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## **SERVANT LEADERSHIP APPROACH TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The influence of globalization is also felt in the world of education, especially universities, where with the existence of education law that allows foreign universities to operate in Indonesia, disguising competitors is not only from local universities but also foreign universities, so to be able to compete it is necessary to improve performance from the university and one of the factors that need to be considered is the existence of an effective leader.*

*Leadership is the art of influencing others to discuss the vision of a leader who has experienced a paradigm shift, from traditional leadership approaches to servant leadership approaches, which means initially more to the authority of a leader to be a leader who serves and empowers followers. The servant leadership approach is certainly different from the transformational leadership approach when viewed from several aspects such as: the role of a leader and the role of followers. Leadership Servant emphasizes more on moral and social justice so that it is more suitable to be applied to educational institutions because it is an institution that cares more about the conditions of social justice, because in universities the followers are mature professionally so that it is easier to harmonize and understand the interrelationships in an effort to achieve common goals. When viewed from the professional autonomy level and involvement in management, the type of organization in higher education can be divided into four parts, namely: bureaucratic, collegial, managerial and entrepreneurial. So as to be able to improve the performance of these types of organizations, it requires a leadership approach that emphasizes empowering followers.*

**Key words:** servant leadership, Higher education, role of leader

### **INTRODUCTION**

The influence of globalization on communication, information and technological development has changed the pattern of information flow faster. An open market system with intense competition is faced by all countries in the world, the key to success in winning the competition lies in the mastery of technology, and reliable human resources. The above description only shows how big the challenges must be faced now and in the future and how important the role of higher education is in producing reliable, highly capable academic and professional personnel who can increase productivity and efficiency in production in order to have high competitiveness.

Global competition occurs in all sectors, this also occurs in the education sector with the operation of several foreign universities in Indonesia in accordance with the Education Act No. 12/2012 concerning Higher Education article 90. In addition, information about the ranking of

the world's best universities according to [www.cnnindonesia.com](http://www.cnnindonesia.com) on June 21, 2018 was quite surprising because Indonesia University only reached 292, Gajah Mada University ranked 391, and the Institute of Technology Bandung ranked 359 while Singapore's state university National University of Singapore managed to reach 11th, and University Malaya ranked 87th. To map the quality and potential of universities in Indonesia, the Ministry of Research and Technology held a university ranking using a method of assessment from four components, namely the quality of Human Resources (HR), institutional quality; the quality of student activities as well as the quality of research and scientific publications.

For this reason, all universities in Indonesia try to be the best by increasing their performance in these four components, for that college requires an appropriate leader to improve performance such as research conducted by Ogbonna and Harris (2000), which states that leadership style has an influence to improve performance. From the background above, the purpose of this study is to discuss the servant leadership approach that can improve performance in higher education

### **Leadership From Various Approaches**

Leadership (Kauzes, 1995) is explained as the art of directing others to want to achieve the goals that have been set, because of that the approach arises from the concept of leadership. The leadership concept approach according to Yulk (1994), can be categorized into several, namely, this approach emphasizes the personal attributes of a leader, meaning that a leader is born and naturally has certain characteristics and is not owned by others. Behavior approach, which is studying aspects that are carried out by a leader in work. The power-influence approach, the leader's process influences between followers, the situational approach, is that different behavioral patterns will be effective in different situations, charismatic approaches, namely why the following of certain leaders are willing to make extraordinary efforts and make personal sacrifice to achieve the goals or mission of the group.

When considered, these leadership concept approaches have a leader-centered perspective with an implicit assumption that causality has a single direction (the leader acts and followers react). Therefore, the leadership Servant approach appears which is more suppressing follower-centric, namely having a tendency to serve first and then leading (Crippen, 2006; Sendjaya and Sarros, 2002; Pekerti and Sendjaya, 2010).

### **Servant Leadership Approach**

The servant leadership approach begins with ideas and ideas from Greenleaf (e.g., 1970, 1972, 1974, 1996) and then develops rapidly and to date there are no definite indicators of servant leadership. Leadership servants are indicated that first of all is the desire of a leader to serve his followers first and for those needs then he becomes a leader, and not vice versa (Akuchie, 1993; Farling et al., 1999; Graham, 1991; Polleys, 2002; Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002).

