific argument. If one individual can change and develop for the better, no doubt with a community, organization, or nation. The issue is whether the community or organization is aware of this possibility, and whether they know where the development will be directed (Ikrar T., 2015:1-400).

There are challenges and opportunities for those in leadership positions. On one side, a leader (should) realize the potential for change and development,

but on the other side, a leader must be able to make all in community or organization aware, both about the potential and direction of its development. Then comes the big imperative: let's grow, let's grow together, let's walk towards the target. To be able to accelerate change and development, all sides need to have a growth mindset. Everyone needs to believe that they have an opportunity to grow and develop without limits (Ikrar T., 2019:1-340; T Ikrar, 2016: 1-11).

This is where a leader deals with the mentality of the individuals they lead. Mentality itself created from experience, education, life history, and the environment. In reality, there are indeed people who have a growth mindset. They are people who have optimism about seeing the future, because they believe that a better future can be fought for together. But beside that there are also people who "feel ready". They always claim, "This is me." They do not want to change and always argue "I have principles." People like this tend to be in denial to any possibilities, and we call this fixed mindset.

The term "tendency" is used here, because basically no one is 100% in growth mindset or 100% fixed mindset. These things needs to be proposed because many leaders think so. In fact, many think that the classification is so mechanical that a switch process from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset can be carried out. "If that's the case, everything will be easy," said David Rock, founder of the Neuroleadership Institute. "But the reality is not that simple. In a person there are both fixed-mindset and growth-mindset. That you are so confident you can learn to drive a car but at the same time being sure you will not be able to play the violin proves that both of these mindsets are within you". (Ikrar T., 2019:1-340; John Hawksworth et al, 2015: 1-46).

Leading Transformation

It seems that David Rock was right. In every human being there are two tendency: not to change and to change. It concerns both mental attitude and way of thinking, i.e., mindset. But at the same time, we realize that the mentality and mindset of growth will bring us to the new reality we dream of, we call it the new age of progressive Indonesia, therein lies the assignment of a leader. A leader must be able to (1) make people aware of the need to move from the fixed mindset to the growth mindset, and (2) must be able to lead the transformation itself.

Using the term of Hijrah, there is an "ignorant situation" in Neuroleadership that needs to be realized and pondered. By default, man will work with his emotional brain. When making a decision or responding to something, our emotion arises first. When it comes to choosing food, drinks,



friends, life partners, even political choices, the first consideration that arises is something nice; which is more satisfying. The selection process is based on like or dislike. Rational reasons usually follow later, more as a justification (Kuhlman et. al, 2018: 103-107; Argang Ghadiri et al, 2012:1-155).

This last idea is not a new discovery. Long time ago advertisers, political campaign planners, and business negotiators have been using that fact. With the knowledge they have, they influence societies to like or dislike something, so that it is then easily directed to certain decisions. Just look at cigarette advertisements that actually laugh at the dangers of smoking. It was precisely the joke that spread and created a deep connection between the community and cigarette corporation.

The emotional brain is the most ancient part of the brain. It exists in the most primitive animals, the reptilian group. That's why the emotional brain is called the reptilian brain. In general, it works for survival purposes. Therefore, it only sees things from two sides: threat or opportunity. If in motivation segment we know the terms of reward and punishment, that actually being exploited is one's reptilian brain (Kuhlman et. al, 2018: 103-107).

The brutal fact that we face is most humans base their decisions on this emotional brain. People make the decision to do or not do something for fear of something bad, or to achieve something

Humans, or homosapiens, have a modern brain, which is the conscious brain or the thinking brain; however small this volume is, this conscious brain distinguishes humans from other living things. This brain makes people have self-awareness; allows people to have a value system; can distinguish between what is good and what is not good; it can even make people think transcendently, and thinking about things that go beyond what is captured by the senses. The modern brain takes people to the clairvoyant and wisdom.

Modernity of Thinking as Culture

The key word in Neuroleadership is: Hijrah. At the first opportunity, Neuroleadership is not about how leader changes those who are led, but rather changes himself. Neuroleadership must begin from awareness that transformation must take place within himself first. He must be critical of his mentality and mindset. He must understand how far he has a fixed mindset, and how far he has a growth mindset. He must also begin to know himself, how extensive the reptilian brain still fetters within himself, and how extensive his life has been led by conscious and a value system (Ikrar T., 2019:1-340; T Ikrar, 2016: 1-11).

Only when the leaders are able to transform themselves do they have the opportunity to help his tribe to shift; to leave fixed mindset and adopt growth



mindset; for moving from reptilian brain to human brain, from emotional brain to conscious brain, from impulsive tendencies to willingness to contemplate.

But one thing must be understood here, the transformation does not mean leaving and ignoring the old. The emotional brain remains in us, and it is there for a purpose. Humans still need fear, anxiety, stress, sadness, emotion, joy, happiness, and so on. Transformation or hijrah here is more in the sense that we must be more able to control; we must be able to use all parts of the brain wisely and intelligently (John Hawksworth et al, 2015: 1-46).

In this flow of thinking, the vision of progressive Indonesia can be placed and discussed. The vision of progressive Indonesia is about building and bringing the Indonesian people more "wisely". This is about how we build emotional intelligence to people; a people that able to process their emotions, so that they become nice, friendly, and feel what other people feel. We must bring this nation have emotional and social intelligence. At the same time, we as a nation must also be a "smart prefrontal cortex". At the level of awareness, we must increase wisdom, and on the side of thought, we must become superior in science and technology.

