

THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE ON SERVICE QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A STUDY AT A SOCIAL SCIENCE FACULTY

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Abstract: This study aimed at disclosing the influence of the leadership style on the service quality in Higher Education Institution. This study population is 103 supporting staffs of a social science faculty, with a proportional random sampling of 80 people. The hypothesis in this study was analyzed by using the structural model of Partial Least Square. Based on the results of Partial Least Square testing, it is disclosed that there is a significant influence of the leadership style on the service quality at the faculty being studied. The positive correlation shows that the stronger the leadership style is, the higher the leadership style impact on the service quality will be.

Keywords: Leadership style, Service Quality, Higher Education Management

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People in the current era actualizes higher self-consciousness on the quality of their life. How people perceive the quality are different one to another. In the case of the service quality, people, as part of customers and providers, have already realized that both of them have rights and obligations. As providers, they should provide the best service to their customers. Meanwhile, as customers, they have a right to receive the best ser-

vice quality. Concerning this fact, many studies have been conducted to disclose findings on service quality issues, studies in healthcare and education.

Higher education institution (HEI), as a part of education, also put its concern on the service quality. As one of its primary customers are students, HEI cannot only view students as those who learn in the university, but it should also view them as “customers” who have right to get excellent service quality. This shifting paradigm is in line with the rapid development of HEIs in which both public and private HEIs compete with each other, in terms of providing better education service. Therefore, it is a demand for HEIs to become more aware of the education quality improvement, including service quality.

ate quality. To cope with current changes in education quality improvement and service, HEIs in Indonesia must adapt to implement excellent education and service quality to stakeholders in line with Indonesian regulations.

Based on previous study results and recent issues on the improved quality on service in the education field, it can be inferred that no study has been conducted to disclose the leadership style impact on service quality in HEI. Also, only a few studies had been conducted to find out the effect of the leadership style on service quality in non-education areas. Jabnoun and Rasasi (2005) state that "the role of leadership in the success of quality initiatives has been high lighted by many authors, yet little research has been conducted to investigate the leadership styles that support quality implementation". Jabnoun and Rasasi (2005) found that all dimensions of transformational leadership and transactional leadership of contingent reward are positively correlated with service quality. Then Lucas and Buckley (2009) studied Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust and disclosed their finding by highlighting Firth-Cozens and Mowbray message concerning the obvious relationship between Leadership and Quality. Also, Bacha (2014) conducted a study held in French firms found that there is a partial relationship between transformational leadership and follower task performance on the one hand, and on the other hand between transformational leadership and follower perceptions of core job characteristics. The first study held in HEI concerning the influence of leadership on service quality was a study conducted by Trivellas and Dargenidou (2009) in Technological Educational Institute of Larissa focusing on the impact of leadership roles on service quality. In their research, Trivellas and Dargenidou (2009) did not study the influence of leadership style on service quality, yet they focused on the impact of leadership roles on service quality.

Based on the previous study above, it is seen that there is no study concerning leadership style impact on service quality that has been conducted in HEI. Also, the study on the leadership style and its impact on service quality as conducted in some organizations showed different findings which lead

to finding inconsistencies as revealed by two studies conducted by Jabnoun and Rasasi's (2005) and Bacha (2014). Therefore, based on previous studies and phenomena in society, this study intends to disclose the leadership style impact on service quality provided by supporting staffs at a social science faculty in one of the state universities in Indonesia.

METHOD

The population of this study is 103 supporting staff sat a social science faculty consisting of civil servants and non-civil servants. Meanwhile, samples of this study are 80 employees. The determination of the sample followed the criterion defined by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). This study uses Proportional Random Sampling. It is a technique to define samples randomly by using a proportional number for each subpopulation in line with the size of the population itself (Sugiyono 2004, p.83).

Furthermore, this study applied cross-section data in which the data used had been already obtained in June 2016 by using questionnaires. The questionnaire answers used five Likert scales, and the statistical analysis used Partial Least Square. Herewith the research framework of the leadership style impact on the service quality (Figure 1).

Based on the research framework, the hypothesis (H) of this study is: There is a significant influence of Leadership style (X) on service quality (Y).

In this study, the leadership style covers transactional and transformational leadership. This study measured the leadership style of certain structural positions of the faculty being studied based on employees' point of view. Supporting staffs were given questionnaires containing the leadership style items adopted from Bowersox (2012) including indicators of transformational, transactional, leader's perceived effectiveness, satisfaction, and efforts, and *Laissez Faire*. The last two indicators were used to support possible post hoc analyses. Furthermore, as this study focused on the leadership style impact on service quality, the indicators and questionnaire items of service quality were adopted from Tjiptono and Chandra (2011). The indicators of SERVQUAL involved Reliability, Responsibility, Assurance, Empathy, and Tangibles.

