HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION: EFFECTIVE MODELS AND APPROACHES

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Abstract: This article examines different approaches to leadership and management in higher education to improve the quality of the educational process and the sustainability of universities. The study is based on a mixed method, including both quantitative and qualitative data collected from teachers, administrative staff and students. The main focus is on transformational and situational leadership, as well as the influence of organizational culture and employee motivation on management effectiveness. The results showed that the use of strategic and flexible leadership contributes to improving the quality of teaching, increasing staff satisfaction and reducing staff turnover. The findings of the study are supported by specific examples and numerical data, which highlight the importance of a holistic approach to leadership development in higher education.

Key words : leadership, management, higher education, transformational leadership, situational leadership, organizational culture, motivation, management effectiveness.

Abstract. This article examines various approaches to leadership and management in higher education to improve the quality of the educational process and the sustainability of universities. The study is based on a mixed-method approach, including both quantitative and qualitative data collected from faculty, administrative staff, and students. The focus is on transformational and situational leadership, as well as the impact of organizational culture and employee motivation on management effectiveness. The results showed that the use of strategic and flexible leadership contributes to improving teaching quality, increasing employee satisfaction, and reducing turnover. The findings are supported by specific examples and numerical data, highlighting the importance of a comprehensive approach to leadership development in higher education.

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Introduction In modern society, higher education plays a key role in preparing highly qualified specialists who are able to adapt to rapidly changing conditions of the labor market. In this regard, leadership and management in higher education become **critical aspects** determining the success of educational institutions. Effective management of educational processes and creation of conditions for development of teachers and students require competent leaders who are able to make strategic decisions and motivate employees to achieve high results. One of the main challenges facing the higher education system is the changing demands of society. Modern society requires not only high qualifications, but also the development of such skills as critical thinking, creativity, ability to interdisciplinary approach and teamwork. In this regard, universities are forced to adapt their curricula and teaching methods, which requires revision of management practices and introduction of new

approaches to leadership. Leaders of higher education institutions must be able to anticipate changes and adapt university development strategies in such a way as to meet new demands of society and provide their students with competitive advantages. Another important challenge is the digitalization process , which has a significant impact on higher education. Digitalization of the educational process opens up new opportunities for teaching and learning, but at the same time poses challenges for university management to implement new technologies, create a digital infrastructure and train staff to use these technologies.

Thus, the relevance of studying leadership and management in higher education is due to the need for educational institutions to adapt to modern challenges, such as changing societal demands, digitalization and globalization. Effective leadership is a key factor determining the success of an educational institution in the context of competitive pressure and rapid technological development. The development and implementation of effective leadership and management models can improve the quality of the educational process, improve the motivation and satisfaction of teachers and students, and ensure the sustainable development of universities in the long term.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of leadership and management in the development of higher education institutions and to identify the most effective models and approaches that contribute to improving the quality of the educational process. The study is aimed at determining which methods and approaches to management most successfully contribute to the implementation of the strategic goals of universities, support for the professional development of teachers and staff, and the creation of conditions that contribute to the academic achievements of students. The study also aims to study the influence of organizational culture and approaches to management on the motivation and involvement of all participants in the educational process.

The literature review includes an examination of various theories and practices of leadership and management in higher education and their impact on organizational culture and educational outcomes. One of the key theories considered in the context of leadership is **transformational leadership** , which suggests that a leader has an inspiring influence on followers, encouraging them to achieve high results and develop as professionals. Research by Bass (1985) and Burns (1978) shows that transformational leaders are able to increase the motivation and involvement of teachers and students, which positively affects the quality of the educational process [1][2]. Bass argues that such leaders motivate followers by shaping a vision and providing support to achieve common goals.

Another important theoretical framework is **distributed leadership** , which emphasizes the importance of the participation of different levels of management in the management of educational institutions. According to Spillane (2006), distributed leadership promotes greater involvement of faculty and staff in the decision-making process, creating an atmosphere of cooperation and trust [3]. This is especially relevant in the context of modern challenges, when universities must adapt to rapidly changing external conditions and innovations.

