



MANAGING A UNIVERSITY FOR BETTERMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Abdi Omar Shuriye, PhD

Professor of Islamic Political Thought and International Relation

Al-madinah International University (MEDIU)

Malaysia

Email: abdi.shuriye@mediu.my

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the intricacies of university management for improved development, analysing the fundamental elements of university administration. The study highlights the need of effective leadership, governance, financial and human resource management, and strategic planning in developing a strong educational institution. The research analyses leadership styles and administrative structures, emphasising the critical importance of visionary leadership in setting university objectives and aligning resources to achieve these aims. Furthermore, it examines the significance of faculty growth, curriculum innovation, and the preservation of high academic standards to guarantee institutional excellence. The discourse encompasses current difficulties confronting universities, such as resource limitations, globalisation, and technological progress. Furthermore, the article incorporates perspectives from Islamic management concepts, highlighting ethical governance, social responsibility, and fair resource distribution. The incorporation of Islamic management into university leadership provides a comprehensive method for addressing ethical and societal requirements within the academic domain. Future research should explore how these ideas might enhance university management to address the changing requirements of higher education.

KEYWORDS: University Management, Leadership, Governance, Strategic Planning, Islamic Management, Academic Excellence

INTRODUCTION

Universities are dynamic organizations that require efficient management to achieve their objectives. Efficient administration of universities encompasses multiple facets including leadership, governance, financial administration, human resource administration, and strategic planning (Sen et al., 2012).



Smith (1987) asserts that good university management is crucial for establishing a favourable learning environment, attracting and maintaining competent faculty members, and guaranteeing the overall triumph of the institution. Effective leadership in university administration is essential for establishing the course and vision of the institution. This pertains to the responsibilities of the university president, vice-chancellor, or other high-ranking executives in formulating strategic decisions, fostering a favourable organisational culture, and interacting with stakeholders (Middlehurst et al., 2010). The governance structures of a university have a key impact on its management by establishing the procedures for decision-making, methods for accountability, and the interconnections between various levels of the institution.

Financial management is a crucial component of university administration, since it dictates the distribution of resources for different academic and administrative purposes. Efficient financial management guarantees the most efficient use of funds, transparency, and adherence to regulatory obligations (Todowede, 2013). Human resource management is critical for the recruitment, retention, and professional growth of competent faculty and staff, hence enhancing the overall standard of teaching and research at the university. Strategic planning is an essential aspect of university administration, since it encompasses the establishment of objectives and priorities, the allocation of resources in accordance with institutional priorities, and the ability to adjust to changes in the external environment. A clearly defined strategic plan directs the process of making decisions and allows the university to stay competitive and adaptable to new challenges and possibilities (Akyel et al., 2012).

MEANING OF MANAGEMENT

Management, as a term used across domains and disciplines, has a multidimensional sense. Here are ten detailed definitions of management that can apply to various organisational situations, outside of the domain of university settings:

Strategic Coordination: Management involves coordinating tasks and resources within an organisation to achieve goals efficiently and effectively. It entails long-term planning and positioning an organisation to respond to changes in its surroundings (Fauzi et al., 2020).



Resource Allocation: Management optimises the use of resources, including human capital, financial, and material assets, to achieve organisational goals (Henri, 2006).

Performance Enhancement: Management aims to continuously improve organisational performance through the development and implementation of excellence standards. Managers use a variety of techniques, controls, and improvement strategies to increase productivity and job quality.

Human Interaction and Communication: Management is really about creating relationships and communicating effectively. This feature includes negotiation, dispute resolution, and effective communication tactics to ensure that teams collaborate well and maintain high morale (Elgoibar et al., 2022).

Decision-Making Framework: Management involves offering a systematic framework to guide organisations through complicated decisions and anticipate probable implications (Herath, 2007).

Change Management: Effective management involves smoothly managing organisational change. This includes driving innovation, overcoming resistance, and adopting new procedures or strategies while maintaining stability (Key Factors in Effective Change Management, 2022).

Leadership and Visionary Guidance: Management involves leading an organisation to achieve its vision. Effective management entails developing and communicating a compelling vision and driving the organisation to achieve it (Aji, 2020).

Improving Operational Efficiency: Management entails optimising processes, reducing waste, and increasing productivity to align everyday actions with strategic objectives (Simon, 2012).

Risk Management and Quality Assurance: involves recognising, assessing, and prioritising risks, as well as taking efforts to reduce the likelihood and effect of unfavourable outcomes. It also entails sustaining quality standards for products



and services (Huang & Bian, n.d).

