

CHAPTER 5

Scholarly Leadership in Higher Education: A Case Study of Two Exceptional Academics

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5.1 INTRODUCTION

Higher education management has become increasingly difficult because of the ecosystem dynamics of various external and internal factors. It includes the challenges posed by economic uncertainty, which affects university operations. The Covid-19 pandemic has also transformed the global landscape of higher education, including universities. As a result, the university campus has limited services, and all learning is conducted online. Furthermore, the university is also subjected to a market-based culture, which has the potential to interfere with the core ideas and aspirations of the university. Therefore, a balance of ideas, vision, and implementation should be sought for a university's long-term viability, which demands good governance and leadership.

In addition, the intersection priorities of idealism and realism should be pursued. In the context of a nation, public universities are established by a government to lead, change, and empower the public and the nation. Accordingly, the government retains

a mandate in university governance based on national preferences and interests. However, university governance ecosystems are distinct and cannot be operated similarly to other institutions or government agencies. Likewise, university operations must be more adaptable and flexible in responding to the changing ecosystem. The autonomy of the university is required to ensure the effectiveness of decisions in the increasingly complex university management. However, the university still requires several government educational assistance grants to carry out its mission. Consequently, university autonomy should be granted alongside public accountability. The university is also tasked with carrying out public service responsibilities and resolving their problems.

This chapter focuses on the roles of scholarly leadership in universities in meeting all the demands. This chapter is divided into five sections. Section 5.2 explores the definition and characteristics of scholarly leadership. Sections 5.3 and 5.4 use case studies to provide insights on scholarly leadership from two outstanding academics, followed by the discussion and conclusion in Section 5.5.

5.2 SCHOLARLY LEADERSHIP IN UNIVERSITY

University excellence is recognized by three major agendas covering education, research, and services. All the roles are based on the university's existing state as a knowledge-based institution. The university is also bound to provide a lively discussion on various fields of knowledge with a diversity of viewpoints and openness. In addition, the university must provide access to high-quality and equitable education to provide lifelong learning and education for all. As a result, the

university must oblige as the focal point of an intellectual ecosystem culture built on the strength of scholars. The scholars must generate ideas and thoughts of new knowledge for the well-being of the people and the prosperity of the nation. The scholar's responsibilities also include reaching out to the community and industry in fulfilling the university's role as a reference institution. University scholars are expected to provide services through either teaching or research expertise.

The pursuit of becoming an accomplished scholar has taken up a significant academic priority. In this regard, their focus on increasing knowledge capacity and expertise should provide a clear path for their career advancement. Once established as successful academic professionals, they are unlikely to look elsewhere for leadership, preferring instead to be self-leaders and, in time, perhaps providing academic leadership to others (Bolden, 2012). As a result, many emerging scholars resist and stay away from becoming university leaders. They may not value leadership roles as highly as academic work, and some may regard leadership responsibilities as disadvantageous.

Furthermore, university leadership positions are not permanent and are usually limited in duration. The scholar's reluctance to assume leadership roles, combined with the leadership duration limitation, pose challenges to sustaining university leadership. Nonetheless, scholars should be encouraged to take on more leadership roles. There are numerous reasons for this, including the opportunity to leverage their experiences as they advance in their careers. To become a scholar, one must engage in various development practices, including leading teaching and research at various scales. Consequently, their experiences can be incorporated into larger-scale leadership for the benefit of the university.