

Examining the Excellence in Higher Education (EHE) Program in the Disruptive Era

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This research examined the Excellence in Higher Education (EHE) program as an approach that can be implemented to realise bureaucracy reform at Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia (UNNES) in the disruptive era. The sample was 165 respondents, which included lecturers and educational staff in UNNES. The method of data processing is done by Exploratory Factor Analysis to build the construct model of EHE. The results showed that the seven EHE programs can be implemented in an effort to improve the success of bureaucratic reform in UNNES. This study also inferred that aspects of EHE have a positive and significant influence on the performance of UNNES.

Key words: *Excellence in Higher Education, Disruptive Era, Bureaucracy Reform, Higher Education.*

Introduction

Public service in the disruptive era is very important in realising good governance. This form of public service will be able to satisfy users if they are always responsive and adaptive to the latest external developments that occur. Bureaucratic reform as a form of response to external changes that is fast and difficult to predict becomes very relevant to do. Bureaucracy reform is a national commitment to create effective, efficient, clean, and accountable governance, as well as has high quality public services. In this case, the role of UNNES in supporting successful reformation is considerably strategic. One of the concrete realities from UNNES, as one of the leading universities in Indonesia, is to support the reformation by organising and developing institutional governance and following the principle of good university governance as was proven by the Business Strategic Planning of UNNES in 2019-2024.

UNNES as a Work Unit of Public Service Agencies should be able to realise professional and productive organisational management in order to support vision of UNNES to be at an international university level. Excellence in Higher Education (EHE) is an integrated approach to guide the university in undertaking improvement processes in academic, student affairs, administrative and services so that the performance achieved can be in line with the standard of accreditation (Brusoni et al., 2014; Amin et al., 2014). Further to this, getting an accreditation for UNNES brings more consequences and demands to keep on doing improvement processes on the seven important organisational elements; these are the pillars of an institution's strength. Those seven elements include: leadership, strategic planning, external focus of stakeholders, information and analysis, HR focus and sufficient workplace, process effectiveness, outcome and achievements (Ruben, 2007).

EHE Programs have been implemented in some overseas universities, among them, Germany, Belgium, Colorado, India (Kuriakose & Iyer, 2016; Alexander et al., 2007). However, the findings of EHE Programs supporting bureaucracy reform in Indonesia have not been explained empirically. UNNES, which is 52 years old, needs to evaluate whether the business processes run all this time by involving those seven important elements that have implemented excellence factors that can be understood by each academic. When excellence has been an integrated program in each process of UNNES' business, then university performance will easily be measured and achieved. It is noteworthy to consider whether EHE can be as an approach that can be implemented to create bureaucracy reform. In addition, the EHE approach implementing excellence factors in each business process still needs to be empirically studied for its influence on performance achievement of UNNES.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Higher Education Performance

The concept of EHE proposed by Abdullah (2006) is a specific factor for measuring the quality of service stating that the student is the primary customer of the service. According to Abdullah (2006), Higher Education Performance has 6 (six) dimensions: Non-Academic Aspect, Academic Aspect, Reputation Aspect, Access Aspect, Program Issues Aspect, and Understanding Aspect.

Leadership

Leadership is the cornerstone of excellence in every organisation. Leadership strategic planning discerns the way faculty and staff are involved in certain activities (Ruben, 2007). The basis of strategic planning is initiated by determining missions, visions, and goals of organisations with external and internal analysis (to identify external opportunity and threat, strength, as well as internal weakness) (Fooladvand et al., 2015). Therefore, an

organisation needs to consider the reason of existence and its intention to reach the goals during certain periods of time (Conway et al., 1994; Tulbure, 2011).

External Focus

External Focus puts attention on the group that obtains advantages or impacts influenced by program or services offered by institutions, departments or programs observed. The category of external focus is elaborated into varied aspects that is, how organisations learn about needs, perceptions, and groups' priorities and how information used to improve work and reputation are in relationship with their institution (Ruben, 2007). Rozsnyai (2003) suggested that the focus of the externalities of higher education institutions is about the effect of quality assurance on the quality of education. Furthermore, academic involvement and motivation towards the higher education curriculum can foster broad knowledge and enable students to develop themselves as professional individuals from previous generations. Function shows how the leaders and leadership practices encourage excellence, effectiveness, involvement, innovation, and attention towards an individual's, a group's and an organisation's needs, which get benefits from the program and services of leadership practices (Ruben, 2007; Jones, 2012). Moreover, Braun (2009) stated that effective leadership is the focal success of an organisation.