Ethical Governance and Compliance: Management ensures compliance with legal and regulatory obligations. It ensures that the organisation runs with integrity and responsibility in all of its functions (Aji, 2020; Shivakumar, n.d.). Management is an umbrella term that captures the varied activities and responsibilities of leaders and managers alike in steering an organization toward success. It is a discipline that combines both theoretical knowledge and practical application to tackle the dynamic challenges of running organizations of any type or

THE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF MANAGEMENT

Every organisation that wants to succeed and run smoothly has to understand the concept of management principles. Henri Fayol's 14 principles laid the groundwork for understanding efficient organisational structure and leadership. Over time, management theories have evolved and improved (Kangal, 2017). Among these guidelines are:

- i. **Division of Labour:** Stressing specialisation to boost productivity and knowledge.
- ii. **Unity of Command:** To prevent disputes and disarray, make sure all staff members answer to a single boss.
- iii. **Authority and Responsibilities:** Maintaining an appropriate balance between authority and accountability.
- iv. **Discipline:** Enforcing rules and regulations to keep the organisation in order.
- v. **Compensation:** Paying fairly will guarantee motivation and satisfaction.

Although Fayol's ideas have influenced conventional management theories, new management concepts have emerged in response to the changing needs of contemporary organisations. These are in line with the need for preparation, wise choices, lucid communication, staff involvement and motivation, and change management to adjust to evolving market conditions and technological breakthroughs (Parker & Ritson, 2005).

- i. **Planning and Goal-Setting:** Modern organisations emphasise the need of defining precise goals and creating tactical plans to attain them.



- ii. **Decision-Making:** Modern managers must be skilled in obtaining and analysing data as well as making defensible choices that support organisational goals.
- iii. **Communication:** Nowadays, it's accepted that clear and effective communication is essential to cooperation and strategy alignment inside a company.
- iv. **Motivation and Engagement:** Contemporary companies prioritise the development of environments that energise staff members and encourage a sense of involvement and dedication to company goals.
- v. **Adaptability and Change Management:** A company's ability to quickly adjust to changes in the market and advancements in technology is deemed essential to its survival and expansion.

The adoption of these progressive ideas represents a departure from the inflexibility of conventional management frameworks and acknowledges the dynamic and complexity of the modern workplace. Adaptability and engagement are two concepts that are in line with the current trends of employee empowerment and the necessity for agile management techniques in a global market that is changing quickly (Krzakiewicz & Cyfert, 2014).

MANAGEMENT FROM ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

Viewing management as a discipline via cultural and ideological contexts improves our knowledge of it. In Islamic practice, this worldview is portrayed as a cohesive and all-encompassing concept that has an impact on every facet of life. This component of the literature study enhances our understanding of Islamic management by clearly stating its fundamental concepts and significant traits, backed by a synthesis of scholarly research.

The principles of Islamic Management

Tauhid: is a fundamental principle in Islamic management that emphasises a higher aim and ethical standards in company processes. Managers who adopt Tauhid will integrate their religious beliefs with the pursuit of organisational goals, ensuring that all their actions align with the worship and remembrance of Allah (Muhammad, 2023).

Adhering to Sharia: Following the principles of Sharia provides a moral framework



that directs corporate ethics. The foundation establishes explicit limitations, such as prohibiting usury and gambling, and advocates for socio-economic equity by requiring almsgiving (zakat) and fair commerce (Sulaiman et al., 2013).

Social Justice and Equity: The Islamic approach on management strongly promotes the principle of Adl. This principle guides the development of human resource policy, organisational behaviour, and stakeholder involvement, ensuring that all individuals connected to the business are treated fairly and respectfully (Muhammad, 2023).

Khilafah: Management in Islam is regarded as an act of stewardship, emphasising the sustainable and judicious utilisation of resources. Managers are required to implement ecologically sustainable practices and take responsibility for their economic choices (Sulaiman et al., 2013).

Consultation: also known as Shura, is a procedural approach in Islamic management that promotes democratic engagement and inclusivity in decision-making processes (Almoharby, 2010).

Key characteristics of Islamic Management

Ethical Conduct: The Islamic managerial framework is characterized by an unyielding commitment to ethics. Transparency, integrity, and honesty are not just encouraged but demanded in every transaction and interaction (al., 2023).

Social Responsibility: Islamic management is intrinsically linked to the welfare of society, rather than being driven only by financial gain. Businesses are anticipated to have a beneficial impact on society, demonstrated by acts of philanthropy and efforts towards sustainable development (Zorao, 2023).

Employee well-being: in an Islamic work environment extends beyond monetary rewards to promote psychological and spiritual satisfaction among employees. This method guarantees that workers are treated with respect, appreciated, and given chances for personal and spiritual growth (Hayati & Caniago, 2012).

Balance: Islamic management aims to achieve equilibrium between professional obligations and personal religious practices by drawing inspiration from the concept of Ummah. This entails making provisions for prayer hours, holidays, and other religious duties, so guaranteeing that employees are not compelled to



make a choice between their employment and their religious beliefs (Saridin, 2022). It emphasises the idea of maintaining a balance between work and personal life by considering the integration of spiritual well-being and professional duties.

