

# Implementation of Situational Leadership in the Distance Learning Management Office

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**Abstract**—This study aims to identify how situational leadership plays a role in overcoming various cultural problems in the distance learning service unit. This study uses a qualitative approach to examine and describe the situational leadership in dealing with cross-cultural problems in distance learning units. Referring to the results of research that in building harmonious organizational life in different cultural situations can be done by applying situational leadership. The efforts made are by providing intensive supervision and communication, providing understanding through education and training and mentoring in various situations faced by the organization. Thus the leader needs to carry out leadership styles, i.e.: S1 (directing), S2 (coaching), S3 (supporting) and S4 (delegating) equally in overcoming various cultural constraints.

**Keywords**—situational leadership; distance learning management office

## I. INTRODUCTION

Management of distance learning in Indonesia basically will not be separated from cultural and geographical aspects. This is because the wider the reach of education, the more cultural and geographical aspects will vary. Distance Higher Education is a type of educational service that facilitates the constraints of higher education needs caused by time and space. Distance learning can be defined as learning that takes place remotely because of the separation of educators and students, requires the independence of students, and is supported by adequate learning services. The three main aspects in the definition are the separation of educators and students, independence, and learning services [1]. Various problems and constraints faced in distance learning, one of which is the cross-cultural constraints faced by organizational leaders.

In line with the characteristics of Distance Learning Higher Education (PTJJ)'s management in Indonesia, which has service offices in various regions (34 Provinces), the aspects of leadership and culture are important to be explored. This is related to the cross-cultural phenomenon in the context of leadership in service units spread throughout the country. This study aims to identify how situational leadership plays a role in overcoming various cultural problems in the PTJJ service unit in Indonesia.

Research on distance learning is generally related to the use of technology in learning, such as learning evaluations, student

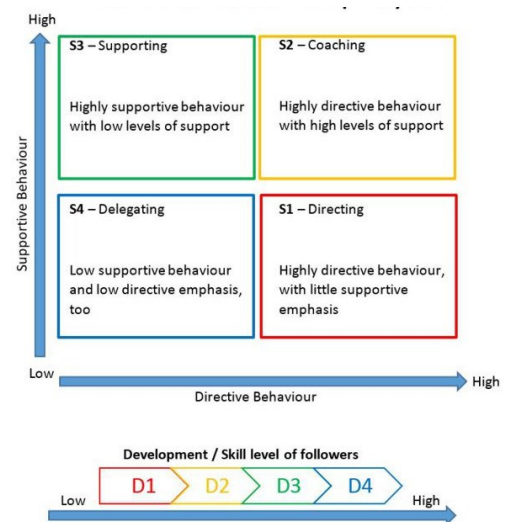
attitudes toward distance learning and student satisfaction with distance learning [2]. Research that is also often carried out related to distance learning is related to students' endurance to keep learning online or remotely [1]. Furthermore, research related to distance education is about information technology that supports the learning process [3–5].

The other research related to distance learning is leadership [6–8]. The research is related to organizational leadership in the use of technology and leadership in organizational aspects such as organizational support in facilitating learning. However, research on Distance Education (PTJJ) is still rarely studied about aspects of leadership and culture, Uzuner writes about culture in distance learning but not related to management but about aspects of student culture as students [9].

## II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

### A. Situational Leadership Theory

The Situational leadership model represents four quadrants. Each quadrant denotes a different leadership style. The diagram can be seen below:



Source: [10]

Fig. 1. The four leadership style.

The different leadership styles in situational leadership theory, range from S1 to S4 and vary in the level of leadership involvement direction involved. This level of direction and control and ultimately, the correct leadership style to use, is understood by mapping the 'Development Level' (D1 to D4) of the team or individuals against one of the quadrants.

1) (S1) *Telling*: Normally at this level of maturity, the individuals or team do not have much task knowledge. They are yet to learn the skills needed to be proficient and so they need clear direction and guidance. As a result, the necessity is to be told how to do something and what to do. To this end, the style reflects much of an autocratic behaviour.

2) (S2) *Selling*: This is the next step up in the development cycle and although the leadership style is slightly less autocratic, it still requires a good degree of direction from the leader, whereby he/she now begins to explain ideas and the reasons for such. This approach helps the individual / team to start to develop their skills and reasoning. With this style, leaders begin to sell their message to influence and develop the team.

3) (S3) *Participating*: At this level of development, the leader adjusts their style to reflect a more democratic stance and focuses further on relationships and less on task direction. He/ She allows the team(s) to create their goals but works with them to do this.

The main aim here is to develop the team further to take action and to think more autonomously, releasing the leash, if you like, and giving them greater scope for self-leadership.