Information and Analysis

Information and analysis focuses on investigating how institutions, departments, or programs conduct assessments and how the assessment processes integrate into the life of the organisation. This enables that information about progress, outcomes and achievements are used effectively to guide organisational decision making, resource allocation, planning and improvement efforts. This category also considers how the organisation maintains an internal assessment and review system and how to use both for continuous improvement (Ruben, 2007). Ten factors emerging from factor analysis determines how the desired source and information needs can be grouped into key themes or categories within the target market (Bonnema et al., 2008; Hull and Dodd, 2017). The first two factors relate to the type of institution, i.e. university and college. A further five factors relate to information's needs and are: work aspect, course content aspect, a whole student experience aspect, sport aspect and financial aspect. The three final factors relate to social sources, direct sources and media sources.

Faculty / Staff and Workplace

This category considers factors that contribute to create an excellent, trained, engaged, collaborative workplace, and the commitment of faculty and staff members. In each



college or university environment, the challenge is to encourage lecturers and staff to develop their disciplinary and technical skills while also contributing optimally to the institution such as mission, vision, goals and plans (Ruben 2007). The definition of staff development indicates that teachers have to translate acquired knowledge, skills and conceptions to a change in how they think and their educational behaviour (Rijdt, 2013). Davis (1996) defined performance criteria into two groups, non-academic staff and academic staff.

Process Effectiveness

Programs and services are a means that a college, university, department, institution, and or other unit can provide aspirations, values, and goals. Through program and service offerings, the faculty and staff expertise and other institutional resources are available to students, other beneficiaries and constituent groups both inside and outside the university, and society at a large scale. To achieve and maintain high standards for the institution as a whole and for many departments in colleges or universities, it focuses the review process towards the effectiveness and efficiency of educational programs and services and how they contribute to campus life (Ruben, 2007). Moreover, the organisational structure must enable a business process or processes to encourage creativity and innovation within the organisation for bureaucratic needs and more participation and empowerment within the organisation (Ahmad et al., 2007; Perera et al., 2017).

Outcome and Achievements

For any college or university, the academic field, student life, and administrative service program or department consists of effectiveness and quality as the primary objective (Ruben, 2007). According to Nasrallah (2014), the notion of a reliable conceptual framework to interpret the collected data is about faculty members' perceptions, classroom teaching practices (including how they assess students), understanding of teachers' knowledge about learning outcomes, what impedes their implementation and evaluation of constructive alignment.

Hypotheses

H1: Leadership aspect has positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance.

H2: Strategic Planning has positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance.

H3: External Focus aspect has positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance.

H4: Information and Analysis aspect has positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance.

H5: Staff focus and workplace aspect has positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance.

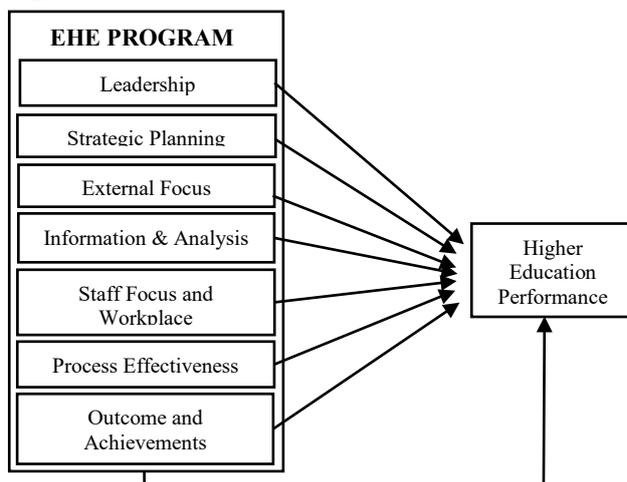
H6: Process Effectiveness aspect has positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance.