Islamic management is a comprehensive framework that combines traditional management principles with the ethical and socio-economic requirements of Islam. This paradigm emphasises a shift away from a company model only focused on making profits, towards one that prioritises human well-being, environmental sustainability, and ethical governance. The approach to leadership presented in this model is both compassionate and balanced. It may be applied not just in Islamic communities but also in secular organisations that aim to adopt ethical and sustainable management practices (al., 2023). It cultivates an organisational culture that prioritises dignity, promotes active involvement, nurtures well-being, and guarantees comprehensive success that encompasses both material and spiritual dimensions. The ongoing advancement of Islamic management theories, enhanced by empirical research, offers extensive prospects for academia and practitioners to explore novel avenues in achieving organisational excellence.

WHAT IS UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT?

University management, the intricate web of processes and structures that govern a university's operations, plays a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of higher education. It encompasses a diverse set of functions, demanding strategic leadership, financial acumen, and a deep understanding of the academic environment (- et al., 2023).

Core Functions and Responsibilities Academic Affairs: This pivotal role is responsible for supervising the curriculum, guaranteeing its pertinence and congruity with changing industry requirements and societal necessities. It encompasses the processes of hiring and training faculty members, creating a vibrant learning atmosphere by using new teaching methods and providing research prospects. The institution implements quality assurance procedures to uphold academic standards and bolster its reputation for scholarly brilliance (Pillay & Kimber, n.d).



Financial Management: Universities must manage a multifaceted financial environment. The university administration deliberately allocates resources, carefully considering financial limitations while also prioritizing investments in infrastructure, faculty development, and research projects. Obtaining financial support from tuition fees, government grants, and philanthropic contributions is essential for maintaining the university's operations and facilitating its ambitions for expansion (Bajpai, 2023).

Human Resources: The most significant asset of a university is its human capital. The primary objective of university management is to attract and retain highly skilled teachers and staff, while also offering them opportunities for professional growth and advancement. An explicitly formulated human resource plan cultivates a favorable work atmosphere, advances employee welfare, and stimulates production, ultimately enhancing the university's achievement (Daumiller et al., 2020).

Facilities Management: The physical environment has a substantial impact on both student learning and academic research. The university administration is responsible for the preservation and maintenance of campus facilities, grounds, and technological infrastructure. This includes developing a long-term strategy for future infrastructure requirements, guaranteeing easy access, and establishing a campus environment that can be maintained over time (Musa, 2012).

Student Affairs: University management encompasses more than just academics. It includes student services such as accommodation, eating, counselling, and extracurricular activities. An effective student affairs infrastructure enhances student well-being, cultivates a sense of community, and equips students with the essential skills to handle academic and personal difficulties, thereby contributing to their overall success (Barnes, 2020).

Strategic Planning: Universities function within a constantly changing and active environment. Establishing objectives for the future and determining the strategic path of the organization is of utmost importance. The university administration conducts thorough strategic planning, considering issues such as market trends, financial prospects, and areas with potential for expansion (Akyel et al., 2012). This strategic vision guides the university in attaining its academic, research, and



outreach goals.

Government and Public Relations: Universities engage with diverse stakeholders, including as government agencies, donors, and the wider society. The university administration establishes and sustains robust connections with these external institutions. The university utilises effective communication techniques to obtain money, improve its reputation, and advertise its research and educational programmes. These efforts eventually contribute to the institution's long-term viability and societal influence (Todowede, 2013).

Leadership and Governance: The leadership of a university is often entrusted to a group of administrators, headed by a president or chancellor. Deans are responsible for supervising and administering particular colleges or schools within the university, whereas department chairmen are in charge of overseeing and directing individual academic departments. Governance institutions, such as boards of trustees and committees, offer supervision and strategic guidance, guaranteeing responsible decision-making and accountability (et al., 2023).

HOW BEST TO MANAGE A UNIVERSITY?

Universities, being intricate establishments balancing academic superiority, financial viability, and societal influence, necessitate efficient management tactics to flourish in the current dynamic higher education environment. This section explores essential strategies that can enhance university administration, cultivating a dynamic educational atmosphere, and attaining institutional objectives.

1. Cultivating a culture that promotes a shared vision and strategic planning.

Efficient university administration commences with a distinctly expressed vision and strategic blueprint. The roadmap, created through a collaborative process comprising faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders, aims to tackle long-term objectives, establish fundamental principles, and delineate crucial performance metrics (Islamiyah et al., 2022). A culture characterized by a common vision promotes a sense of responsibility and dedication, guaranteeing that all parties involved collaborate towards a cohesive goal. Frequently evaluating and revising the strategy plan is crucial for adjusting to a perpetually changing environment.