4) (S4) *Delegating*: At this point in the cycle, the team are now competent. Their levels of development are high with the task at hand, and the leadership style reflects a hands-off approach. The manager now delegates goal creation and decision making to the team and as such, they competently get on with the task; setting goals, creating plans and executing them autonomously. The leader is normally kept abreast through regular updates.

### B. Gender Theory

In view of the role it plays, men and women have different views. Gender role theory states that women see their role in the family as part of their social identity, when compared to men [11–13]. When the role of women in the workplace is increasing, the hopes that are placed on them in playing roles in their families are not lost [14,15]. Therefore, when work disrupts family demands, women are more likely to develop negative attitudes toward work. Such conditions still occur in several places and this is still difficult to avoid.

It is difficult to measure whether changes in society can cause men and women to be more similar. When communities emphasize gender differences and treat men and women in different ways, there will be some differences in that as aggressiveness and social behavior. However, when society places more emphasis on equal opportunities and treatment, many gender differences are lost instantly [16].

### III. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach that is done to explore, understand, and describe an object of research in a descriptive way in the form of words and language [17]. This type of research uses case studies which aim to examine and describe the situational leadership in dealing with cross-cultural problems in distance learning units. The researcher becomes a key instrument because researchers are the only data collectors and act as observers with the aim of knowing the conditions and getting information directly on PTJJ. The research locations are in several PTJJ in West Java, Central Java and Lampung. The data source is the Head of the Service Unit and employees. Sources of data in this study are the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. Data sources are recorded through written records or through recorders. The focus of the question is on how to apply the concept of situational leadership in overcoming cultural differences.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Referring to the interview results it can be seen that the core problems faced by managers in PTJJ service units are cultural differences, where leaders are usually appointed or appointed by the government and assigned to various regions that may be culturally different. In the cases revealed were differences in perceptions of gender, time management and communication. In some cases there are misunderstandings caused by different perceptions of communication. Besides that, there is a difference in the majority of trust with the trust of leaders can hamper communication and disrupt organizational performance.

Another problem that might arise is the problem of gender. In certain areas, gender issues are important. Conceptually there is a great deal of debate about the differences between men and women in terms of job performance, absenteeism and transfer rates. The debate regarding job performance is inconclusive. There is no convincing data showing that men perform better than women, or vice versa. The only area where there is a somewhat consistent difference between men and women is attendance. Women have a higher level of absenteeism because they usually take care of and take care of children, elderly parents, and their partners who are sick, making it absent from work [18].

In the context of situational leadership can be used situational leadership approach to discuss about how a leader helps followers or people he leads to be able to achieve the expected goals. When a leader is able to bring his followers to achieve the desired goals, the taker will feel that he is being considered more and has good support from his leader. In this condition the leader is faced with two conditions: 1. When a follower has achieved his goal. When followers have been able to achieve their goals, the leader only needs to provide control over the tasks that his followers have completed. Because the follower is considered to have been able to do what was assigned to him. 2. When a follower cannot reach his goal.

When a situation that occurs followers have not been able to achieve its goals, then the leader must direct and guide his followers so that he is able to complete the task given to him. Followers like this need a lot of motivation so that he can

develop better. Interview results and Focus Group Discussion Thus determining the appropriate style to determine the leadership style that will be carried out:

- The placement; Placing staff in accordance with their competencies and interests so that motivation continues to build
- Active and intensive supervision so that employees feel that they are always given assistance through continuous communication. Communication builds trust and confidence.
- Togetherness. Build goals for each stage of work, so that leaders know what is expected by staff and staff also understand what is expected of the leadership
- Leaders provide opportunities for education and training so that knowledge and insight of staff becomes broader and more open.

Furthermore, PTJJ leaders are committed to: Firstly, can be done by building a healthy multi-cultural life; carried out by increasing intercultural tolerance and appreciation. Which can be preceded by an increase in the level of public knowledge about cultural diversity, with various models of recognition of certain cultural characteristics. This is important to understand the behavior patterns of the surrounding community. Secondly, increasing the role of communication media, to conduct censorship substantively which acts as a corrector to the deviation of dominant social norms, by launching corrective pressures on subsystems that may come out of functional balance. Disclosure of scandals or actions that are detrimental to the public interest and harassing values that are upheld by the community must be informed by the function of maintaining stability. Third: conduct distributive supervision, function to maintain the balance of the system through selective dissemination and various techniques of dissemination and information filtering, which may invite conflict in the community or cause disunity, precisely the communication media is required to display various appreciative information on culture other communities.

## V. CONCLUSION

Referring to the results of research that in building harmonious organizational life in different cultural situations can be done by applying situational leadership. The efforts made are by providing intensive supervision and communication, providing understanding through education and training and mentoring in various situations faced by the organization. Thus the leader needs to carry out leadership

styles both S1, S2, S3 and S4 equally in overcoming various cultural constraints.

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