H7: Outcome and Achievements aspect has positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance.

H8: EHE Program totally has positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance

Research Model

Figure 1. Research Model.



Research Methodology

The sample of this study is 165 respondents from UNNES academics in all UNNES work units. Quantitative sampling techniques use Purposive Proportional Random Sampling. The sample was chosen because it has the criteria required in this study, randomly selected, and proportionally represented from each work unit under study. These criteria are permanent employees (lecturers and educational personnel) of UNNES. In this research, a quantitative approach used SPSS with Reliability and Validity Instrument Test and Exploratory Factor Analysis, Classic Assumption, and Regression Analysis to see the relation between proposed variables.

Results and Discussion

Based on the validity test, it is known that the whole item of the eight proposed (test of leadership, strategic planning, external focus, information and analysis, staff focus and workplace, process effectiveness, outcomes and achievement, and higher education performance indicators) meet the validity criteria with the sig alpha count < 0.05 (indicating the item of the question is valid). Thus, the item can be said to be able to measure what is measured by the question. Based on the reliability test, it is known that the Cronbach's alphas for leadership (0.858), strategic planning (0.828), external focus (0.876), information and analysis (0.863), staff focus and workplace (0.868), process effectivity (0.880), outcome and achievements (0.893), higher education performance (0.92). Reliability tests mean that factor loadings of the items are retained in each respective construct of the study.

The main goal of factor analysis is to define the structure of a data matrix and to analyse the structure of the relationship amongst sub or variables by defining a set of similar variables or dimensions. Using this type of analysis, the researchers are able to identify the dimension of structure and can determine to what extent the variables can be explained by each dimension (Ghozali, 2016). Exploratory Factor Analysis can group some variables or dimensions into more specific groups.

Table 1: KMO and Barlett's Test

| | | |
|--|--------------------|---------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | 0.953 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 982.373 |
| | Df | 21 |
| | Sig. | 0.000 |
| a. Based on correlations | | |

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the value of sig KMO < 0.05 , which indicates that there is a relationship between the variables tested. This means exploratory factor analysis can be done. Another to denote is the value of Measure of Sampling Adequacy, where the value is $0.953 > 0.5$. it means the relationship between the variables tested is strong enough. The more the Measure of Sampling Adequacy number approaches 1.0, the stronger the relationship. Based on the data in the table, the relationship between the variables tested is very strong.

Table 2: Component Matrix

| Component Matrix^a | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | Raw | Rescaled |
| | Component | Component |
| | 1 | 1 |
| Leadership | 2.949 | 0.893 |
| Strategic_Plan | 2.005 | 0.862 |
| External_Foc | 3.033 | 0.896 |
| Info_analysis | 2.280 | 0.899 |
| Staff_FocusWP | 3.230 | 0.894 |
| Process_Effective | 2.341 | 0.888 |
| Outcome_Achiev | 2.794 | 0.894 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that all dimensions (7 dimensions) proposed are grouped on 1 component/variable or not spread into several components/variables. Thus, it can be argued that the overall dimensions proposed include leadership, strategic planning, external focus, information and analysis, staff focus and workplace, process effectiveness, and outcome and achievements are the shaping of ‘one variable’, which in this case is shaped into EHE. From the table, it also can be shown that the effect of each dimension in forming EHE, and the most dominant dimension in forming EHE is information and analysis with 0.899.

The result of the partial statistic test of the EHE variable on Higher Education performance which can be seen in table 3, shows that the value of sig $0.000 < (0.05)$. Table 3 indicates that EHE has a positive and significant impact on the performance of Higher Education.