The difference between transformational leadership and servant leadership lies in a paradigm shift from the power of a leader based on authority to empowering followers. Servant leadership is very emphasized on service because leaders who serve and do not focus on their own self-interest are more easily accepted (Dambe and Moorad, 2008). So the servant leadership approach emphasizes that a leader is following the wishes of his followers (Robbins, 2005) determines his vision and serves his followers (Sergiovanni, 2006). For that servant leadership emphasizes more on moral and social justice so that it is more appropriate to be applied to educational institutions because it is an institution that cares more about the conditions of social justice (Yukl, 2006). In Table 1 we can see the difference between servant leadership and transformational leadership from various aspects.

**Table. 1 Comparing Servant Leadership and Transformational leadership**

Aspect	Servant Leadership Theory	Transformational Leadership Theory
Nature of Theory	Normative	Normative
Role of Leader	To serve followers	To inspire followers to pursue organizational goals
Role of Follower	To become wiser, freer, more autonomous	To pursue organizational goals
Moral component	Explicit	Unspecified
Outcome expected	Follower satisfaction development, and commitment to service, societal betterment	Goal congruence increased effort satisfaction and productivity organizational gain
Individual level	Desire to serve	Desire to lead
Interpersonal Level	Leaders serve Follower	Leaders inspire followers
Group level	Leaders serve group to meet member needs	Leader unite group to pursue group goals
Organizational level	Leader prepare organization to serve community	Leader inspire follower to pursue organization goal
Social level	Leader leaves a positive legacy for the betterment society	Leader inspire nation or society to pursue articulated group

Source: Barbuto and Wheeler (2006)

**Servant Leadership and Higher Education Performance.**

After considering the comparison between servant leadership and transformational leadership, then as with other leadership research, there is no confirmation of effective servant leadership research (Northouse, 2010; Yukl, 2010). Meanwhile, according to Wheeler (2012), servant leadership approach is very suitable with universities because this organization has a culture to provide services, has individual and collective responsibilities to have a positive and strong ethical relationship. This was confirmed by Hunter (2004) which states that servant leadership has a strong leadership principle in the world.

Higher education is a different organization because it combines elements found in organizations in general such as: goals, culture, structure, hierarchy and stakeholders (Bolman and Gallos, 2011) and combines with values, goals, tasks, employees, governance, technology and history (Altbach et al., 2001; Thelin, 2004), this has led universities to be well managed by their resources and functions because their members are professionals who dedicate themselves to the interests of science (McCaffery, 2010)

Based on the characteristics of the college, Birnbaum (1988) distinguishes into four forms, namely bureaucracy, political, collegial, and anarchical with descriptions as in Ttable 2.

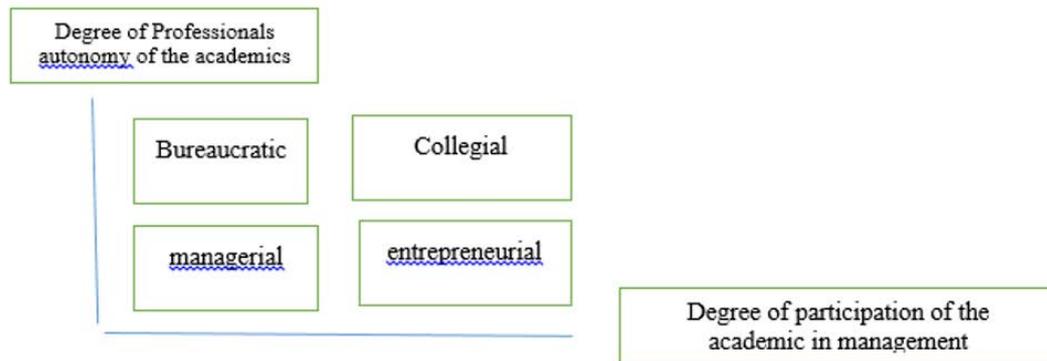
**Table 2 Four Organisational Forms of Universities**

Organisational form	Descriptions
Bureaucratic	The structure and decision making are rational
Political	Power and resources are competed for among academics
Collegial	Power and values are shared in a community of equal.