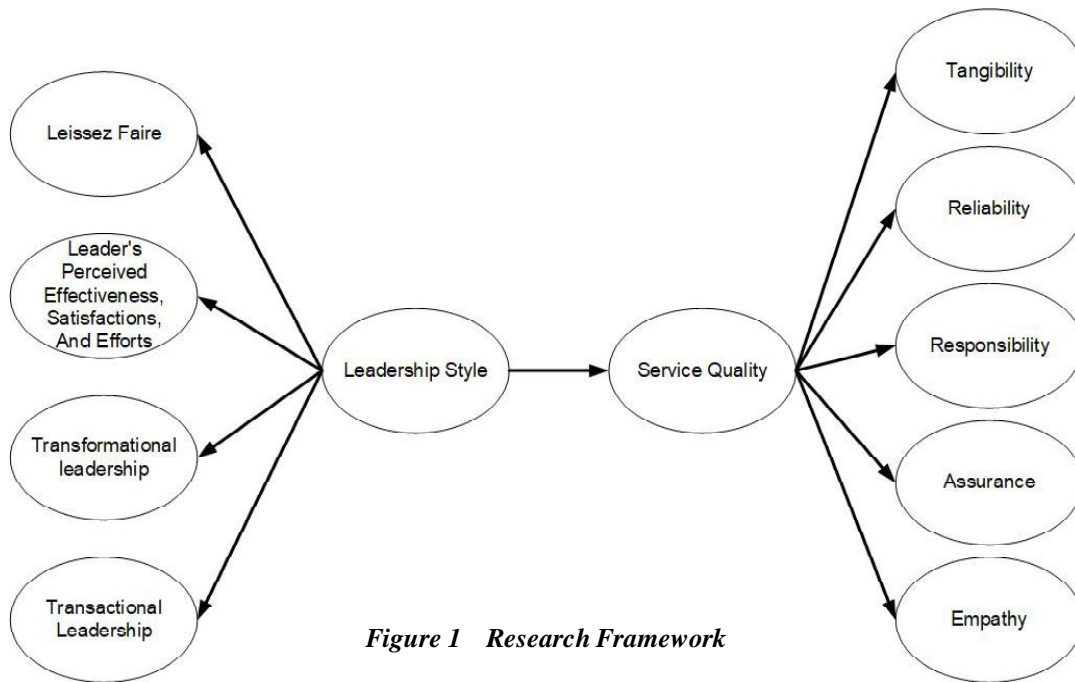


Figure 1 Research Framework

RESULTS

Respondent Description

The description of the respondent characteristics includes gender, age, and education background. Respondent characteristics are differentiated by its gender, age, and educational background. The numbers of male and female respondents are 72.25% compared to 28.75%. The majority of respondent age is above 40 (forty) years old who reach 41% of overall respondents. The rest of the data are 34% for respondents whose age are 30-40 (thirty up to forty) years old and 25% for respondents whose age are below 30 (thirty) years old. Based on the educational background, the majority respondents are graduated from Senior High School (46%), and the rests involve Bachelor Degree (34%), Diploma (15%), and Master's (4%).

Descriptive of Statistical Analysis

The analysis descriptive is assessed by interpreting the average score of each indicator. The interpretation of the average score is based on Noermijati (2008).

The respondent description of the leadership style variable is as follows:

Table 1 The Respondent Description of the Leadership Style Variable

Indicator	Mean
Leissez Faire	2.71
Leader's perceived effectiveness, satisfaction, and effort	3.30
Transformational Leadership	3.35
Transactional Leadership	3.13
The Average value of Leadership Style variable	3.22

Source: Processed Data (2016)

Meanwhile, the service quality variable can be described as follows:

Table 2 The Respondent Description of the Service Quality Variable

Indicator	Mean
Tangibility	3.67
Reliability	3.66
Responsibility	3.80
Assurance	3.81
Empathy	3.87
The average value of the Service Quality variable	3.76

Source: Processed Data (2016)

Partial Least Square Data Analysis

The result of the convergent validity testing displays that all the indicator values are valid as they are greater than 0.5, except the result of Leissez Faire indicator in which its loading factor less than 0.5. Moreover, the assessment used to test the variable reliabilities are Discriminant Reliability (AVE), Cronbach Alpha, and Composite Reliability. A vari-

able is considered reliable if the value of the discriminant reliability is above 0.5, the Cronbach Alpha's value is greater than 0.6, and the Composite Reliability is higher than 0.7. The results of the Discriminant Reliability (AVE), Cronbach Alpha, and Composite Reliability assessment are summarized in the table below:

Table 3 AVE, Cronbach Alpha, and Composite Reliability Testing

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
Leadership Style	0.503	0.964	0.961	Reliable
Service Quality	0.525	0.953	0.946	Reliable

Source: Processed Data (2016)

Based on the result of discriminant reliability, it is obvious that the AVE is more than 0.5; thus, all variables are reliable. Furthermore, the results of the composite reliability of each variable are 0.964 for leadership style and 0.953 for service quality. Based on the composite reliability testing, it is clearly depicted that results are above 0.7, meaning that each variable is reliable. Then the results of Cronbach's Alpha for the leadership style variable is 0.961, while the service quality variable result is 0.946. The Cronbach's Alpha testing results indicate that all variables are higher than 0.6 in which it can be inferred that both variables are reliable.

