

Leadership and Decision Making in Adaptive Management Related to Improving the Quality of Higher Education in Makassar City

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to ascertain the correlation between leadership and decision-making within the higher education setting in Makassar, with particular emphasis on enhancing the educational quality. This research employs qualitative methodologies. The research employed in-depth interviews with educational leaders and decision makers as the primary instruments to investigate the ramifications of collaborative leadership, responsive decision making, and student participation in the endeavor to achieve excellence in higher education. The aforementioned findings substantiate the notion that these practices play a substantial role in fostering an inclusive and responsive educational milieu. Collaborative leadership fosters innovation and inclusivity, while responsive decision-making guarantees the effective fulfillment of student needs. The active engagement of students contributes significantly to the enhancement of the educational experience. This study presents explicit suggestions for educational institutions in Makassar to persist in promoting collaborative leadership, responsive decision-making, and student engagement. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of adaptive leadership in effectively addressing persistent challenges within a constantly evolving educational environment. The implementation of evaluative practices and the allocation of adequate resources are essential for the maintenance and progression of these improvements. Encouragement is given for the collaboration among educational institutions, regulatory bodies, and local government institutions to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and optimization of resources.

Keywords: Adaptive Management, Leadership, Education Quality.

INTRODUCTION

The significance of higher education in the advancement of a nation's society and economy cannot be overstated. The role of higher education in the development of individuals who possess competence, innovation, and global competitiveness is significant (Wijaya et al., 2016). The impact of higher education on a nation's competitiveness, economic growth, and societal welfare is significant (Ali, 2009). In the context of Makassar City, which holds significant importance as one of the prominent

urban centers in Indonesia, the advancement of tertiary education plays a pivotal role in bolstering the progress and expansion of the locality.

The quality of higher education in Makassar City, similar to numerous other regions, is contingent upon a multitude of factors, encompassing leadership and decision-making within the realm of educational administration. According to Djatola (2021), robust leadership and proficient decision-making possess the capacity to propel higher education institutions

forward and enhance the caliber of education provided. Hence, the objective of this study is to comprehensively comprehend and analyze the significance of leadership and decision-making within the framework of adaptive management, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the overall quality of higher education in Makassar City.

Despite the existence of numerous studies on leadership, decision making, and higher education management, there remains a necessity to conduct a more focused examination of these dynamics within the specific context of Makassar City. Cultural disparities, educational regulations, and the specific socio-economic contexts of the local area can impart distinct attributes to the management of higher education in this particular region (Stephens et al., 2008).

This research aims to provide valuable insights to policy makers, leaders of higher education institutions, and educational practitioners in Makassar City regarding the role of leadership and decision making in adaptive management within the context of higher education. The ultimate goal is to enhance the quality of higher education in this region. Furthermore, the outcomes of this study can serve as a valuable scientific contribution to the existing body of literature on higher education management and the application of adaptive management within the local context.

In recent times, there has been notable progress in the field of higher education in Makassar City, as stated by Arief (2020). Numerous private and public universities, as well as other institutions of higher education, have experienced significant growth, indicating a steadfast dedication to expanding the availability of higher education to the general populace (Arifin, 2016). Nevertheless, this expansion also presents novel challenges, particularly with regards to the preservation and enhancement of the educational standards offered.

The identification and comprehensive understanding of leadership and effective decision making in the management of higher

education are crucial elements that warrant attention (Ajefri, 2017; Bess et al., 2012). The utilization of qualitative research methods will enable us to examine these matters from a comprehensive perspective. This study will also contribute to the existing body of knowledge by investigating adaptive management practices that may be specific to higher education in Makassar City.

In a more expansive framework, this study also possesses the capacity to offer valuable insights for higher education policy in Indonesia (Sukomardojo, 2023). By comprehending the optimal approaches that are currently being implemented in Makassar City, both the central and regional governments, along with various stakeholders involved in higher education policy across the nation, can potentially incorporate pertinent strategies and methodologies to enhance the overall quality of higher education at a national scale.

The significance of this research extends beyond the local context of Makassar City, encompassing substantial national implications for the advancement of the higher education system in Indonesia. In general, it is anticipated that this research will serve as a significant contribution towards enhancing the quality of higher education, fostering economic growth, and promoting community welfare in Makassar City and Indonesia as a whole.

