



## THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING MODEL IN IMPROVING ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE BASED ON ACTION-BASED LEARNING IN UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction/Main Objectives:** This research is motivated by the findings from a preliminary research conducted at the administrative leaders at Universitas Negeri Padang. **Background Problems:** Less optimal leadership competency in administrative leadership in terms of change management, conflict management, communication, decision making, team building, and leaders' ability to improve performance. **Novelty:** This model can improve any program and support the expansion of the master program and/or development of the doctoral level in leadership and management in higher education, especially for the development of the capacity of structural leadership capacity. It can be implemented in any university's program, such as in master's programs or at doctoral levels. Furthermore, this model has a contribution to increase the capacity building of universities. In addition, this model can be used as the basis for opening a special study program for leaders, in increasing their leadership competence. **Research Methods:** This research is a development research using ADDIE model which consist of five stages: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation.. Research data were collected using a questionnaire, observation, and a questionnaire. The collected data is analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. **Finding/Results:** This study produced 4 (four) products: model book, material book, instructor guidebook, and participant guidebook. These products were declared to be very valid by experts in terms of construction, content and linguistic aspects. Practicality test results show that it is very practical for the four products that have been developed. **Conclusion:** Furthermore, this model has a very large contribution to increase the capacity building of universities.

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## 1. Introduction

Efforts to achieve the maximum goals of an organization are largely determined by the leadership in the organization. Likewise, in higher education organisations, leadership role determines the achievement of goals effectively and efficiently. The leader must be able to mobilise all components of the organization to work together to achieve goals. Leaders at the primary and secondary school levels are also different from leaders at higher institutions. In line with the research finding conducted by Black (2015), leadership in higher education needs to be managed by people who are professionals in their fields. As a result, universities can grow and develop quickly to become research university. It means that universities will not experience significant progress without special competencies possessed by the leaders. It can be stated that leadership is one of the important competencies in running an organization, especially universities.

Universitas Negeri Padang is one of the universities that continues to improve its quality. The effort of the university is realized with accreditation A in accordance with Decree No: 2989 / SK / BAN-PT / Akred / PT / XII / 2016 with a validity period until December 20, 2021. Good university accreditation is also expected to be accompanied by an increase in rank among the universities especially in Indonesia. Based on the organizational structure at Universitas Negeri Padang, which is based on the Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education Regulation No. 10 of 2015, there are several bureaus, the academic division, and administrative division led by the head of the academic section and the head of the subdivision.

Academic leadership is leadership headed by lecturers who get additional duties to occupy positions as chancellor, vice-chancellor, dean, vice dean, department heads and department secretaries, and several institutions led by lecturers in tertiary institutions. Besides the academic leadership, there is an administrative leader such as section heads and sub-section heads.

Academic leaders and administrative leaders have different opportunities to improve their competence. This is motivated by a different scope of work. Academic leaders are more likely to be flexible in dividing time, aside from the teaching assignments carried out. In comparison, administrative leaders tend to be more rigid in opportunity, time, and working hours. Specifically for administrative staff, their working hours are set based on Ministerial Regulation Number 31 of 2016 regarding the Granting of Employee Performance Allowances in the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education, Article 8 Paragraph 1. It says that the working days are from Monday to Friday or 37.5 hours per week. Therefore, it is necessary to accommodate opportunities for programmatic development of their leadership competencies. However, the existence of administrative leaders cannot be separated from academic activities of higher education. Various activities that must be managed by administrative leaders include academics, student affairs, finance, public relations, information systems, curriculum, decision making, staffing, facilities and infrastructure.

Based on the duties and responsibilities of the academic section at the University, it can be said that the academic section is an essential part of the university, but this

section still gets less attention. It can be proven by some phenomena that the authors have encountered in the field related to the scope of administrative. First, the ability of leaders in changing management competencies still needs to be improved. The leaders still focus on controlling jobs, especially those related to technology. The leadership still faces difficulties in dealing with various employee behaviours that tend to reject changes in the organization, even though the leadership has provided convenience and support the employees to face organizational changes.