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing

| Hypothesis | Coefficient | Sig count | Sig requirement < | Result |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------|----------|
| Hypothesis 1 | .803 | 0.000 | 0.05 | Accepted |
| Hypothesis 2 | .795 | 0.000 | 0.05 | Accepted |
| Hypothesis 3 | .737 | 0.000 | 0.05 | Accepted |
| Hypothesis 4 | .802 | 0.000 | 0.05 | Accepted |
| Hypothesis 5 | .757 | 0.000 | 0.05 | Accepted |
| Hypothesis 6 | .813 | 0.000 | 0.05 | Accepted |
| Hypothesis 7 | .832 | 0.000 | 0.05 | Accepted |
| Hypothesis 8 | .852 | 0.000 | 0.05 | Accepted |

EHE has begun to be applied in several overseas universities, including Germany, Belgium, Colorado, India (Kuriakose & Iyer, 2016; Alexander et al., 2007). However, the research findings of the EHE Program support the realisation of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia that have not been empirically explained. Based on the limited research on EHE, the identification of the EHE dimension is applied in this new context (UNNES). To apply the approach or theory to a new context, it is necessary to test the relevance of the previous literature to the current context. In this case, testing whether the dimensions/aspects of EHE in the previous literature is still a relevant application to UNNES.

Based on the results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis test, it can be seen that the EHE-forming dimensions proposed as a new approach at UNNES are accepted as a whole. With a value of sig KMO < 0.05, which indicates that there is a relationship between the same variables tested. So, the value of Measure of Sampling Adequacy, where the value is 0.953 > 0.5. Then, the rescaled component shows that all dimensions (7 dimensions) proposed are grouped on one component/variable or not spread into several components/variables. Hence, it can be argued that the overall dimensions proposed include leadership, strategic planning, external focus, information and analysis, staff focus and workplace, process effectiveness, and outcomes and achievements are the shaping of 'one variable', which in

this case creates EHE. One of the most dominant dimensions in forming EHE is the information and analysis dimension with 0.899.

Partial statistical tests result in leadership on the performance of Higher Education from table 3 shows that the value of sig is $0.000 < 0.05$. It indicates that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. That is, Hypothesis 1 in stated that "leadership has a positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance" is proved, meaning the hypothesis is accepted. It shows that leadership has a significant impact on performance. Thus, when the leadership of UNNES is good, the institutional performance will also be good. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Braun et al. (2009) which found that effective leadership development is crucial for the performance and success of an organisation as well as among academics.

Partial statistical test results of strategic planning on the Higher Education performance that can be seen in table 3, shows that the value of sig is $0.000 < 0.05$. The number indicates that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. That is, Hypothesis 2 in the study stated that "strategic planning has a positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance" is proven, meaning that the hypothesis is accepted. It shows that strategic planning has a significant impact on performance. Thus, when strategic planning of UNNES is good, the institutional performance will also be good. Raluca and Alecsandru (2012) found that the main factor the management team of the university should take into account is developing a managerial strategy for relevant and efficient institutions in competitive markets such as higher education systems.

Partial statistical test results with an external focus on Higher Education performance from the table indicated that the value of sig is $0.000 < 0.05$. It means that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. That is, Hypothesis 3 stated that "external focus has a positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance" is proven, which means the hypothesis is accepted. It shows that the external focus has a significant impact on performance. Thus, when external focus of UNNES is good, the institution performance will also be good. Rozsnyai (2003) suggested that the focus of the externalities of higher education institutions is about the effect of quality assurance on the quality of education. Furthermore, academic involvement and motivation towards a higher education curriculum can foster broad knowledge and enable students to develop themselves as professional individuals from previous generations (Berasategi et al., 2016).

Partial statistical test results of information and analysis on Higher Education performance that can be seen in table 3, shows that the value of sig is $0.000 < 0.05$. The number indicates that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. That is, Hypothesis 4 in the study stated that "information and analysis have a positive and significant impact on Higher Education

performance” is proven, meaning that the hypothesis is accepted. It showed that information and analysis have a significant impact on performance. Thus, when the information and analysis of UNNES is good, the institutional performance will also be good. Bonnema et al. (2008) suggested ten factors emerging from a factor analysis to determine how the desired source and information needs can be grouped in key themes or categories within the target market. The first two factors relate to the type of institution, i.e. university and college. Five further factors relate to information needs i.e., work aspect, course content aspect, student experience aspect as a whole, sport aspect and financial aspect.