In addition to its direct contributions to the advancement of higher education, this research holds significance in relation to global trends within the field of education. Numerous nations and higher education establishments across the globe are progressively acknowledging the significance of adaptive management in addressing swift transformations in the realms of education, technology, and society (Sulfemi, 2019). Hence, this study can offer significant insights for professionals in higher education and international researchers who are interested in the domain of educational management.

In addition to its practical advantages, this research will also make a valuable contribution to the advancement of theoretical knowledge in the field of higher education management. The

formulation of a localized theory, grounded in the specific context of Makassar City, holds potential as a foundation for future research endeavors within this domain. Furthermore, the outcomes of this study can be extrapolated to various other contexts by making necessary adaptations, thereby serving as a source of inspiration for fellow researchers.

Within the realm of education policy, this research has the potential to offer recommendations that can be utilized by local, provincial, and national governments to enhance higher education policies in a manner that is both efficacious and attuned to the demands of society and the regional labor market.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the potential for enhancing the quality of higher education in Makassar City. It is anticipated that this research will make a significant contribution and offer practical solutions to the challenges encountered by higher education institutions in this locality. In general, this research holds substantial significance in endeavors to enhance the caliber of tertiary education and equip students with the necessary skills to confront forthcoming obstacles in Makassar City, as well as on a broader scale within Indonesia.

In an era of heightened global interconnectedness and intense competition, the caliber of higher education plays a pivotal role in determining a nation's competitiveness and its populace's capacity to engage in the global economy. Hence, placing emphasis on enhancing the caliber of higher education in Makassar City is a highly strategic measure in bolstering economic development and societal well-being, while also addressing global imperatives pertaining to the quality of human capital.

The significance of this research resides in the endeavor to comprehend and ascertain efficacious and regionally tailored adaptive management practices in Makassar City. By acquiring a more profound comprehension of the significance of leadership and decision-making within this particular framework,

educational institutions in the region can implement tangible measures to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and pertinence of the education they provide.

Furthermore, this research presents additional prospects for collaboration among institutions of higher education, local governmental bodies, and other pertinent policy stakeholders. By gaining a deeper comprehension of the intricacies of adaptive management within the realm of higher education, it becomes possible to establish more efficient and fruitful collaborations aimed at surmounting prevailing obstacles.

This research holds significant value in the context of enhancing the quality of higher education and promoting the advancement of Makassar City. Additionally, it contributes to the overall development of higher education at the national level, considering its relevance and potential for substantial impact. The anticipated outcomes of this research endeavor are expected to yield significant insights, offer practical guidance, and serve as a source of inspiration for policy makers, educational institution leaders, and fellow researchers who are invested in the advancement of higher education development and the implementation of adaptive management strategies.

METHODS

The present study employs a qualitative methodology. The population encompassed in this study comprises individuals holding leadership positions, decision-making authority, and professional roles within diverse higher education institutions located in Makassar City. Given the comprehensive nature of qualitative research, the sample will be purposefully selected. The study will encompass a sample size of 15 participants who will be chosen based on their comprehension of leadership practices, decision-making, and adaptive management within their respective institutions. The sample will consist of individuals occupying leadership positions in higher education institutions, including faculty deans, decision-making personnel, and

lecturers who possess pertinent experience. The research will employ two primary instruments: (1) In-depth interviews utilizing a structured thematic guide to acquire a comprehensive comprehension of leadership and decision-making experiences, perspectives, and practices; (2) Analysis of pertinent documents, including policies, annual reports, and meeting notes, to supplement and reinforce the insights derived from the interviews. The process of data collection involves conducting in-depth interviews with the participants. The interviews will be recorded and subsequently transcribed for the purpose of conducting further analysis. The interviews will be carried out within a welcoming and encouraging environment, employing a semi-structured methodology that allows for adaptability in addressing any emerging topics throughout the interview process. Furthermore, supplementary data will be gathered by means of analyzing pertinent documents. The process of data analysis was conducted utilizing a content analysis methodology. The analysis of interview transcripts and documents was conducted in order to discern patterns, themes, and relationships within the realm of leadership, decision-making, and adaptive management in the higher education sector of Makassar City. The data is systematically encoded, categorized, and interpreted in order to generate pertinent findings. Conduct a comprehensive analysis of data to construct a coherent narrative regarding the significance of leadership and decision-making processes in endeavors aimed at enhancing the caliber of higher education within the region.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Leadership Analysis in Higher Education Management in Makassar City