Anarchical	Meaning is yet to be found in a community of autonomous actor.
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Sources: Birnbaum (1988)

While the opinion of Farham (1999) distinguishes organizational types from two aspects, namely: degree of professional anatomy of academics and degree of participation of academic in management into four types of types of organizations such as Figure 1



**Figure 1. Farnham’s (1999) Organizational Type of University**

Universities as institutions engaged in services provide services to stake holders consisting of academicians such as students, lecturers, education staff, parents of students and also the community and the government, of course have high responsibility and commitment to provide the best service, (Covey, 2004). According to Page and Wong (2000), a leader with a servant leadership approach will make a good contribution to improve the performance of the organization and become a healthy organization in accordance with what is expected by its followers.

**Servant Leadership Dimension**

Dimension findings from Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) who conducted research using respondents stated that there are 5 dimensions that can be used, namely: Altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive mapping and organizational stewardship

**Altruistic calling**

Altruistic calling is that a leader must serve his followers first rather than for his own sake, this means that a good leader must be able to fulfill the wishes of his followers. A leader in a college must be able to fulfill the wishes of the academic community consisting of lecturers, students, alumni and other stakeholders. Of course each part of the academic community has different interests. For this reason, a leader is needed who can prioritize the interests of his followers rather than self-interest so that all elements of the leadership feel satisfied and perform well.

**Emotional healing**

A leader is required to be a good listener and has the ability to listen to complaints and suggestions from his followers. A leader is required to be able to create an atmosphere where followers will feel comfortable in delivering complaints from work and probable conditions that are being experienced. Thus the followers will feel helped because they have been able to

convey their complaints and get a good response from their leaders who will do their work well and improve their performance.

### **Wisdom**

A leader is also required to be able to combine his knowledge and benefits practically in his environment

### **Persuasive mapping**

A leader is required to be able to think about plans ahead of his organization and also describe the opportunities that exist, so that it will encourage followers to achieve the expected goals

### **Organizational stewardship**

A leader must also be able to contribute to the surrounding community through community development programs.

### **Discussion**

Higher education performance is assessed from four components, namely the quality of Human Resources (HR), institutional quality; the quality of student activities as well as the quality of research and scientific publications.

The quality of human resources is the most important thing to support the performance of universities. A college can be said to have good quality if the lecturers who teach have competence in their fields. With the enactment of Law No. 14 concerning Teachers and Lecturers as of January 1, 2016, lecturers who teach undergraduate programs must have a minimum academic degree is S2 is expected to be able to improve the quality of its human resources. At present the competition to get lecturers who have competencies is very heavy, this is due to the limited human resources who are willing to become lecturers. Lecturers as the most important asset for universities, so that a leader in a college must be able to maintain properly so that the person does not move to another university. The character of the lecturers is having a good level of education so they have a need to be appreciated. For that we need leaders who are able to create a comfortable working atmosphere where the lecturers can channel their competencies well.

Institutional quality, which is in accordance with indicators from the National Accreditation Agency that to be said that universities have good institutional quality are: have governance that can guarantee the realization of the vision of the college, the character of the leader, operational system and quality assurance. To be able to have good institutional quality, a leader is needed to give his followers the opportunity to create according to their competence

Student activities are also very dependent on a leader from the university, if he can inspire and understand what is expected by students, student activities will also develop well. The number of lecturers' research publications is also an indicator of the success of higher education. If a leader is able to map well the direction and vision of a university, it will be a motivating factor for lecturers to conduct research and publish in reputable journals.

### **Conclusion**

To win the competition, universities must improve their performance through four indicators, namely improving human resources, improving governance, increasing student activities and increasing publications. For this reason, universities need leaders who use the servant leadership approach, because this approach has a culture to provide services, individual and collective responsibility and have a strong and positive ethical relationship.

Higher education which is one of the determinants of its performance is measured from human resources which are the biggest assets are professionals who dedicate to the interests of science (lecturers) then must have a leader who serves that is a leader who seeks to prioritize the interests of its members compared to his personal interests.

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