Neuroleadership Application

The relationship between brain and behaviour has perplexed philosophers and scientists since the time of the ancient Greeks. Recent technological advances have allowed neuroscience to flourish, alongside growing romanticism that reductionist studies will allow us to understand complex interpersonal behaviours. Organizational cognitive neuroscience and neuroleadership are newly established interdisciplinary fields that use neuroscientific techniques to answer questions about behaviours within organizations. Neuroleadership aims to discover screening tools for good leaders, to improve leadership skills, and to identify unconscious factors affecting behaviour in hopes of improving management and leadership practices (Argang Ghadiri et al, 2012:1-155).

Many people assume that leadership is an art that requires special skills. These skills can be the ability to manage something that is not possible to be possible. Thus, a leader will be able to determine the right direction and take responsibility for what he decides (Ikrar T., 2019:1-340; Kuhlman et. al, 2018: 103-107).

Neuroleadership is a science that combines leadership and brain function. Just as the brain is created as a policy maker, so that the brain is held accountable. Leadership creates the responsibility of the decision-making process.

The decision-making process is a very interesting interaction in the brain. Of course, there are good and bad risks, but more important than that is where leadership is headed. In the end, leadership is about responsibility of life and hereafter.

The decision-making process systematically starts from the parietal lobes which is stimulated to the frontal lobes, then from the frontal lobes arise policies that are passed on to the occipital lobes. We expect a mutual beneficial result from this process. The question is, how to get the win-win solution?

We need sensitive leaders to be analytical before making a decision. That sensitivity is based on various variables: is this what is needed, is this what expect the people, is this good for the organization, is it useful, and what are the risks of this decision?

The leader requires long experience and extensive knowledge. The longer his experience and the more extensive his knowledge, the more able he creates connection between his mind and soul to merge in making decisions in order for the decision to become more accurate.

There are many factors that are considered by a leader in making decision whether academic, cultural, or religious theology. This is closely related to local wisdom in Indonesia, where every leader is expected to be able to read the needs of nature and be integrated with it. That's what other creatures don't have on earth: changing the environment. Only humans are able to repair or damage their environment, then develop, or even destroy it.

A leader based on Neuroleadership is expected to be able to find the hopes of the people, not those who frighten people with various threats. The greater hope that are fostered will make leadership more effective.

Neuroleadership is a new paradigm. From there, will arise a new approach that can look at human behavior based on brain structure, even to see one's political tendencies based on the basic character of the party or candidate chosen.

Talking about the brain can't be separated from two things: physical and non-physical forms. Physical form can be called as brain structure, while non-physical form is also called invisible soul. All are interrelated and complementary. A person with psychiatric symptoms could be due to a brain structure that has problems either due to physical factors or substances that can cause brain injury. From there, emerges a personality that has an influence on performance.

As we all know, in the brain there are 187 billion cells, each of which has the same ability as one of the most sophisticated computers today. That connection determines typology or character of person. Is he a calm or emotional,

extreme, lateral or moderate thinker? All that cannot be separated from the 3 processes that occur in the brain: neuroplasticity, neurogenesis, and neuro-compensation. Uniquely, the signal and character can be mapped and pictured in the brain (Ikrar T.et al, 2013: 7).

What needs to be emphasized in that process is neuro-compensation. We could say neuro-compensation is the ability to rise after a fall. For example, when we learn to ride a bicycle, we need to keep balance so that we fall, rise, then fall again. But from there, comes kind of expertise that change us from unable to able to ride a bicycle. Finally, we have reflexes when riding it and in the end we feel relaxed without the burden.

It is undeniable that neuro-compensation is largely determined by two main factors: genetic and environmental. However, genetic factors contribute to a person's character, and the environment enriches that character. People who are raised in a good leadership environment by a president, for example, will create leadership character in him. Including bad characters like mafia children who eventually "joined" to become mafia.

There was a study in America that looked at voter tendencies based on brain structure. It turns out that there are differences in brain structure between those who vote for a Democratic party that is in fact a lower-class society, and a Republican party that is in fact a middle to upper class. Even the tendency of choice can remain up to seven generations unless environmental factors "successfully" change it.

In the case of Indonesia, Neuroleadership can be used to see political tendencies based on the habits of the brain. Of course, what is expected here is the occurrence of neuroplasticity which makes the brain become healthier and grow. Neuroleadership is a novel thought of how leaders use their minds and thoughts. It is about how a leader prioritizes his mind from all forms of emotions, egoism, extremism, and others. This scientific discipline should be viewed from four angles of truth, starting from philosophical truth, sociological truth, juridical truth, and cultural truth. Neuroleadership expresses the truth with academic language and can be justified.

With Neuroleadership, a leader required to keep moving, growing, and developing better from day to day. In psychology known as positive psychology, that is also what is fought by Neuroleadership: seeing things from the strength point. Neuroleadership becomes a new enlightenment that does not leave the humanity, because the goal of leadership is grace and love. For this reason, leadership with a healthy brain is a new need and hope.

Going forward, the world is confronted with something that is uncertain, volatile, complex, and ambiguous. That's where the role of Neuroleadership to maintain the sanity and exposure of Indonesia. Of course, it begins from individuals who have educated their brains (emotions).

Indonesian leaders are who have a comprehensive capacity, so they are brave to take risks and be responsible. For that, we need to choose the right leader. It means the leader who has growth mindset (transformational leadership). (John Hawksworth et al, 2015: 1-46; Argang Ghadiri et al, 2012:1-155).

Finally, Neuroleadership is a model where phenomena are no longer able to explain complexity. An exposed leader is needed who can solve various problems: leaders who have the capacity to transform for the better. Thus, all Indonesian people can be proud because they already have an ideal leader model, that is the leadership of Neuroleadership which is engraved within themselves.***

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