One of the important findings in this research is related to a collaborative and inclusive leadership approach in higher education management in Makassar City. Most respondents underscored the importance of collaboration between leaders, lecturers, staff and students in decision-making and

management of higher education institutions. One interview with a dean expressed this view:

"We view leadership as a joint effort. I always encourage staff and lecturers to participate in the decision-making process. Sometimes, important decisions are taken through dialogue and deliberation. This creates a sense of ownership among them and encourages shared responsibility in running the institution"

The interviews demonstrate the prevalent culture of collaboration that is embraced by the majority of higher education institutions in Makassar City. The responsibility for leadership extends beyond institutional leaders and encompasses a collaborative effort among multiple stakeholders. This methodology enables the utilization of a wide range of viewpoints and backgrounds in the process of making decisions, thereby fostering a more democratic atmosphere and allowing room for innovative ideas to flourish.

In addition, another discovery in this study reveals that leaders in Makassar City are required to possess a considerable degree of adaptability when fulfilling their leadership responsibilities. An interview conducted with the rector of a higher education institution serves as an illustrative example of this concept:

"We must be ready to face change, whether in terms of technology, societal demands, or changes in education policy. Flexibility in leadership is key to maintaining the relevance and quality of higher education"

This approach highlights the necessity of continuous adaptation in the management of higher education in Makassar City. The rapid advancements in technology, evolving job market demands, and shifting social dynamics necessitate the presence of leaders who possess the readiness and ability to adapt and alter strategic direction. The capacity for adaptability in leadership within higher education institutions is crucial for maintaining relevance and effectiveness amidst the ever-changing landscape of challenges.

The aforementioned findings indicate that the foundation for effectively managing higher education in Makassar City lies in the implementation of collaborative and flexible leadership. This approach fosters an inclusive environment that is capable of adapting to the ever-changing dynamics of the educational landscape.

Furthermore, the results of this study also demonstrate a profound dedication to the promotion of sustainable learning within higher education institutions in Makassar City. One participant, an experienced lecturer at a university, expressed:

"We are always looking for ways to learn from our experiences and improve our education. Continuous evaluation of management practices and decision making is an important part of our culture. We are always looking for ways to get better."

In this context, a leadership approach creates a culture that encourages continuous evaluation and improvement. Leadership that supports continuous learning leads to continuous improvement in the quality of higher education in Makassar City.

Apart from that, this research also reveals the importance of student participation in decision making in higher education institutions. One student interviewed stated:

"We feel valued because we are given the opportunity to participate in decisions that impact our education. This gives us a sense of ownership and makes us feel more responsible for our educational process"

Student participation in decision making is an important aspect of inclusive leadership in Makassar City. This creates a climate where students feel actively involved in improving their own education, and strengthens the commitment of higher education institutions to respond to student needs and aspirations.

In addition, this research highlights the challenges in maintaining the quality of higher education along with the growing expansion of higher education institutions in Makassar City. A higher education leader said:

" The growth of higher education institutions is a good thing, but we must also ensure that the quality of education is maintained. This is a real challenge that must be overcome."

These challenges underscore the pivotal role that leaders in higher education play in upholding the quality of higher education as institutions expand. It is imperative to develop a prudent approach in order to safeguard the integrity of higher education amidst its expansion, so as to prevent any compromise on the quality of education provided.

The findings of this study offer significant insights into leadership practices in higher education management in Makassar City. These practices are characterized by a collaborative, flexible, learning-oriented, and inclusive approach. The aforementioned findings offer a comprehensive comprehension of the significant role that leadership assumes in enhancing the quality of higher education within the Makassar city region. Furthermore, these findings shed light on the effective strategies that can be employed to surmount the emerging challenges in this context.

Decision Making in Adaptive Management in Higher Education

The research results show that decision making in higher education in Makassar City often involves a collaborative process involving various stakeholders. One respondent, a decision-making staff member, explained this process:

" We hold regular meetings where staff, lecturers, and leaders discuss and provide input into decision making. Everyone has a say in this process."

Collaborative decision making creates an environment where multiple perspectives and ideas can be contributed, which in turn can result in better decisions and better support the educational institution's vision and mission.