2. Placing Academic Excellence as the Highest Priority

The primary objective of a university is to achieve academic excellence. The university administration must prioritize strategies that improve the quality of teaching and research (Quitoras & Abuso, 2021). This can encompass:

- i. Curriculum Innovation: Consistently evaluating and revising the curriculum to ensure that it remains pertinent to the demands of the industry and the needs of society.
- ii. Faculty Development: Allocating resources to enhance faculty recruitment, implementing development programmes, and cultivating a research-friendly atmosphere to attract and retain highly skilled individuals.
- iii. Implementing rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to uphold high academic standards and bolster the university's reputation for scholarly excellence.

3. Effective Resource Management

Universities must manage a multifaceted financial environment. Effective university management must demonstrate proficiency in resource allocation, effectively balancing financial limitations with the necessity for strategic investments (Jing-liang, 2015). This entails:

- i. Utilizing data analytics to find cost-saving opportunities, optimize resource allocation across departments, and prioritize investments that match with the strategic strategy, thereby making decisions based on data.
- ii. Expanding the sources of funding: Investigating additional sources of income apart from tuition fees, such as research grants, philanthropic donations, and collaborations with industries.
- iii. Enhancing Facilities Management: Enforcing sustainable strategies for campus operations and infrastructure upkeep to minimize expenses and foster ecological accountability.

4. Investing in Human Capital

The university administration should give priority to implementing measures aimed at attracting, retaining, and nurturing a highly skilled workforce (Saginova et al., 2015). This can be accomplished by:



- i. **Competitive Compensation and Benefits:** Providing attractive compensation, comprehensive benefits packages, and chances for professional growth to attract and retain highly skilled individuals.
- ii. **Promoting a pleasant work environment** by cultivating a culture of collaboration, transparent communication, and maintaining a healthy work-life balance to enhance productivity.
- iii. **Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion:** Implementing strategies to actively promote diversity and inclusion among the teachers and staff, with the aim of enhancing the learning environment and fostering innovation.

5. Cultivating a Vibrant Student Experience

University encompasses more than just academics. The university administration should give priority to the development of a comprehensive and nurturing student experience. This includes:

- i. **A strong Student Affairs Infrastructure:** Offering extensive student services such as accommodation, meals, counselling, career guidance, and extracurricular activities to promote student well-being and achievement.
- ii. **Technology Integration:** Utilizing technology to improve the learning process, encourage student involvement, and customize learning paths.
- iii. **Establishing robust business partnerships:** Developing strong connections with industry partners to provide chances for students to engage in internships, co-op programmes, and secure job placements.

6. Building Strong External Relations

Universities engage with a wide variety of stakeholders, such as government agencies, funders, alumni, and the larger society (Jongbloed et al., 2008). The university management should develop successful communication methods to promote the university's research, educational programmes, and social impact. This will help in securing financing, improving the university's reputation, and building collaborations with the community.

- i. **Government Relations:** Lobby for government policies that promote higher education and ensure access to research funding possibilities.
- ii. **Alumni Relations:** Foster robust connections with alumni networks to produce charitable donations and provide mentorship prospects for students.



Efficient management of a university involves a complex effort that necessitates a strategic approach, making decisions based on facts, and a dedication to ongoing enhancement. Universities can become leaders in knowledge creation and societal impact by focusing on academic excellence, efficiently managing resources, investing in human capital, enhancing the student experience, establishing strong external relationships, and promoting a shared vision.

WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

Leadership, a concept as ubiquitous as it is multifaceted, has captivated thinkers and practitioners for millennia. While there's no universally accepted definition, leadership broadly refers to the ability to influence, motivate, and guide individuals or groups towards a common goal (Tyaningsih & Nurachadijat, 2023). Effective leadership is crucial in various contexts, from universities navigating a competitive landscape to businesses seeking innovation. Let's delve into some key leadership definitions and explore diverse leadership approaches.

Classical Definitions of leadership

Trait Theories: Early leadership theories focused on identifying inherent traits associated with effective leaders. These traits might include intelligence, charisma, decisiveness, and integrity (Stogdill, 1948). Trait theories, however, have been criticized for overlooking the situational context and the role of development in leadership skills.

Behavioral Theories: Shifting the focus from innate traits to observable behaviors, behavioral theories propose that leadership styles can be learned and developed. Two prominent behavioral styles include task-oriented leadership, which emphasizes structure and goal achievement, and relationship-oriented leadership, which prioritizes building rapport and fostering a positive work environment (Toxirovna, 2023).

Contemporary Approaches:

Transformational Leadership: This approach emphasizes the leader's ability to inspire and motivate followers to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of a shared vision. Transformational leaders challenge the status quo, encourage innovation, and empower followers to reach their full potential (Transformational Leadership Theory - Meaning, Criticisms and its Implications, 2022).