Second, the ability of section heads and subdivision heads to achieve organizational goals aligned with their main tasks and functions is very difficult, due to the inability of leaders to direct the actions of their employees' actions, especially with the various changes in the organization. Third, the level of conflict relatively high often occurs in the line of command of the division head and subdivision head. This conflict causes prolonged conflict and is often left alone by the leadership role. This causes a less conducive atmosphere in the work environment of the section head.

Moreover, from the decision-making viewpoint, many section heads and sub-section heads are still lack of the skills to make quick and appropriate decisions, especially in critical conditions. Fifth, forming a team also needs improvement because the current conditions in the field show that there are still many employees who have lack of a sense of organisation; hence, employee disciplinary is increasingly down. In return, this caused their declined quality of performance. Leaders also need to increase appreciation for employees who excel to increase their

performance. The leadership also needs to improve work commitments both for the leader personally and for the employees. This is very important so that they can work responsibly. The phenomenon found is also in line with what was found by Kartasasmita (2009) saying that the quality of education will also determine the quality of future leaders. Indonesia is currently experiencing a "deficit" of leadership, national leadership, regional leaders and tertiary institutions.

Apart from the competencies related to leadership duties that have been stated, another problem is the lack of training provided to administrative leaders to increase their competence. The other problem is that the heads of the divisions and subdivisions did not receive continuous training. Even during their tenure, they rarely participated in the training organized by universities to improve their leadership competence. Even if there is a training given to heads of divisions and subdivisions, sometimes the training was not relevant to the needs of their main duties and functions as leaders. Also, the training materials were not in line with the training participants' needs, so that when the training was taking place, the participants did not respond well. Besides, the training is considered as a refreshing material, and not as that to increase their knowledge and experience. Usually, the materials they got during the training only contained lectures and assignments. This causes boredom and fatigue during the training. Therefore, it is necessary to design a training model to improve the leadership competence of the heads of divisions and subdivisions.

The training should be designed according to their needs and without leaving their duties as officials. When viewed from

the age of section heads and sub-division heads who are above 45 years old, it is necessary that the training should be designed as attractive as possible, one of which is by using an action learning-based approach using which the leaders are trained to solve various problems in their leadership. Besides, information technology in the form of the internet is also used and provides workshops to train their competencies with a schedule that has been arranged well.

The training is designed according to their needs and without leaving their duties as officials. When viewed from the age of the section heads and sub-section heads who are over 45 years old, the training will be designed as attractive as possible using an Action Learning-based approach, where leaders are trained to solve various problems in their leadership. Revans (2011) stated that action learning helps individuals, teams, or organizations find and solve many complex problems in business, government or educational institutions. Furthermore, Realin (2000) also suggested that action learning describes an educational strategy used in a group setting that seeks to generate learning from human interaction arising from engagement in the solution of real-time (not simulated) work problems, such as a change in management, ineffective communication, a work team that is not solid, and less skilled in making decisions.

Based on the understanding of action learning proposed by the experts above, we can conclude that action learning is an approach to learning that solves real problems that occur in a workgroup. This model also has a substantial contribution to increase the capacity building of universities. Especially for Universitas Negeri Padang, which is heading towards a world-class

university, it is important to accommodate leadership competencies in various ways by providing leadership training regularly. Besides, this model can open a special study program for leaders in increasing their leadership competence. In conclusion, this study aims to produce a Training Model for Improving Competency in Leadership based on Action Learning in Higher Education.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Leadership

Leadership is an ability that a leader must have in moving the wheels of the organization. Daft (2003) suggested that leadership is an ability that a person has to influence others in achieving goals by involving other people's ideas. Furthermore, Usman (2013) stated that leadership is a set of knowledge and arts that a person possesses to influence people to act according to the expected goals. Meanwhile, Zainal et al., (2014) provided a more complex definition of leadership, namely the process and art of influencing people by paying attention to obedience, trust, honor, and cooperation to realize organizational goals. This is in line with what Gary (2010) stated about leadership. It is influencing others to understand and agree on what is needed in carrying out tasks and how to do that task, as well as a process to facilitate individual and collective efforts to achieve common goals. It means that leadership is a process and art and an ability that a person has in an effort to influence others by providing the right coordination and direction to achieve predetermined goals effectively and efficiently.

