

CHAPTER 7

Higher Education Institution's Top Management Insight on Leadership Competency Criteria

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7.1 INTRODUCTION

The recent research on Higher Education Institution (HEI) has identified that restructuring, less restrictive and globalization are the most driving force that changes the management pattern of HEI (Dopson, 2019). These constant changes require HEI top management to have leadership competency and leadership effectiveness to ensure that the HEI remains relevant and sustainable in today's volatile eco-system of HEI. With such changes, HEI leaders are expected to face an uncertain environment, thus will need a complex and diverse approach in their leadership roles. When HEI has become global and internationalized, novel challenges becomes larger, liberal, complex and multi-functional (Black, 2015; Dopson, 2019). Hence, HEI leader's competency plays an important role in this new changing HEI ecosystem. To increase HEI performance and competitiveness with other institutions, some private and

public universities are forced to merge with other institutions. In conjunction with the novel challenges, there are more strategic alliances, collaboration, joint venture and widening networking which require distinctive and competent leaders to manage the integrated HEI (Dopson, 2019). However, an effective leadership style is required at the top management to ensure the successful of an organization. Hence, this chapter highlight the process in ranking the criteria of the top management in HEI to cope with the current and future strategies and challenges.

7.2 RELATED WORK

In today's eco-system of HEI, the government had reduced the financial support for HEI which requires more independent financial acquisition from the HEI. This has forced the HEI to embrace entrepreneurship as an alternative for financial attainment. Hence, having entrepreneurial skills or business acumen becomes a critical competency for today's HEI leader. HEI leaders are also responsible for the process of resource allocation, aligning teaching and research as well as supporting restructurings for academic excellence (Devlin, 2013; Dopson, 2019). The other challenges faced by HEI leaders are acquiring effective leadership, sustainability in HEI, university mergers and acquisition, global virtual delivery of HEI, inserting appropriate quality culture in universities, gender issues, synergy divergent campus cultures to form coherent educational communities and dealing with tightening resources (Black, 2015; Drew, 2010; Fullan, 2009; Mader, 2012; Yung-Chi Hou, 2015; Lomas, 2004; Arquisola, 2019; Scott, 2010). Whilst the micro challenges reported are dealing with staff matters, constant adhoc interruption, outdated process, organizational indecisiveness, staff

performance, and working in change-averse culture (Scott, 2010). Within the numerous challenges, leaders need to be alert with the most prominent capabilities and effective management and know-how to develop it (Scott, 2010).

According to (Spendlove, 2007), tasks and duties reported vary across HEI although some similarities were identified for leaders who are responsible for research, enterprise, and knowledge transfer. The work commenced is greatly depending on the strength, interest and disinterest of the position holder. (Arquisola, 2019) emphasized that in Asia, the leader's perception and behaviours are reflected by their culture and values. However, current literature in leadership is largely based on the Western context, which is different from the Asian context and culture (Hallinger, 2015). The HEI leaders in Asia not only implement their roles within the institution context but are frequently affected by the socio-cultural discourse (Arquisola, 2019). Hence, there is a critical necessity to identify the criteria of HEI leadership competency specifically in the local context, to ensure that the selection of the HEI leaders is consistent with the dynamic changes in today's HEI eco-system and cultural context. To identify the Leadership Competency Criteria specifically in the Malaysia context, we had interviewed several top managements of higher education institution in order to gather their insight on leadership competency criteria according to each top management position in HEI.