Servant Leadership: Servant leadership focuses on the leader's role in serving the needs and well-being of their followers. Servant leaders prioritize empathy, listening, and fostering collaboration, creating an environment where followers feel valued and supported (Dennis et al., 2010).

Situational Leadership: This approach recognizes that the most effective leadership style varies depending on the situation and the followers' development level. Situational leaders adapt their style to provide the appropriate level of directive and supportive guidance (Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory, 2010).

Leadership and University Management

University management presents a unique context for leadership. Effective university leaders require a blend of strategic vision, academic understanding, and the ability to navigate complex stakeholder relationships. They must lead faculty in the pursuit of academic excellence, inspire students to achieve their full potential, and build strong relationships with donors, government agencies, and the broader community.

LEADER VS. BOSS

In the domain of university management, the responsibilities of a leader and a boss frequently overlap. Although both individuals possess positions of power, their methods and effects can vary significantly. In this analysis, we examine the fundamental differences between leaders and bosses within the context of a university environment.

Focus and Motivation:

Leaders serve as sources of inspiration and motivation. They provide a distinct and unambiguous vision for the university, which is in harmony with the institution's fundamental principles and the demands of society. They inspire a fervor for acquiring knowledge and exploring new ideas among academics, staff, and students. Employers typically prioritize duties and instructions. They oversee daily activities and verify compliance with set norms. Their fundamental drive stems from the desire to accomplish particular objectives and retain a sense of organization (Edge et al., 2023).



Decision-Making:

Leaders foster a culture of collaboration and actively involve others in the decision-making processes. They prioritize the inclusion of various viewpoints and encourage individuals to assume responsibility for their tasks, whereas bosses typically employ a hierarchical approach to making decisions. Information cascades downward, and directives are anticipated to be adhered to with limited scope for feedback (Bartolović et al., 2022).

Communication:

Leaders demonstrate exceptional proficiency in communicating. They exhibit transparency, promoting open channels of communication and actively listening to the concerns and ideas of others. In contrast, communication with bosses tends to be more directive and one-sided. They may give more importance to giving orders rather than promoting open communication and exchanging comments (Connaughton, 2023).

Development and Growth:

Leaders allocate resources towards the enhancement of the growth and progress of individuals in their vicinity. They offer opportunity for academics and staff to acquire new skills and advance professionally, whereas bosses may prioritise short-term responsibilities above long-term growth. McMahon (2017) under their guidance, the potential for professional advancement may be restricted.

Impact and Legacy:

Leaders have a long-lasting influence. They foster creativity, nurture a dynamic educational atmosphere, and drive the university towards attaining its strategic objectives, whereas bosses may uphold the existing state of affairs. Their main influence centres on guaranteeing the efficient functioning of established systems and processes (Violeta, 2022).

The Ideal in University Management

Although the leader and boss archetypes have different approaches, the best method for university administration frequently has elements of both. Competent university leaders demonstrate the capacity to offer guidance and organisation, like to a supervisor, while concurrently inspiring, motivating, and empowering people, resembling a genuine leader. This combination of leadership styles



cultivates a vibrant and flourishing university atmosphere in which teachers, staff, and students may thrive.

KNOWLEDGE VS. WISDOM

Both wisdom and expertise are essential in the complicated field of university administration. Despite the fact that they are frequently used synonymously, these ideas have different applications and meanings. Administrators at universities can be better equipped to handle difficult situations and make wise judgments if they are aware of these variances.

Knowledge Is the Basis for Action

A body of information and facts is referred to as knowledge. It covers an immense range of topics, including historical events, scientific ideas, and the greatest pedagogical approaches. Universities are by definition hubs for the production and exchange of knowledge (Knowledge, 2023). To carry out their responsibilities efficiently, university administrators rely largely on expertise. For example, their ability to make wise budgetary decisions is facilitated by their understanding of financial management concepts. Analyzing curriculum creation techniques is also necessary to guarantee academic excellence. But information might not be enough on its own. A wealth of knowledge does not always equate to sound judgment or the capacity to handle challenging circumstances with foresight. Herein lies the application of the notion of wisdom.

Wisdom: The Art of Applying Knowledge

Wisdom can be defined as the capacity to use information wisely in conjunction with experience, judgment, and discernment. A prudent university administrator is not limited to financial management; in addition, they are able to predict future trends, evaluate intricate financial data, and make long-term, well-informed investment decisions (DeFrank et al., 2019). Beyond merely understanding the facts, wisdom entails the capacity to integrate knowledge, recognize possible outcomes, and make decisions that are consistent with the university's guiding principles and long-term objectives.

The Synergy of Knowledge and Wisdom

The best way to think about knowledge and wisdom is as complementing forces. Making well-informed decisions requires a solid knowledge base. But without



wisdom to guide us, knowledge might be misused or result in unexpected repercussions (Müürsepp & Jakubik, 2022).