Apart from that, decision makers in higher education in Makassar City must be responsive to changes in the dynamics of education, technology and society. A faculty dean said:

" We must be prepared to change our policies and practices along with rapid developments in technology and student needs."

The ability to respond quickly to change is critical in decision making in higher education. A dynamic educational environment requires adaptive decision making.

Higher education institutions in Makassar City actively involve students in decision making. A student explains his experience:

" We are often invited to provide input on changes to policy, curriculum and educational services. This makes us feel valued and have a say in our studies."

Student involvement in decision making is an important aspect of adaptive management. This creates a sense of belonging among students, and allows educational institutions to better respond to student needs and aspirations. There is a practice of continuous evaluation of policies and decisions taken. A leader of a higher education institution stated:

"We regularly evaluate our policies and decisions to ensure that they are still relevant and effective. We find out what is working and what needs improvement."

The practice of continuous evaluation facilitates ongoing learning and enhances the process of decision making. This practice enables the agency to adapt and rectify policies that may no longer be in accordance with its goals and vision.

The findings of this study demonstrate the significance of collaborative, responsive, and inclusive decision-making within the framework of adaptive management in the higher education sector in Makassar City. The aforementioned findings highlight the crucial involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process and provide evidence that such practices foster an adaptable, responsive, and pertinent educational environment that caters to the needs of students and the evolving educational landscape. To enhance the management of higher education in Makassar City, policymakers, educational institution leaders, and practitioners in the field of higher

education can utilize these findings as a valuable reference. The utilization of collaborative, responsive, and inclusive methodologies in the process of decision making holds the potential to facilitate the attainment of the objective of enhancing the caliber of higher education. Moreover, it guarantees the continued pertinence and efficacy of higher education institutions situated in Makassar City in the face of forthcoming trials.

The Relationship between Leadership and Decision Making and the Quality of Higher Education

This research reveals a strong relationship between leadership practices, decision making, and the quality of higher education in Makassar City. Interviews with higher education leaders and decision-making staff revealed the following findings:

A number of leaders of higher education institutions underscored the important role of collaborative leadership in improving the quality of education. One respondent, a chancellor, stated:

"We believe that leadership based on collaboration is the key to our success. We work closely with faculty, staff and students to develop relevant and innovative academic programs."

Collaborative leadership creates an environment where fresh ideas and diverse perspectives can contribute to improving the quality of higher education. This creates a system that is more responsive to change.

In addition, decision making that is responsive to student needs and aspirations has a positive impact on the quality of education. A faculty dean stated:

"We listen to our students. Our decisions regarding curriculum, student services and policy changes always focus on how they will impact the student experience."

Student involvement in decision making and policy creates an educational experience that is

better suited to student needs, which in turn improves the quality of higher education.

Leaders who are adaptive and responsive to change are key in overcoming the challenges faced by higher education institutions. One higher education institution leader explained:

"Change is constant in the world of education. We must always be ready to respond to these changes and ensure that the quality of education is maintained."

The implementation of adaptive and responsive leadership within higher education institutions enables them to effectively confront challenges and maintain their relevance amidst the rapid transformations occurring in the realm of education.

The correlation between collaborative leadership, responsive decision-making towards students, and adaptive leadership with the quality of higher education is readily apparent in the findings of this study. This fosters an educational setting that is characterized by adaptability, inclusivity, and responsiveness to the diverse needs of students and the ever-evolving nature of the educational landscape.

Prior studies conducted in the realm of higher education leadership and management have consistently underscored the significance of collaborative leadership practices, responsive decision-making, and student engagement in fostering a more inclusive and responsive educational milieu (Mardizal & Jalinus, 2023). The findings of this study suggest that the practices examined in previous research are indeed relevant in enhancing the quality of higher education. Hence, to enhance the caliber of higher education in Makassar City, it is imperative to persistently promote collaborative leadership practices that engage diverse stakeholders, guarantee decision-making responsiveness to student requirements, and activate student participation in the policy formulation process. The implementation of leadership training that places emphasis on ongoing adaptation and evaluation is also recommended. By adopting this approach, higher education institutions can ensure the

preservation of elevated standards of educational quality and sustain their pertinence in confronting forthcoming challenges.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that previous studies have underscored the significance of being responsive to change within an educational setting that is experiencing rapid transformations (Fakhrudin et al., 2013). This pertains to the notion of adaptive leadership, which plays a crucial role in surmounting challenges and upholding the pertinence of higher education institutions amidst a period of incessant transformation. Hence, it is imperative to provide training to the leaders of higher education institutions in Makassar City, equipping them with the necessary skills to promptly and efficiently adapt to changes.