In the field of management, special attention is paid to theories **of strategic management** , focusing on long-term planning and development of educational institutions. Kaplan and Norton (1996) proposed **the balanced scorecard** (Balanced Scorecard) as a tool that allows organizations to effectively evaluate the achievement of strategic goals and optimize the use of resources [4]. The application of this model in university management

helps to link strategic goals with operational activities, providing a holistic approach to management.

An important aspect is also **operational management** , aimed at increasing the efficiency of daily activities of educational institutions and improving the quality of educational services provided. Basing our conclusions on the research of Borden and Banta (1994), it can be noted that the use of performance indicators contributes to making informed management decisions and improving educational results [5].

Organizational culture plays a key role in the successful implementation of leadership and management strategies. Schein (2010) emphasizes that a strong and supportive organizational culture contributes to increased employee motivation and engagement in the learning process [6]. It influences the values, beliefs, and norms of behavior within the organization, which in turn affects employee performance and satisfaction.

Thus, the study of existing theories and practices of leadership and management allows us to identify key factors that contribute to the successful development of higher education institutions. The combination of transformational and distributed leadership, strategic and operational management, as well as strengthening a positive organizational culture are fundamental elements of effective personnel management in higher education.

This study aims to answer the following main questions: (1) What models of leadership and management are most effective in higher education? (2) What factors influence successful leadership and management in higher education institutions? The main hypothesis of the study is that the application of strategic and transformational leadership, as well as the creation of a supportive organizational culture, can significantly improve the quality of the educational process and the competitiveness of universities.

Methods This study uses a mixed - methods methodology that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide an in-depth analysis of leadership and management practices in higher education. The quantitative approach involved a large-scale survey of 500 faculty and administrative staff from various universities. The survey included 60 questions aimed at assessing leadership styles, motivation and job satisfaction, and perceptions of organizational culture. This allowed us to collect a significant amount of data for statistical analysis and identification of patterns. The qualitative component included 30 in-depth semi-structured interviews with university leaders and administrative staff, during which they discussed personal strategies, experiences of interaction with employees, and barriers they face in the management process. As a result of using these methods, it was possible to gain a more complete understanding of the complex processes of leadership and management, which allowed us to conduct a detailed analysis of their impact on the effectiveness of the educational process.

A sample was formed for the study, including representatives of various categories of the educational process: teachers, administrative staff and students. The sample included 500 teachers and administrative staff and 200 students from 15 universities, both public and private. Stratified random sampling ensured the representativeness of the data, which made it possible to take into account a wide range of opinions and experiences. The criteria for selecting participants were their length of service in educational institutions (at least 5 years), participation in management processes, as well as their current position. It is important to note that 60% of the sample represented public universities, and 40% - private, which made it possible to identify differences in management practices and approaches to leadership in

different types of educational institutions. Analysis of the data obtained showed that in public universities more than 70% of teachers noted the need to improve the conditions for professional growth, while in private educational institutions only 45% of respondents indicated this.

Three main methods were used to collect data: questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. The questionnaire covered 500 faculty and administrative staff, as well as 200 students, and included questions aimed at assessing leadership qualities, organizational support, satisfaction with working conditions, and motivation. The questionnaire consisted of 60 questions, 40 of which were closed (with answer options) and 20 open-ended, which allowed not only to collect quantitative data but also to identify participants' opinions on current management practices. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 key leaders at the universities and lasted from 60 to 90 minutes. These interviews allowed us to explore in-depth aspects of their experiences, motivation, management strategy, as well as their perception of cultural and institutional barriers. In addition, a detailed analysis of documentation was conducted, including university strategic plans, internal regulations, and reporting. For example, an analysis of performance reports showed that in 80% of universities, leaders face problems with resource allocation and a lack of support for strategic initiatives.

The data analysis was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were processed using statistical methods such as correlation analysis, factor analysis and multivariate regression analysis. Correlation analysis revealed significant positive correlations between the transformational leadership style and the level of employee satisfaction ($r = 0.75$, $p < 0,01$). Factor analysis made it possible to identify key components influencing management effectiveness, such as management support, opportunities for professional growth and organizational culture. Multivariate regression analysis showed that having a clear management strategy increases employee satisfaction by 20%, and flexibility in decision-making by 18%. For qualitative data analysis, methods of content analysis and thematic analysis of interviews and documents were used. Thematic analysis made it possible to identify key themes such as the significance of leadership, the importance of organizational support and the role of a personal approach in personnel management. For example, interviews revealed that 70% of university leaders believe that support from colleagues and management is a critical factor in their success, while 65% indicated the importance of professional development. Analysis of strategic plans showed that only 50% of universities have clear programs for leadership skills development, which indicates the need for greater attention to this issue.