- i. Foresee potential obstacles and create proactive plans to overcome them. University leaders who try to be both informed and wise are better able to do this.
- ii. Handle difficult moral conundrums knowing full well what might happen.
- iii. Encourage the investigation of novel concepts while upholding a foundation of academic rigor to cultivate an innovative culture.
- iv. Demonstrate a profound comprehension of the university's mission and values in order to inspire and drive teachers, staff, and students.

Cultivating Wisdom in University Management

Though it takes time to develop wisdom, university administrators can take the following actions to foster it:

- i. **Welcome lifetime learning:** By participating in many ideas and continuing professional development, you can always look for fresh information and insights.
- ii. **Experience reflection:** To obtain insightful knowledge and enhance decision-making, consider past encounters, accomplishments, and setbacks on a regular basis.
- iii. **Seek mentorship:** Get knowledge from seasoned mentors and leaders who can impart insight and offer direction.
- iv. **Work on your empathy:** Gaining empathy for other people's viewpoints will help you collaborate with them and establish trust in the academic community.

WORDS VS. ACTIONS

Putting vision into practice through concrete actions is just as important to effective university management as making well-reasoned statements and devising strategic plans. Strong words might encourage and inspire, but it's tangible deeds that show dedication and foster trust among the campus community. Let's examine how to close the gap between words and deeds and go deeper into the significance of action in university administration (Song, 2022).

The Peril of the "All Talk, No Action" Leader

University administrators who just use rhetoric run the danger of offending staff,



faculty, and students. Vague declarations on innovation or academic achievement become meaningless in the absence of tangible measures. A continuous discrepancy between intentions and behavior damages morale and trust, making it more difficult for the university to accomplish its objectives (Crawford, 2022).

The Power of Action-Oriented Leadership

Leaders that are action-oriented show their dedication by taking concrete actions. This could entail:

- i. **Strategic resource allocation:** Supporting innovative projects and faculty development programs with funding allocations that match ambitious aims.
- ii. **Simplifying procedures:** Taking proactive measures to lessen administrative duties for teachers and staff so they can concentrate on their primary academic responsibilities.
- iii. **Championing diversity and inclusion:** Putting policies and programs in place that actively support a varied and inclusive learning environment is a step beyond symbolic gestures.
- iv. **Promoting open communication:** Creating channels of communication that are unobstructed and paying attention to the advice and concerns of teachers, staff, and students.

Strategies for Bridging the Word-Action Gap

University administrators can close the gap between words and deeds by doing the following:

- i. **SMART Goal-Setting:** Specifying goals that are precise, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound guarantees understanding and facilitates tracking of progress.
- ii. **Transparent Communication:** Accountability and trust are fostered by keeping others informed about strategic initiative progress and problems.
- iii. **Empowering Others:** Encouraging teachers, staff, and students to share their knowledge and insights promotes a feeling of ownership and raises the possibility that an initiative will be implemented successfully.
- iv. **Setting a Positive Example:** University leaders must set a positive example for the entire university community by modeling the behaviors and values they support.



The Ripple Effect of Action

University administrators' tangible acts have a knock-on effect across the entire organization. When leaders put action first, others are motivated and inspired to take charge and provide their skills (Sengupta & Blessinger, 2022). By working together, we can create a culture of continuous improvement that moves the university closer to realizing its mission and reaching its strategic goals.

CONCLUSION

In summary, managing a university is a significant and diverse undertaking that necessitates striking a careful balance between upholding traditions and welcoming innovation. An innovative strategy that adapts to the changing needs of teaching, research, and community involvement is essential to an institution of higher learning's quest of improvement and progress.

In this essay, we have examined the fundamental elements of university administration, such as leadership, governance, data-driven decision-making, strategic visioning, and the promotion of academic excellence. We have also talked about the significance of managing finances, hiring staff, maintaining buildings, student affairs, and interacting with other parties.

The construction of a dynamic learning environment that motivates students to become leaders and thinkers in addition to providing education is the overall goal of these initiatives. Universities have a duty to promote innovation and sustainability while fostering a varied, inclusive community in order to act as catalysts for societal advancement.

It is a challenge for university administrators to be flexible, adaptive, and committed to the major goals of the institution when the university environment changes due to globalization, technology breakthroughs, and changing social requirements. Universities may achieve their goals of teaching and research excellence by embracing technology, investing in the professional development of their professors and staff, and actively participating in the global academic community.

As a result, strong university administration may act as the engine for growth, establishing the school as a center of learning, a crossroads for creativity, and a pillar of the advancement of society. Universities will not only negotiate the



Australian Journal of Social and Cultural Studies
Vol. 14, October 2024, pp. 15-39

Established July 2008

*The Islamic Centre for Research and
Development Inc. Sydney, Australia*

complexity of the present, but also pave the path toward a more affluent and enlightened future via strategic governance, unity of purpose, and cooperative efforts. We are more than just administrators when it comes to looking after these priceless institutions; we are also future planners and defenders of a heritage. Let us continue to lead our institutions with discernment, bravery, and a steadfast dedication to the advancement of our global community as we look to the future.