Furthermore, the last testing is a structural inner model used to predict the causal relation among latent variables evaluated by using R².

Table 4 Structural Model Testing

Variabel	R ²	Percentage
Service Quality	0.636	63.6%

Source: Processed Data (2016)

Based on the inner model testing it is disclosed that the predictive value of service quality variable is 0.636 or 63.6% implying that the rest 36.4% is affected by other factors which are not stated in the equation model. In addition to the above result, the inner model testing can also be disclosed by evaluating the predictive relevance stone-Geiser Q-square test which aims at finding the predictive relevance by using this equation model:

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - R_1^2)(1 - R_2^2) \dots (1 - R_p^2)$$

$$Q^2 = 1 - (1 - 0.636^2)$$

$$Q^2 = 0.4047 = 40.47\%$$

The Q-square result shows that its value is higher than 0, indicating that the model of the study has predictive relevance and it is considered as a good model.

Result of Hypothesis Testing

The result of the hypothesis testing is as follows:

Table 5 Hypothesis Testing

Variable	PathCoefficient	Standard Error	P Values	Result
Leadership Style > Service Quality	0.798	0.088	0.001	Significant

Source: Processed Data (2016)

The hypothesis testing uses Partial Least Square analysis. The hypothesis testing of this study is conducted by determining the P-value of the path coefficient. The hypothesis testing is considered significant if the P-value < 0.01 , and the confidence interval is 99%. Meanwhile, it is considered insignificant if the P-value is > 0.05 , and the confidence interval is less than 95%. On the basis of the above result, it is found that the hypothesis is accepted since the leadership style variable has a positive significant to service quality variable indicated by $\beta = 0.798$, $P < 0.01$. It means that the stronger the leadership style is, it will influence the service quality performance.

DISCUSSION

Based on the data description, the highest indicator of the leadership style variable is transformational leadership which is 3.35. The results imply that leaders (dean, vice deans, heads of departments, and head of general administrative) are considered having the leadership style performance. Meanwhile, the lowest indicator of the leadership style variable is Laissez Faire. It is also supported by the result of the item mean value which belongs to item number 28, which is "My leader avoids making decisions". The result of the item mean value is 2.50. It supports the result of the hypothesis testing that leaders of the faculty being studied have leadership style as also displayed by the highest mean value result for the transformational leadership indicator. The highest mean value of the transformational leadership items is item number 26, referring to the question of "My leader articulates a compelling vision of the future". The mean value of this item is 3.63, which is considered good. According to Wong (2007), a leader is a person who influences a group of people to achieve certain goals. To influence others means that there should be a vision to be shared with their employees. Therefore, it is obvious that leaders have defined the vision for a long term goal of the organization and set the goal as the institution dream to be achieved in the future. Conducting appropriate dissemination of vision will lead employees to do their tasks in line with the stipulated vision.

In correlation with the service quality statistical analysis, service quality provided is good based on the results of all indicators, which are reliability, tangibility, responsibility, assurance, and empathy. Dhurup (2012) explains that the reliability indicator refers to the consistency and dependability of an organization's performance. It has three items. The highest item found in this indicator is the third item, while the lowest is in the first item. The highest is the item number 1 containing "My leader trusts that I will do the job right the first time and will persist in doing it without error"; whereas the lowest is "My leader always trusts me when I promise to stakeholders to do something in a certain time, I will do so".

Furthermore, another indicator is responsibility referring to the willingness to assist customers and provide prompt service. This indicator has 5 question items in which the highest mean value items refer to item number 10 and 11, while for the bottom refers to the item number 9. The same mean value is shown in item number 10 and 11 showing that the staffs believe that their leaders trust them to do the job with the responsibility. The lowest mean value, as shown in item number 9, indicates that staffs perceive that their leaders less encourage them.

