The Leadership Competency of Higher Education Administrative Leaders

Sulastri1, Nurhizrah Gistituati2, Neviyarni S3, Hasdi Aimon4

1,2Jurusan Administrasi Pendidikan, Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia
3Jurusan Bimbingan Konseling, Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia
4Jurusan Ilmu Ekonomi Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

sulastrihermanto@gmail.com, icha yp@yahoo.com, neviyarni.sulaihi911@gmail.com, ands3dkpl@gmail.com

*Corresponding Author
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Abstract: This research is based on the lack of optimal leadership competency of higher education administrative leaders. The purpose of this study is to describe the leadership competency of administrative leaders at Universitas Negeri Padang with indicators: change management, conflict management, decision-making, communication, team building, and performance-enhancing skills. The type of data in this study is quantitative. The sample is the member of Universitas Negeri Padang with purposive sampling from administrative leaders. The data sources used in this study are 45 representatives consisting of heads of bureaus, deans, sub-heads, employees and lecturers. The result of the study proves that the leadership competency of administrative leaders is at level of 71.48% with an average of 2.98. It means that the leadership competency of the administrative leadership is still at a moderate/average level.

Keywords: Competence; Leadership; Universitas Negeri Padang.

1. Introduction

The leadership competence of higher education administrative leaders needs to be held with full responsibility so that will improve the quality of the college. Leadership is an ability to influence others in achieving the goals set. Leadership skills are needed to influence others in carrying out their duties. Of course the role of competence of the leader is very important for the progress of the organization. Therefore, leaders need to be equipped with various attributes, so that they are able to manage the organization to be better by improving leadership competencies in a sustainable manner.

The leadership competence should be adjusted to the level of leader’s position in the organization. There are several leadership levels proposed by the USFWS Leadership Competency Development Model (2008), namely 1) basic level leadership competence, including; responsibility, creativity and innovation, customer service, flexibility, problem solving, team building, technical credibility; 2) middle-level leadership competence, including; responsibility, conflict management, creativity and innovation, partnering, problem solving, team building, technical credibility, 3) senior-level leadership competencies, including; responsibility, certainty, other developments, external awareness, influence and negotiate, team building, strategic thinking, 4) executive-level leadership competence, including; responsibility, certainty, other developments, influence and negotiate, political intelligence, strategic thinking, and vision. Furthermore, Sherman (2007) said it is important to increase the competence of leadership, especially in the field of personal mastery, financial management, human resource management, interpersonal effectiveness, caring and system thinking [6]. Next, the study from Ammons (2009), Jablokow (2010) and Soehner (2014) emphasize other leadership competencies such as problem solving, cognitive abilities, structured job skills, communication skills, organizational transparency, interpersonal skills and managerial skills [1,3,5]. The influence of the competencies of
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the leadership is great on the progress of the organization. The result of Lunenburg’s research (2014) proves that the leader gives a big influence on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment and organizational performance to produce quality work [4].

Based on the above indicators, it is expected that the leaders in universities need to understand well the various aspects to improve the quality of higher education. There are two types of college leadership: academic leaders and administrative leaders. Academic leaders are lecturers who are given additional tasks to occupy positions as rector, vice rector, dean, vice dean, department chairman and secretary department as well as some institutions led by lecturers in universities. Meanwhile, the administrative leadership is performed by non-educated personnel in accordance with applicable rules such as head of department.

Currently, the administrative leaders still have various limitations in carrying out their leadership, such as lack opportunity to attend various activities in improving skills. The activities they follow are strongly bound to the prevailing regulations, Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 101 Tahun 2010 tentang Pendidikan dan Pelatihan Jabatan Pegawai Negeri Sipil, the administrative leaders didn’t have opportunity such as capacity building from university. Meanwhile, the opportunity to develop their competencies in particular is limited to only a small part of administrative activities, not training in terms of their substance as a leader. Administrative leaders need to understand the various competencies required to manage their institutions, of course, by understanding the various areas of the scope of their duties.

The focus of the research is on the heads of the department at Universitas Negeri Padang. Information on the competence of administrative leaders is carried out by observation and interviews from 16 August 2017 - 28 September 2017 to the dean, section head, sub-division head, staff and lecturers in five faculties, namely Faculty of Education, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Faculty of Economics, and Faculty of Social Sciences. In addition to the Faculty at Universitas Negeri Padang environment, the researchers also review and interview the Bureau of Academic and Student Affairs, Planning Bureau, Cooperation and Public Affairs Administration and General and Financial Bureau. Based on the results of observations and interviews it can be concluded that.

1. Administrative leaders are less optimal in addressing the various changes that occur in the work environment. Managing the various changes that exist within the organization needs to be done for the organization’s progress.
2. There are still many problems in the field that have not been well managed, so the problem is often protracted. Administrative leaders are not able to identify problems and determine alternative solutions.
3. Leaders are not able to make decisions quickly and accurately, some are not dare to take and bear the risk of decisions that have been made.
4. The communication skills of administrative leaders also still need to be improved. This can be seen from the lack of ability of administrative leaders to convey ideas, arguments and opinions clearly to subordinates either orally or in writing.
5. Administrative leaders are still constrained in fostering work or interact with colleagues, so less to contribute positively to subordinates.
6. The ability of leadership to improve subordinate performance is also still low. As result, subordinate discipline is not well done, as well as in terms of rewarding for those who show good performance.