Furthermore, there are various kinds of leadership competencies that must be possessed as suggested by Vaculik,

Prochazka, and Smutny (2014) saying that leadership competencies consist of competence towards tasks, namely competence in building relationships with people and competencies related to oneself. Competence for tasks includes determining, predicting, planning and organizing assigned tasks, such as working together and handling conflicts. Meanwhile, competencies related to oneself are the ability to make self-observations, self-evaluation, self-management, self-knowledge, self-confidence, maturity, personal values, fairness, openness, self-development, integrity, management pressure, the ability to accept provisions. Based on the explanation of the various leadership competencies that have been stated, the leadership competencies referred to in this study are leadership competencies in change management, conflict management, decision making, communication, team building, and the ability to improve performance.

In addition to the above competencies, a leader must pay attention to his values, attitudes and behaviour in leading the organization, the ability to facilitate and increase the involvement of subordinates in carrying out work (Saripudin & Rosari, 2019). Being a committed leader also needs to be supported by several skills, such as the ability to build relationships between employees, mutual understanding and respect for integrity, honesty and humility, so that organizational goals can be achieved well (Rosa & Ancok, 2020).

All of these competencies are the objects of research examined in this study. This is in accordance with the needs in the field.

## 2.2. Training Model

Training is a planned and guided learning process in order to increase knowledge, skills, and attitudes of workers, both individually and in groups. A model can be said to be a pattern or example, a reference, and a variety of something that will be compiled. The model suggested by Joyce, Weil, and Calhoun (2009) is a plan or pattern that will be used for long-term learning plans, designing learning materials, and guiding indoor learning.

The selection of a suitable training model is very much tailored to the needs of training's purposes in the field. This is due to a large number of training needs. Therefore, it must be specifically formulated so that the training can be well directed. As stated by McArdle (2011), "... there are six components to determine that training is needed, they are as define the training need, design the learning to fit the need, prepare to conduct he training, set the scene for learning, implement the training, and measure the effectiveness" (p.???)

## 2.3. Action Learning

The theory of action learning was first developed by Revans in 1982. This theory helps organizations to develop the world of business or organizations, as well as increase their ability to solve problems. Action learning helps individuals, teams, or organizations to find and solve complex problems in business, government, or educational institutions (Revans, 2017) .

Revans (2017) emphasizes the advantages of action learning. First, it is raised from real problems where participants learn by doing and acting according to their level of maturity in the problems at hand. Participants are given the opportunity to be able to solve various real problems faced in

the work environment. Second, action learning reflects on the formulation of questions in depth. Questions that are discussed in depth will generate new knowledge and skills. The more questions that are discussed in the team, the more knowledge and skills will be gained about the problems at hand. Finally, activities carried out in action learning prioritize participants, so that they are able to explore all the potential and resources possessed by participants. Based on these advantages, it is very appropriate if this training base is more oriented towards action learning. Emphasis on real problems and reflection as well as questions in depth are very helpful in finding solutions to the problems at hand.

There are several processes for implementing action learning in the field. Marquardt (2011) stated that there are six components to the action learning process, namely 1) a problem (project, challenge, opportunity, issue or task, 2) an action learning group or team, 3) a process that emphasizes insightful questioning and reflective listening, 4) taking action on the problem, 5) a commitment to learning, and 6) an action learning coach.

Zuber-Skerritt (2009) also emphasized that there are several sequences of activities in carrying out action learning, namely 1) the planning stage, by identifying real problems in the field, 2) carrying out actions, on plans that have been prepared, 3) making observations to get information from actions that have been implemented, 4) carry out a reflection on activities that have been carried out, so as to gain new knowledge. Based on the proposed action learning process, it can be concluded that the process of action learning includes 1) formulate critical problems, 2) form groups/teams, 3)

formulate questions and reflections, 4) carry out actions, 5) develop learning commitments to achieve goals, and 6) assign instructors to help the team reflect on learning.