Moreover, for the assurance indicator, there are four items. The highest mean value of these items is item number 3, while the lowest is item number 2. The item number 3 refers to the belief of the leaders that their staffs can be polite to the customers, while number 2 refers to the leaders' efforts of ensuring the stakeholders that everything is going to be safe in the transaction with the faculty. It implies that the leaders of the faculty being studied have already trusted their staffs, yet they still need time and efforts to convince their stakeholders that all services will be served appropriately. As for the empathy indicator, it has four question items in which the highest item is the first item stating, "My leader must set convenient business hours for stakeholders". It implies that the regulation stipulated by leaders concerning the allocation service time is quite appropriate for both customers and supporting staffs. Thus, the service provided can be perceived as good.

Meanwhile, for the lowest question item refers to the second item concerning leaders' belief on employees whether they can provide individual attention to customers or not. Through the result of the statistical analysis descriptive of these indicators, it is seen that both the highest and the lowest is considered good. It means that leaders have shown their empathy and caring to their staffs well. Moreover, based on the overall mean values of all indicators within the service quality, it is quite clear that the mean value of the empathy indicator is the utmost. Therefore, it can also be inferred that supporting staffs who provide the service directly to their stakeholders understand and realize that the stakeholders are the primary customers of their faculty and they want to provide them the best services.

The last indicator is tangibility referring to the need of the physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication material aspects which portray the service figures that customers use to examine the quality. This indicator consists of 5 question items. All the items within the tangibility indicator achieve good level for their mean values, except for item number 3, which only reaches 2.71 (fair level). The third question item contains a question "the equipment provided is old with out of date technology". The result of the main value of the third item implies that the faculty being studied does not provide sufficient technology that can accommodate their needs of providing good service quality. In contrary to the lowest, item number 4 is considered the highest stating that "the leader provides an internet connection to support your job". Its mean value reaches 4.10, implying that staffs perceive that leaders through their policy have already provided sufficient internet connection to support their employees' job performance. Through this statistical analysis descriptive, it is shown that the internet connection provided is sufficient to perform their job.

Based on the statistical analysis of each item and the mean value, empathy indicates the highest average value. Supporting staffs believe that their leader can provide convenient business hours and fulfill the needs of the stakeholders. Also, they can also perceive that their leader gives them trust, in

terms of providing good attention and services to their stakeholders in which in this study the empathy refers to the caring that the service providers give to the stakeholders or customers. In contrary to empathy, the reliability shows the lowest value, although the score is at a good level, which is 3.66. It can be inferred that employees believe the service quality is good, but they feel less confident in the consistency and dependability of the company's/institution performance. To cope with this, leaders should put their trust in the staffs and give them more rooms to explore their capability. Also, leaders should be more sensitive to every single problem faced by their stakeholders and give an appropriate solution to them through their staffs. Therefore, they can provide better service quality to the stakeholders.

Furthermore, in line with the discussion of the statistical data above, the result of the Partial Least Score data analysis also shows that leadership variable has the significant influence on the service quality indicated by $\beta = 0.798$ and $P < 0.01$. Therefore, the hypothesis can be accepted. Furthermore, the result of this study supports the study of Jabnoun and Rasasi (2005) in which the service quality is found to be positively related to the leadership style. It also supports the main notion of Trivellas and Dargenidou's study (2009) that different leadership roles are connected with different dimensions of higher education service quality. Also, Ugboro & Obeng (2000) also state that service quality is related to the climate of organization involving leadership commitment, employee empowerment, and all efforts focused on service quality. It shows that a leader has a role in affecting the process of the service quality provided by his/her employees. This study result also supports the finding of Trivellas and Dargenidou (2009) who state that the success of the change of the quality management system and its transition depends on the leader's capability in facing and solving problems. It can also create a culture strategy that is supported by all the members of the organizations. Therefore, based on the analysis, it is seen that the leadership style indeed has an impact on the service quality in HEI, especially at the social faculty being studied. In line with the result, the positive result of the path coefficient

value implies that the higher the leadership style is, it can significantly affect the service quality performance.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the result of this study, it can be inferred the leadership style of the faculty being studied has a significant impact on the service quality provided by its supporting staffs. This study also supports the study of Jabnoun and Rasasi (2005) and Trivellas and Dargenidou (2009). Furthermore, it also shows that supporting staff service quality has a close correlation with the leader's style in which it supports the finding of Ugboro & Obeng (2000). Therefore, the way the leader leads and drives the organization affects the organization quality.

In addition to the above theoretical implication, the result of this study will be beneficial for the education system management in HEIs. It can be an additional input for HEIs leaders and practitioners to apply a fit leadership style for the institution, to provide sufficient exposures for their staffs, to give more appreciations and rewards to their staffs, and also to provide better facilities which can be used to perform excellent service quality and to achieve organization's goals.

Recommendations

Furthermore, on the basis of the study result, it is hoped that the next researchers are able to expand the scope of the study by assessing the entire supporting staffs of certain university and also completing the data collection by conducting interview and open questionnaire in order to have deeper analysis on the influence of leadership style on the service quality in HEI.

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