Partial statistical test results of staff focus and workplace on Higher Education performance indicated that the value of sig is $0.000 < 0.05$. It means that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. That is, Hypothesis 5 in the study stated that “staff focus and workplace has a positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance” is proven, meaning that the hypothesis is accepted. It shows that the staff focus and workplace has a significant impact on performance. Thus, when the staff focus and workplace of UNNES is good, the institutional performance will also be good. In any college or university environment, the challenge is to encourage faculty and staff to develop their disciplinary and technical skills while also contributing optimally to the institution such as through the mission, vision, goals and plans (Ruben, 2007). The definition of staff development indicated that as teachers must translate acquired knowledge, skills and conceptions into changes about how they think and their educational behaviour (Rijdt, 2013).

Partial statistical test results of the process effectiveness on the Higher Education performance which can be seen in table 3, show that the value of sig is $0.000 < 0.05$. The number indicated that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. That is, Hypothesis 6 in the study stated that “the process effectiveness has positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance” is proven, meaning that the hypothesis is accepted. This shows that process effectiveness has a significant impact on performance. Thus, when UNNES has good process effectiveness, its institutional performance will be also good. To achieve and maintain high standards for the institution as a whole and for many departments in colleges or universities, it focuses on the review process towards the effectiveness and efficiency of educational programs and services and how they contribute to campus life (Ruben, 2007). On the other hand, the organisational structure must enable a business process or process to encourage creativity and innovation within the organisation for bureaucratic needs and more participation and empowerment within the organisation (Ahmad et al., 2007).

Partial statistical test results of outcome and achievements on the Higher Education performance that can be seen in the table, shows that the value of sig is $0.000 < 0.05$. The number indicates that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. That is, Hypothesis 7 in the study

stated that "outcome and achievements has a positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance" is proven, meaning that the hypothesis is accepted. It shows that outcome and achievements have a significant impact on performance. Thus, when UNNES has good outcomes and achievements, its institutional performance will also be good. For any college or university, the academic field, student life, and administrative service program or department consisting of effectiveness and quality as the primary objective (Ruben, 2007). According to Nasrallah (2014), the notion of a reliable conceptual framework to interpret the collected data is about faculty members' perceptions, classroom teaching practices (including how they assess students), an understanding of teachers about learning outcomes, what impedes their implementation and evaluation of constructive alignment.

Tests using the EHE variables (total of all dimensions) on Higher Education Performance indicate that the sig value is $0.000 < (0.05)$. The number indicated that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. That is, Hypothesis 8 in the study stated that "EHE has a positive and significant impact on Higher Education performance" is proven, meaning that the hypothesis is accepted. It shows that EHE has a significant impact on performance. Thus, when UNNES has a good EHE, its institutional performance will also be good. The total impact shown by EHE variable on Higher Education Performance can be seen in Summary Model table. In Adjusted R Square, the effect of total EHE variable is 0.72 (72%). Thus, it can be said that the EHE variable is able to predict the Higher Education Performance of 72%, and the remaining 28% is predicted by other variables not tested in this study.

Conclusions

This study concludes that the EHE program can be implemented in UNNES. Implementation of the EHE program with seven aspects is expected to improve the success of bureaucratic reform and performance of UNNES. This study also infers that the aspects of EHE have a positive and significant influence on the performance of UNNES. That is, the higher aspects of EHE, is where UNNES will improve the performance of the institution. EHE as a whole has a positive and significant influence on the performance of UNNES. The amount of influence indicated is 72%, meaning that UNNES performance is predicted to be 72% by EHE. While the remaining 28% is predicted by other factors.

This research complements prior studies examining the application of EHE to universities, and their impact on institutional performance. However, this prior research was done in the Western world, while in Indonesia studies that examine EHE are very limited. Notwithstanding that, this study still involves samples at UNNES only and is limited to institutional performance variables, but it is expected that for further research, examining the application of EHE in other educational institutions, by extending the variables to be



studied is necessary. This study still has limitations, such as limited data collection methods and quantitative data processing. It would be better, if further research combines quantitative and qualitative methods (mix method), so that it will be more objective and have more in-depth results.

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