Within the scope of this study, the findings of prior research indicate a distinct trajectory for enhancing the caliber of higher education in Makassar City. By incorporating the principles of collaborative leadership, responsive decision-making, student participation, and adaptive leadership into their educational management strategies, higher education institutions have the potential to enhance the learning experience and effectively cater to the needs of their students. In addition, the implementation of ongoing evaluation practices will guarantee the perpetual relevance and efficacy of current policies and practices. The following suggestions can assist higher education establishments in Makassar City in sustaining their competitiveness within a dynamic educational landscape and upholding the superior standards of higher education.

Furthermore, within the framework of this study, it is imperative to recognize the significance of students' active engagement in decision-making processes and the management of educational institutions. Students who perceive themselves as having a sense of agency in the decision-making process are inclined to exhibit higher levels of satisfaction and active engagement in their educational pursuits. Hence, the implementation of measures that facilitate student engagement, such as the establishment of discussion forums or student committees,

plays a crucial role in enhancing the caliber of higher education.

Suggestions for enhancing the caliber of higher education in Makassar City should encompass approaches that incorporate these exemplary methodologies, foster a culture of collaboration, adaptability to evolving circumstances, and increased student engagement. By embracing this methodology, institutions of higher education have the potential to greatly enhance the caliber of their educational offerings, furnish an enhanced learning milieu for students, and adeptly address the evolving requirements of the dynamic realm of education. Furthermore, the implementation of ongoing improvement strategies and frequent assessment will aid the institution in maintaining its relevance and efficiency in the pursuit of its objectives pertaining to the provision of high-quality higher education.

Furthermore, it is imperative to guarantee that the execution of the proposed practices outlined in this study is backed by adequate resources. This encompasses the provision of staff training and development, the allocation of appropriate budgetary resources, and the implementation of software and technology that enhances decision-making efficiency and fosters student engagement.

To attain success in the implementation of these recommendations, it is imperative to foster collaboration among higher education institutions in Makassar City, alongside educational supervisory bodies and local governments. Such collaboration can yield significant advantages by facilitating the exchange of best practices and resources.

Hence, the implementation of enhancement strategies encompassing collaborative leadership, responsive decision-making, student participation, adaptive leadership, and continuous evaluation, bolstered by sufficient resources and inter-institutional collaboration, holds the potential to facilitate the attainment of quality improvement objectives by higher education institutions in Makassar City. The pursuit of advanced education and the ability to

effectively address ongoing educational challenges are of paramount importance.

CONCLUSION

Effective leadership that prioritizes collaboration among leaders, lecturers, staff, and students is of paramount significance in enhancing the overall quality of higher education. Collaboration fosters an atmosphere conducive to innovation, the exchange of ideas, and the ability to promptly address educational requirements. The incorporation of student aspirations and needs into the decision-making process has a beneficial effect on the overall quality of higher education. This facilitates a more suitable and fulfilling educational encounter for students. In an era characterized by swift transformations within the educational landscape, the significance of leadership that possesses adaptability and responsiveness to change cannot be overstated. Such leadership is crucial in effectively addressing the myriad challenges that arise. The ability of leadership to effectively respond to external dynamics is crucial for higher education institutions to maintain their relevance and effectiveness. The active participation of students in the decision-making process is a crucial element in the development of educational experiences that are pertinent and suitable to their individual requirements. Students who perceive themselves as having a sense of agency in the decision-making process are inclined to experience higher levels of satisfaction and engagement in the learning process. To enhance the caliber of higher education in Makassar City, stakeholders such as policy makers, educational institution leaders, and higher education practitioners may consider consulting the following research outcomes. Collaborative practices, responsiveness to students, and adaptive leadership serve as fundamental pillars for fostering continuous improvement within educational systems. In the ever-evolving realm of education, the pivotal factors for upholding the exceptional standards of higher education and ensuring the continued relevance of higher education

institutions in cultivating prospective leaders are change and adaptability.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We acknowledge the support funding for research, authorship and publication of this article from Center for Education Financial Service-Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Puslapdik-Kemendikbudristek) and Indonesia Endowment Funds for Education (LPDP).

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