REFERENCES

- N K H., Aishwarya, -, -, M A., & -, M H. (2023, May 4). University Management System. <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2023.v05i03.2839>
- Aji, M Q W. (2020, January 1). INVESTIGATING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE OF INDONESIA. <https://doi.org/10.37500/ijessr.2020.3035>
- Akyel, N., Polat, T K., & Arslankay, S. (2012, October 1). Strategic Planning in Institutions of Higher Education: A Case Study of Sakarya University. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.09.979>
- Akyel, N., Polat, T K., & Arslankay, S. (2012, October 1). Strategic Planning in Institutions of Higher Education: A Case Study of Sakarya University. *Procedia: social & behavioral sciences*. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812044412>
- Al., S S A Q E. (2023, May 11). CULTURAL BUSINESS ETHICS FROM ISLAMIC BUSINESS MODEL AND CURRENT TRADING CHALLENGES. *Science and Engineering Research Support Society*. <https://doi.org/10.52783/rlj.v11i10s.1795>
- Almoharby, D. (2010, February 23). Shuratic decision-making practice, a case of the Sultanate of Oman. *Humanomics*. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/08288661011024968/full/html>
- Bajpai, A. (2023, March 8). *Financial Management*. Shivkrupa Publication's. <https://doi.org/10.48175/ijarsct-8585>
- Barnes, A C. (2020, March 1). *Higher Education and Student Affairs: Applying Expertise in Student Leadership Development and the Collegiate Context*. Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.20372>
- Bartolović, V., Matijević, G., & Ciprić, L. (2022, October 21). LEADERSHIP STYLE AND VARIABLES OF INFLUENCE ON GROUP DECISION-MAKING IN COMPANIES. <https://doi.org/10.7251/emc2202421b>



Connaughton, S L. (2023, June 23). Leadership and Communication.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780199756841-0290>

Crawford, J. (2022, January 31). Editorial: The Need for Good Leaders in Higher Education. University of Wollongong. <https://doi.org/10.53761/1.20.01.01>

Daumiller, M., Stupnisky, R H., & Janke, S. (2020, January 1). Motivation of higher education faculty: Theoretical approaches, empirical evidence, and future directions. Elsevier BV. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2019.101502>

DeFrank, M., Bivona, M A., Chiaraluce, B., & Kahlbaugh, P E. (2019, February 24). The Language of Wisdom Understood Through an Analysis of Wise Quotes. SAGE Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927x19831743>

Dennis, R S., Kinzler-Norheim, L., & Bocârnea, M C. (2010, January 1). Servant Leadership Theory. Palgrave Macmillan UK eBooks.

https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780230299184_14

Edge, C., Pearson, C., & Pearson, A W. (2023, January 1). Leadership.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4842-9315-7_5

Elgoibar, P., Armstrong, R., & Euwema, M. (2022, January 12). Conflict Management in the Workplace.

<https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780199828340/obo-9780199828340-0293.xml>

Fauzi, T H., Harits, B., Danial, D M., & Komariah, K. (2020, May 10). Adaptive Strategies of External Environmental Effects in Digital Entrepreneurship in the Strategic Management Perspective. <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2020-0040>

Hayati, K., & Caniago, I. (2012, December 5). Islamic Work Ethic: The Role of Intrinsic Motivation, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment and Job Performance.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812051075>

Henri, J. (2006, August 1). Management control systems and strategy: A resource-



based perspective. Accounting, organizations and society.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0361368205000371>

Herath, S K. (2007, September 25). A framework for management control research.

<https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/02621710710819366/full/html>

Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory. (2010, January 1).

<https://www.leadership-central.com/situational-leadership-theory.html>

Huang, J., & Bian, Y. (n.d). Effectiveness research of quality management system on verification risk. <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/5976678/>

Islamiyah, Z T., Rahayu, A., & Wibowo, L A. (2022, January 1). A Systematic Literature Review: University Strategic Management. Atlantis Press.

<https://doi.org/10.2991/aebmr.k.220701.088>

Jing-liang, W. (2015, October 26). Approaches of Improving University Assets Management Efficiency. International journal of higher education.

<https://www.sciedu.ca/journal/index.php/ijhe/article/view/8193>

Jongbloed, B W., Enders, J., & Salerno, C. (2008, April 18). Higher education and its communities: Interconnections, interdependencies and a research agenda. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-008-9128-2>

Kangal, S. (2017, March 11). 14 Management Principles.

<https://www.iedunote.com/14-management-principles-henri-fayol>

Key Factors in Effective Change Management. (2022, September 26).