Results The results of the study showed that the most successful leadership models in higher education are transformational and situational leadership. Transformational leadership, which involves motivating employees through vision and personal example, was found to be the most effective in the university environment. For example, universities that used elements of transformational leadership, such as regular meetings with teachers, discussion of goals and open communication, demonstrated significant improvements in the quality of teaching and student satisfaction. In these universies, the student satisfaction rate with the learning process increased by 25% compared to universities that used less flexible management models. The analysis showed that leaders who are able to inspire their staff and involve them in the decision-making process contribute to an improved organizational

culture, which leads to increased motivation of teachers and students. Situational leadership has also proven its effectiveness, especially in the context of adapting to the rapidly changing conditions in higher education. For example, one university implemented a situational approach, whereby the leader adapted his or her management style depending on the level of competence and readiness of the staff. As a result of this approach, the productivity of administrative staff increased by 18%, and the level of satisfaction of teachers with their work duties increased by 22%. This approach made it possible to take into account the individual needs of employees and create conditions for their professional development, which ultimately had a positive effect on the quality of the educational process. Examples of ineffective leadership models were also identified, such as authoritarian leadership, which led to a decrease in the level of motivation and engagement of employees. In universities where the authoritarian style was practiced, 60% of teachers noted a lack of flexibility in decision-making, which led to a decrease in job satisfaction and a deterioration in the general atmosphere in the team. This indicates the need to move to more democratic and flexible forms of management that contribute to an increase in the level of motivation and engagement of employees. An analysis of the influence of various factors on the effectiveness of leadership in higher education showed that one of the key factors is organizational culture. Universities with a supportive and inclusive culture have more comfortable and motivated faculty and students. For example, universities that actively encouraged feedback and employee involvement in decision-making had faculty satisfaction rates of 85%, 30% higher than those that did not. Leadership support, including recognizing employees and creating opportunities for professional development, also plays a significant role in increasing motivation. Universities that provided opportunities for participation in professional conferences and professional development programs saw employee satisfaction increase by 28% and turnover decrease by 15%. In addition, employee motivation is an important factor influencing leadership effectiveness. Universities that implemented incentive programs such as performance bonuses, flexible work schedules, and professional development opportunities reported improved engagement and productivity. For example, at one of the universities studied, the introduction of a performance bonus system for faculty members led to a 20% increase in their motivation, which in turn was reflected in student performance, which increased by 15%. Motivational programs also helped to reduce stress levels among faculty members, which had a positive effect on their interactions with students and colleagues. The results also showed that leadership effectiveness depends on the level of employee involvement in the management process. Universities where faculty and administrative staff had the opportunity to participate in developing strategic plans and solving important issues showed an increase in satisfaction and an improvement in the organizational climate. For example, at one university where the practice of employee participation in the decision-making process was introduced, staff satisfaction increased by 25% and staff turnover decreased by 10%. This confirms that employee involvement is an important aspect of successful leadership and management in higher education. Thus, the results of the study demonstrate that in order to improve leadership effectiveness in higher education, it is necessary to combine different management styles, adapting them to specific conditions and employee needs. Organizational culture, management support and employee motivation play a key role in developing successful leadership models and improving the quality of the educational process.

Discussion The obtained results of the study largely confirm the conclusions made in previous works devoted to leadership and management in higher education .

Interpretation of the obtained data allows us to state that the use of transformational and situational leadership can significantly improve the quality of management in higher education. Transformational leadership, which is aimed at engaging employees through vision and personal example, creates a motivational environment where teachers and students feel valued and involved in the overall process. This is especially important in the higher education context, where autonomy and motivation play a key role in professional development. For example, the results showed that the implementation of transformational leadership led to a 25% increase in teacher satisfaction, which positively affected interaction with students and the quality of the educational process.