In this study, the administrative leadership that wants to be expressed is the one that exist in the tertiary institutions at Universitas Negeri Padang, where previously preliminary research had been carried out. This is to find out more about their needs in improving leadership competencies based on action learning.

### 3. Method, Data, and Analysis

This study aims to solve administrative leadership problems in change management, conflict management, decision-making, communication, and team building. This research uses research and development, also known as R & D (Research and Development). The development model used in this study is ADDIE models in accordance with the research objectives, namely developing training models for increasing leadership competency in administrative leaders. The ADDIE model consists of Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. This study applies the ADDIE model because it has several advantages: 1) the steps taken are very systematic and flexible compared to other models, 2) the steps taken are more comprehensive, and 3) each step carried out is accompanied by an evaluation so that it is more perfect because it has improved (Plomp, 2013).

The trial subjects of the products that have been designed are carried out in two stages, namely the expert test phase and the field test. The development of a training model based on action learning involved several experts who are the lecturers from the

Postgraduate Program of Universitas Negeri Padang. The experts are those who specialize in teaching and learning materials, educational technology, and language science. Besides, the head of the bureau as the user of the model was also involved. The selection of experts and practitioners is based on doctoral qualifications, possessing knowledge and skills in the field of leadership, mastering educational technology and mastering a good language. Meanwhile, the field test was carried out in a large group test involving 12 administrative leaders at Universitas Negeri Padang.

The research instruments used in this study were questionnaire, interview, and direct observation. The data obtained in this study is useful for answering various questions about the action learning training model that is used valid, practical, and effective. The data obtained were analyzed by using the validity test, practicality test, and effectiveness test. The research products were analyzed to see whether model books, material books, instructor books, and participant books are feasible, practical and provide a significant increase in leadership abilities.

#### 4. Result and Discussion

The study began with an analysis of the need for improvement in leadership competency of administrative leaders. Preliminary data on leadership competencies were obtained by distributing questionnaires and interviews. Average results show that 97.74% of respondents stated that they really needed training in improving their leadership competence. The questionnaire was distributed to 21 respondents including the deans, section heads, subdivision heads, employees, and lecturers. Table 1. below

shows the data on leadership competencies in improving performance.

*Table 1.* Percentage of The Need for Increasing Leadership Competence

No	Indicator	Percentage
1.	Change management	96.90%
2.	Conflict management	97.73%
3.	Decision making	97.33%
4.	Communication	98.10%
5.	Team building	97.38%
6.	Ability to improve performance	99.00%
	Average	97.74%

Table 1 above shows that 97,74% of respondents stated that it is necessary to be reminded of the leadership competency of administrative leaders. The highest percentage is in the ability to improve performance, in which 99,00% of respondents argued that leadership competency in ability to improve performance really needs to be improved. The lowest percentage is in change management where 96,90% of respondents stated the needs of this competency. Overall, all leadership competencies in change management, conflict management, decision-making, communication, team building, and the ability to improve performance need to be improved. Careful planning for dealing with change is essential. Therefore the role of the leadership is vital in formulating such a mature plan. This suits interview results with administrative leaders, in which 75% of leaders should be able to design blueprints conceptually to achieve organisation goals.

Kasali (2007) stated that to make changes, it requires an important role of leadership in dealing with changes so that desired goals can be achieved. Furthermore, Kasali argued that the leadership needs to have authority because it is obvious, expert, trustworthy and apparent in its direction in

carrying out the plans that have been prepared. The same thing also stated by Jones (2006), the role of leadership is very important to deal with various changes that occur. In order for leadership competence of this change management to be implemented properly, guidelines are needed to deal with these changes; one of them by developing this Action-based Learning-based training model.