<https://www.managementstudyguide.com/key-factors-in-effective-change-management.htm>

Khan, S., & Ukpere, W I. (2014, March 1). Employee Performance Management at a South African Government Organization.

<https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n3p661>

Knowledge. (2023, March 31). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781394208715.ch3>

Krzakiewicz, K., & Cyfert, S. (2014, June 27). The concept of management by

flexible goals. Management. <https://www.management-poland.com/The->



[concept-of-management-by-flexible-goals,157883,0,2.html](#)

McMahon, G T. (2017, August 1). The Leadership Case for Investing in Continuing Professional Development. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
<https://doi.org/10.1097/acm.0000000000001619>

Middlehurst, R., Kennie, T., & Woodfield, S. (2010, January 1). Leading and Managing the University – Presidents and their Senior Management Team.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-08-044894-7.00889-7>

Muhammad, F. (2023, July 29). ETHICS IN MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS AND PRACTICES: AN ISLAMIC VIEW. <https://doi.org/10.32890/jtom2023.18.1.3>

Muhammad, F. (2023, July 29). ETHICS IN MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS AND PRACTICES: AN ISLAMIC VIEW. <https://e-journal.uum.edu.my/index.php/jtom/article/download/20500/4023>

Musa, M F. (2012, January 1). Higher Education Physical Assets and Facilities.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.08.051>

Müürsepp, P., & Jakubik, M. (2022, January 1). Rationality of Wisdom-Inquiry and Redefining the Tasks of Universities. Philosophy Documentation Center.
<https://doi.org/10.5840/bjp20221416>

Parker, L D., & Ritson, P A. (2005, March 18). Revisiting Fayol: Anticipating Contemporary Management. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2005.00453.x>

Pillay, H., & Kimber, M. (n.d). Quality assurance in higher education: for whom and of what?. <http://www.inderscience.com/link.php?id=27349>

Quitoras, M C L., & Abuso, J E. (2021, January 3). Best Practices of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for the Development of Research Culture in the Philippines. <https://doi.org/10.29333/pr/9355>

Saginova, O., Zavyalova, N., Skorobogatykh, I., Grishina, O., & Мусатова, Ж. (2015, October 30). Faculty Rankings and Management of Human Capital



of a University. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n5s4p465>

Saridin, R. (2022, October 24). Contribution of Islamic Management In Building Ethics In Organizations. Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri.
<https://doi.org/10.29407/int.v1i1.2688>

Sen, A K., Kabak, K E., Tüysüz, F., & Kuzaliç, D. (2012, October 1). Democratization of University Management for Quality Higher Education. Procedia: social & behavioral sciences.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812045983>

Sengupta, E., & Blessinger, P. (2022, December 5). Introduction to Role of Leaders in Managing Higher Education. Emerald Publishing Limited.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/s2055-364120220000048001>

Simon, J. (2012, April 17). Purpose of a Process Improvement Team.
<https://smallbusiness.chron.com/purpose-process-improvement-team-42924.html>

Sivakumar, N. (n.d). 'Saha Viryam' – The Excel Way To Balanced Development Through Ethical Governance.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0974686220090106>

Smith, D H. (1987, December 1). Changing practices in continuing education management. New directions for adult and continuing education.
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ace.36719873607>

Song, B. (2022, November 1). Effective Management, and Educating People to Become Talents — On the Educational Management Countermeasures of College Students. <https://doi.org/10.32629/jher.v3i5.1040>

Stogdill, R M. (1948, January 1). Personal Factors Associated with Leadership: A Survey of the Literature. Taylor & Francis.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.1948.9917362>

Sulaiman, M N., Sabian, N A A., & Othman, A K. (2013, December 31). The Understanding of Islamic Management Practices among Muslim Managers in Malaysia. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n1p189>



- Todowede, B J. (2013, December 1). Managing University Finances for Sustainable Administration and Institution - Building. <https://www.richtmann.org/journal/index.php/jesr/article/view/2350>
- Toxirovna, S U. (2023, May 1). ANALYSIS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF BEHAVIORAL LEADERSHIP THEORIES. <https://doi.org/10.37547/ajsshr/volume03issue05-06>
- Transformational Leadership Theory - Meaning, Criticisms and its Implications. (2022, September 26). <https://managementstudyguide.com/transformational-leadership.htm>
- Tyaningsih, S., & Nurachadijat, K. (2023, June 13). Pengaruh Gaya Kepemimpinan dan Motivasi dalam Suatu Organisasi. Universitas Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai. <https://doi.org/10.31004/joe.v6i1.2999>
- Violeta, V. (2022, December 1). The importance of leadership in the educational process. <https://doi.org/10.52387/1811-5470.2022.4.16>
- Zorao, M. (2023, March 9). Divine Management in the Holy Quran (An Objective Study). Tikrit University. <https://doi.org/10.25130/jjs.20.11.9.9>