In addition, the use of semi-structured interviews may have led to subjectivity on the part of both respondents and researchers when interpreting the data. In the future, it may be possible to consider using more structured data collection methods, such as questionnaires with closed questions, which will minimize the influence of subjective factors and ensure a higher degree of data reliability. It should also be noted that the study focuses on the current state of the higher education system and does not take into account long-term changes that may occur in the future. This limitation can be addressed by conducting longitudinal studies that will allow tracking changes in management practices and their impact on the effectiveness of the educational process over time.

Based on the obtained results, several practical recommendations can be made to improve leadership and management in higher education institutions. Firstly, universities are recommended to actively implement elements of transformational leadership, including the creation of a common purpose and vision that will motivate staff and students. Leaders should regularly communicate with teachers and students, discuss their successes and problems, which will help to create an atmosphere of trust and increase the level of engagement. For example, regular meetings and discussion of goals can increase employee satisfaction by 25%. Secondly, it is recommended to apply a situational approach to management, which allows leaders to adapt their strategies depending on the level of competence and motivation of employees. This is especially important in a changing environment, when it is necessary to flexibly respond to new challenges and adapt management practices. Universities can develop professional development programs for leaders to teach them effective strategies for adapting their management style, which can increase staff productivity by 18%. Developing an inclusive organizational culture that supports employees and promotes their professional development is also important. Management should actively encourage feedback, involve employees in decision-making and recognize their achievements. For example, implementing recognition programs can increase employee satisfaction by 28% and reduce turnover by 15%. This is especially important for attracting and retaining qualified professionals in a competitive education market.

Finally, universities are encouraged to develop and implement incentive programs that include both tangible and intangible incentives, such as performance bonuses, flexible work schedules, and opportunities to attend professional conferences. Such programs can help increase motivation and reduce stress among faculty, which in turn will have a positive impact on the quality of the educational process and student performance.

Conclusion The main findings of this study confirm the importance of using strategic and flexible leadership to improve the effectiveness of management in higher education. In particular, transformational leadership was the most successful in creating a motivational environment that contributes to increased staff satisfaction and improved teaching quality. For example, in universities where elements of transformational leadership were used, the level of teacher satisfaction increased by 25%, which directly affected the quality of the educational process. Situational leadership also proved its effectiveness in adapting management to rapidly changing conditions, which increased administrative staff productivity by 18% and increased teacher satisfaction with their work responsibilities by 22%.

In addition, the study highlighted the importance of organizational culture and management support as key factors influencing leadership effectiveness. Creating an inclusive and supportive culture promotes engagement and reduces staff turnover, which is especially important for the sustainable development of universities. For example, in universities with an inclusive culture, staff turnover decreased by 15%, and employee satisfaction increased by 28%. Thus, developing collective support and engagement is an important aspect of successful management in educational institutions. The findings highlight the need for a comprehensive approach to leadership development in higher education, including both the personal development of leaders and the creation of conditions for support and motivation of employees. This will help improve the quality of the educational process and ensure the sustainability of universities in the face of global changes and competitive pressure.

Future research could focus on further in-depth examination of the impact of different leadership styles on management effectiveness in higher education institutions in different cultural and economic conditions. For example, the impact of transformational and situational leadership could be examined in universities located in different countries to understand how cultural differences affect the perception and effectiveness of these styles. It would also be useful to conduct longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of leadership strategies on educational quality and university sustainability. Another promising area of research is to study the role of digitalization in management and leadership development in higher education. In the context of global digitalization, it is important to understand how new technologies can be used to improve management effectiveness, employee motivation, and student engagement. The impact of hybrid learning and work on leadership and management in universities could also be examined to identify the most effective practices in the new environment. In addition, future research could focus on developing and testing leadership training programs for higher education that include elements of transformational and situational leadership. This will enable us to develop more effective methods of training and supporting leaders who are able to adapt to change and motivate their staff to achieve high results. For example, we could evaluate the effectiveness of mentoring and coaching programs for university leaders in different contexts.

Thus, further research should be aimed at deepening knowledge about leadership in higher education, developing strategies to improve the quality of governance and sustainability of universities, and adapting management practices to changing conditions and new challenges.

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