It can be concluded that the analysis of the needs of the action learning-based administrative leadership training model can be seen in Table 2 below.

Tabel 2. The Analysis of Need of The Action Learning Base Administrative leadership training model.

Existing Conditions	Expected Conditions
There has been no specific training on the leadership competence of administrative leaders held by universities (> 80% really need training)	Availability of training designs on administrative leadership competence to increase the capacity building of higher education institutions
The existing training is inadequate and does not match the required leadership competencies	The existence of adequate training and suitability with the required leadership competencies
The existing training is not able to solve the various problems faced	Having the ability to solve existing various problems
The lack of a significant increase in leadership competence with the training activities that have been followed so far	Providing leadership training that can improve leadership competencies
Training activities did not run smoothly due to classic problems such as problems of time, place and family problems	Designing training activities according to the needs of the training participants
Lack of leadership competence in facing change, facing conflict, the ability to make decisions, communicate, teamwork and the ability to improve performance (> 85% really need an increase in leadership competence)	Design training that can improve leadership competence in dealing with change, dealing with conflicts, the ability to make decisions, communicate, teamwork and the ability to improve performance.

The second stage in this research is the design. The design stage (D) deals with designing (blueprint) a conceptual model based on the results of the needs analysis stage. Some activities designed are designing the model. The developed model is then packaged in the form of model books, material books, instructor books, and participant books with the characteristics of the action learning-based leadership training model for higher education administrative leadership.

In this case, there are two important characteristics: 1) the characteristics of the development of a leadership training model for higher education administrative leaders based on action learning, and 2) the characteristics of the model components. Researchers used the ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) model to develop this research. Meanwhile, the components of the development model refer to the opinion of Joyce et al., (2016) and Weil (2016). The components consist of a) syntax, social system, b) social system, c) reaction principle, d) support system, e) model effect in the form of instructional impact and accompaniment impact. Furthermore, training materials are prepared to implement this action learning-based training model. Basri (2015) stated that the training material needs to be formulated in a structured manner and meet the needs of participants' in terms of skills, knowledge, and work attitudes. Moreover, Basri (2015) suggested that the formulation of material must be in accordance with the trainees' level of ability and background. The selection of material must also be done carefully and organized by considering the aspects of expediency for training participants. After the material is prepared, the developed

model will be packaged in the form of model books, material books, instructor books, and participant books.

The next stage of this research is to validate the products developed as reference materials in this action-based learning of the training model. The four products were validated by six validators consisting of three professors and doctors who were experts in the field of education administration. The validity test results of this research product were analyzed using SPSS version 20. The validation results of the four products are as follows. First, the results of the model book validity test showed that the value of interclass correlation was obtained with very high interpretation (0.908). The validity test results of the second product (the material book) was 0.903. This means that the interpretation of this product is very high. The validity test results of the third product (instructor manual) show the value of the interclass correlation at 0.936, which means that the level of validity of the instructor manual is very high. The final product value is the participant's handbook, where the validity test results was 0.927, which means the interpretation of this product is very high. Based on the validation tests above, it can be concluded that theoretically, the validation test against the model guide, material guide, instructor's guide, and participant's guide is declared valid.

Moreover, researchers also tested the practicality of the implementation of Action Learning (Action-based Learning) leadership competency model in a large group test. Large group testing was carried out to the 17 heads of divisions. However, five of them could not participate in the testing because of illness and work commitment. Practicality was carried out on the experts, in this case,

the instructor and the participants. The practicality test criteria are practicality of the model guide according to the expert, practicality of the material guide and participant guide, and the practicality of implementing the model. The practicality test of the instructor as a model user has an average score of 4.73 and an average achievement of 94.67% with a very practical interpretation. The practicality test of 12 training participants obtained an average value of 4.18 and an average achievement of 83.53% with a very practical interpretation. Based on both instructor's and the training participants' assessments in the practicality test, this model was stated to be very practical to use. It can be concluded that the results of field tests that have been carried out in large group tests, then theoretically it can be said that the ACTION LEARNING leadership competency training model is practical to implement. This is reinforced by the opinion of Nieveen (2013) which stated the consistency of the expectation model with the real model. When it is linked to the development goals, the ACTION LEARNING leadership competency training model is able to improve the leadership competency of the administrative leadership.