Based on the preliminary findings in the field, the leadership of administrative leaders at Universitas Negeri Padang still needs to be improved. Therefore, the researchers are interested in conducting research on the leadership competence of administrative leadership at Universitas Negeri Padang. The purpose of this study is to describe the leadership competence of administrative leaders at Universitas Negeri Padang with indicators; change management, conflict management, decision-making, communication, team building, and performance-enhancing skills. This research is useful to provide recommendations to leaders at Universitas Negeri Padang in order to find the best solution to enhance leadership competence of administrative leaders.
2. Related Works

Universitas Negeri Padang is one of higher educations that has Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi, they are education, research, and devotion. Because of that, have to manage well by academic leaders and administrative leaders. One of leader is administrative leaders have important roles to improve the university. Administrative leaders in college need to improve their competence. Gruban (2003) in https://Slovenian.presidency.of.the.ue.2008,.com emphasizes what we mean by the competence is a relatively stable ability to use science knowledge so as to produce a proficiency in action. Yukl (2015) emphasizes too what we mean by the leadership is a process of influencing others to understand and agree on what is required in performing the task and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to achieve common goals [10]. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the leadership competence of administrative leaders in a sustainable manner. As suggested by Sherman (2007) in his research that the improvement of leadership competence is important especially in the field of personal mastery, financial management, human resource management, interpersonal effectiveness, caring and system thinking [6]. Next, Jablokow's (2010), Soehner (2014), Ammons (2009) studies emphasize other leadership competencies such as problem solving, cognitive abilities, structured job skills, communication skills, organizational transparency, interpersonal skills and managerial skills [1,3,5]. The influence of the competencies of the leadership is great on the progress of the organization. The result of Lunenburg's research (2014) proves that the leader gives a big influence on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment and organizational performance so as to produce quality work. Increased leadership competencies can be done with education and training, workshops, seminars and various other activities.

It is hoped that with the recommended studies above, it can make input for this research further, especially in providing training that is really needed by administrative leaders.

3. Material & Methodology

The type of data in this study is quantitative obtained from the questionnaire. The research questionnaire consisted of six indicators, namely; change management, conflict management, decision making, communication, team building, and the ability to improve performance. The questionnaire consisted of 50 statement items with five alternative answers. The population of this research is the academic member of Universitas Negeri Padang. The samples of the research were taken by purposive sampling from the heads of the departments of Universitas Negeri Padang. Data source used in this research is forty five (45) consisting of head of bureau, dean, head of subsection, employee and lecturers. The data were analysed by using the average score and the level of achievement of respondents. Achievement rate criteria are 99% - 100% = very capable, 80% - 89% = able, 66% - 79% = average / 55% - 65% = below average, and ≤ 54% = low.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

Data on leadership competence of higher education administrative leader at Universitas Negeri Padang can be seen in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Achievement (%)</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Change Management</td>
<td>3.371</td>
<td>67.429</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Conflict Management</td>
<td>3.781</td>
<td>75.611</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
<td>3.644</td>
<td>72.889</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>3.489</td>
<td>69.78</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Team Building</td>
<td>3.607</td>
<td>72.148</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Performance-Enhancing Skills</td>
<td>3.552</td>
<td>71.048</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>2.982</td>
<td>71.484</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table 1 above, it can be seen that the leadership competence of administrative leaders is generally achieved an average of 2.982 with a percentage of 71.484%. It means that the competition
administrative leaders competence is still at a moderate or average level. The highest level of competency achievement is seen in the conflict management indicator of 75.61%, at an average of 3.78. While the lowest achievement level seen in the communication competence of 69.78% at an average of 3.49. Therefore, the improvement of leadership competence of administrative leaders still needs to get continuous attention, so that the implementation of work can be successful. For more details can be seen in Figure 1.

![Achievement Level](image)

**Figure 1.** Leadership Competence of Higher Education Administrative Leaders

### 4.2. Discussion

Based on the level of leadership competence achievement above, leadership competence of administrative leaders at Universitas Negeri Padang needs to be improved. This is due to the low level of achievement that is at a moderate level or the ability of administrative leaders are still in the category of medium/average. Therefore, it is necessary to increase leadership competence especially for communication indicator which is still very low compared to other competencies with achievement level of 69.78%. As a leader it should have good communication skills so that work can be well directed. As Carnegie (2015) emphasizes that communicating strongly and sensitively, coaching, and building employees are high priority for a leader [7].

Leaders should also be ready to face the environment changing because the changes will always be accompanied by the development of science technology. Likewise, in decision-making administrative leaders should be able to make decisions quickly and accurately. Decision-making is usually tailored to the leadership style that the leader has. As Thoha pointed out (2006) that to take a decision is also adapted to the leadership style of administrative leadership. Other competencies also need improvement such as the ability to improve performance, team building, and conflict management. Administrative leaders need to foster good relationships with subordinates by setting clear working standards. This is reinforced by the opinion of Carnigie (2015) that leaders can by compiling performance standards that can be understood and accepted by people in carrying out the work [7]. In addition, increasing performance will also be able to resolve conflicts within the organization. Conflict management for administrative leaders is crucial because if the conflict takes place it will affect the organization's goals. To overcome the problem, it is required to have a "green light" to build a new concept, idea or approach, and be able to turn on the red light to do the analysis and evaluation.
5. Conclusion

Based on the above discussion it can be concluded the results of this study as follows:

a. The leadership competence of administrative leaders is still low. It can be this proved from the level achievement that is still at the level of medium / average is 71.48%. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the leadership competence in the indicators; change management, conflict management, decision making, communication, team building, and competencies improve performance.

b. It is expected that this research can be continued by finding solutions to improve leadership competence of administrative leaders in the form of leadership development training in leadership competency.

c. This research needs to be given to increase capacity building in universities.

d. This research can be an input for university leaders to be able to program training that can improve the competency of administrative leaders programmatically.

e. It is expected that the research will be continued by designing a training program that suits the needs of administrative leaders.

References