Meanwhile, the effectiveness test was carried out in order to see the effectiveness of the models that have been implemented. The results of the study were marked by the t count greater than t table ( $7.086 > 1.812$ ), which means that  $H_0$  was rejected and  $H_1$  was accepted. Where  $H_1$  is the average value of Action Learning leadership training participants greater than 80. In accordance with these data, the researchers can conclude that the ability of trainees in leadership competencies by using the Action

Learning model with an average value of 80 is acceptable.

Katie Venner in Pedler (2011) emphasized in her research that the training approach with Action Learning was able to facilitate leaders to improve their leadership competencies, where leaders are trained to solve a variety of real problems in the field by interacting in teams to find the right action from the problem. This indicates that the leader cannot work alone even though there is a group dimension to solve these problems (Putriastuti & Stasi, 2019).

Besides, in South Korea Action Learning is experiencing very rapid expansion in developing an organization that is specifically managed by its human resource management. Cho and Bong (2010), through their research, stated that in South Korea, there are two types of Action Learning implementation designs, namely Action Learning for leadership development and Action Learning for organizational development. Cho also stated that for the development of this organization South Korea has a special institution called the Korean Action Learning Association (KALA), which was established in 2005. KALA has 700 members who participated personally, and 35 companies that have joined to develop more than 1,000 instructors. Various large companies believe that implementing Action Learning can enhance leadership competence. They have believed in this Action Learning approach since 1993 (Boshyk and Dilworth, 2010). At the same time, the new academic environment began in 2000. Cho believes that Action Learning is very capable of increasing leadership competencies to produce quality products. This research also emphasizes that leaders can make various changes in their

organization with various actions taken from the various problems they face (Putri et al., 2020). In addition, leaders must be able to instill trust in the team in finding the root of the problems faced in the organization (Karim et al., 2019).

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that this model is effective in its implementation. In addition, this model is not only effective to be implemented in a large group, but also in large companies and academic environments

## 5. Conclusion and Suggestion

The research and development of an action-based learning competency leadership model, abbreviated as Action Learning by using 7 Phase, has been carried out and resulted in the following conclusions. A training model for Action Learning leadership competency enhancement was developed through the ADDIE development model. The result of training model for increasing leadership competency in Action Learning has very high validity and practicality. The Action Learning leadership competency training model has very high effectiveness to improve administrative leaders' leadership competency. Besides, the Action Learning leadership competency training model is needed to increase capacity building in tertiary institutions, especially for administrative leaders. Administrative leaders need to be given leadership competencies training to facilitate leaders in dealing with various field conditions. The training provided can improve the leadership's knowledge and skills in overcoming various problems encountered in the field. So far, there has not been

managed training specifically designed for administrative leaders by tertiary institutions. Therefore, by using the Action Learning leadership competency training model, it is expected that the administrative leadership competency can be increased and the improvement contributes directly to the progress of the tertiary institutions.

As for the implication, this model is needed to improve capacity building in tertiary institutions, especially for administrative leadership. Administrative leaders need to be given leadership competence training to facilitate leadership in dealing with various field conditions. The training provided can improve leadership knowledge and skills in overcoming various problems in the field. So far, there has not been any training management that is designed in a manner specifically for administrative leaders by universities.

Therefore, by using this model, expected competencies administrative leadership can increase and it contributes directly to the development of universities. This training is designed to actively involve the training participants with various actions, starting from the problem identification stage real in the field, team orders, process inquiries and reflections, determine the action, carry out the action, compile a report and lastly presentation. None of the participants was silent. All of them participated in the work and got actively involved. The model provides opportunities which are great in increasing the competence of administrative leaders. Topics about the real problems raised can be adjusted according to the needs analysis in the field.

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