

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES OF ACADEMIC SERVICES AND STUDENT AFFAIRS AT THE GRADUATE PROGRAM STATE UNIVERSITY OF MAKASSAR, INDONESIA

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Abstract: *This study aims to explain the strategy adopted in improving the quality of academic and student services at the Graduate Program State University of Makassar (PPS-UNM). The type of research is qualitative with phenomenological approach, and using the 5-D sequence. The primary data sourced from observations and from informants, i.e., lecturers, including the chairman of the study program (Master Program and the Doctoral Program), staff and students, while secondary data sourced from the documents of the research object. The find show that the approach of the strategy adopted in an effort to improve the quality of academic and student services through: 1) Provision of Public Service Standard (SPP) and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP); 2) Development of human resources (HRD) through education, his training in the workplace and comparative studies as a benchmarking; 3) administrative services that are effective, efficient, pleasant through the implementation of (abbreviate) the MITRA functions - managerial, interpersonal, technical, routine, analytical; 4) The provision of services and management information systems (MIS) based on information technology (IT); and 5) the provision of facilities and infrastructure that support the smooth running of academic and student services at PPS UNM.*

Keywords: Quality Service Strategy, Academic Services and Student Affairs

INTRODUCTION

Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 Year 2003 on National Education System explained that every citizen has an equal right to obtain a quality education, including citizens who have physical, emotional, mental, intellectual, and / or social entitled obtain special education. To realize the mandate of the Act also stated that the education budget by 20 percent from the Regional Budget (APBD) and the State Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBN).

The Government developed a national education system implemented systematically starting from primary school to university. Education is basically human needs in managing their lives towards a better (Roza, 2007: 303). Therefore, education should be implemented as much as possible so as to create an atmosphere

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conducive to supporting the achievement of the goals of national education ranging from primary education to higher education.

Higher education as a system, in which there are multiple subsystems mutually influence each other, particularly the lecture system. Lecture system is influenced by the success of the learning process (PBM) and the process of academic administrative services are an important part of higher education, because it will ultimately affect the results (output) of an educational process. In other words, whether or not the PBM runs at a higher education institution also influenced by academic and student administration system in it.

Graduate Program (PPS) State university of Makassar (UNM) is an institution of higher education under the auspices of the UNM which provide educational services to the level of Master (S2) and Doctoral (S3), founded May 31, 1997. PPS UNM's vision is "To be the leading Graduate Programs in education, research, and community service". PPS UNM is an educational institution which is composed of seven (7) Doctoral studies programs and fourteen (14) Master study programs. To support a variety of activities in each program of study at PPS UNM provided academic and student services for the academic community. In addition, provided educators (lecturer) and staff (clerks staff) were able to provide satisfactory or "happy" service (Akib, 2013) to students. On the provision of services in PPS UNM provided educators (lecturers) which consists of internal UNM lecturer, external lecturers and practitioners of government to support the implementation of optimal PBM and quality. Meanwhile, to support the provision of academic and student services as one of the factors that determine the success of PBM in PPS UNM then supplied educational staff (administrative staff) in the form of staff.

In principle, academic services to students in a professional needs to be improved. It is based on the fact that students demanding quality service is service that can meet the desires or needs, particularly services related to the "smoothness" in other term the students have exelant services from the academi services of his studies, but if observed that desire in mind that there are still many students who complained about the discrepancy of services provided by the educational staff at PPS UNM (Preliminary Study Results through observation and interviews, 2014). Similarly, in the lecture, ranging from the provision of academic services at the registration until the execution Exam Thesis or Doctoral Dissertation and promotion, there are students who are experiencing service problems, because the quality of care received is not as expected. According Bensimon (1995: 593) and Russell and Taylor (2000: 78), quality must be based on customer satisfaction. Customers see the quality of the characteristics that should be accepted which includes values, suitable for use, support, and psychological impression that everything is perceived dynamically. Meanwhile, meaning the quality of the customer obtained from the comparison between expectations about services and assessing the reality of services received. Therefore, it is assumed that the provision of quality academic and student

can support substantive activities (PBM) in the PPS UNM and ultimately support the improvement of the quality of education at UNM.

The question is why the quality of public services (services of academic and student affairs) at PPS UNM is still problematic, although higher education institutions and postgraduate taught various fields of science, technology and the art of serving the public, and most importantly the PPS UNM should be an example or role model in the implementation of the strategy right in the provision of excellent service to the academic community.

RESEARCH METHODS

This type of research is qualitative (Gravetter and Forzano, 2012: 158) which is based on observation and other data collection techniques to understand, explain, interpret and report the results of research, with phenomenological approach (Suyanto, 2011: 166-167) on the behavior of service providers or what is said and done. This research activity also uses a process sequence of 5-D (cited in Buerkler, 2013) which includes the steps of: 1) Defining the objectives and the research questions, 2) Designing the research, 3) data collection, 4) Data Analysis, and Documentation. The location of research in the Graduate Program Office, State University of Makassar (PPS UNM). The primary data sourced from observation and from a number of informants consisting of lecturers or professors, including the chairman of the study program Master Program (S-2) and Doctorate Program (S-3), the staff as a service provider, and students PPS UNM, while secondary data sources of documents relating to the object of research. Data were analyzed descriptively qualitative.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quality of service has long been used as a focus of discussion the experts, among others, August William Smith who understand service systems as elements of a systematic method of management and administrative functions (read: Sutherland, 1978: 84); Christian Grönroos introduce the concept of quality in the locus of service through his writings titled "Quality Comes to Service"; A. Blanton Godfrey with Edward G. Kammerer wrote about "The Five Myths About Service Quality"; D. Wotis Wolkins wrote about the "Service Quality Principles"; Paul Kahn developed the "Service Quality as Strategy" (cited in Scheuing and Christopher, 1993: 4, 17, 55, 69). Then Bensimon (1995: 593) examines the suitability of the adaptation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in college. Other experts also give an idea about the quality of service with a different focus and locus is Dickinson (1999: 8) who wrote the services in the public sector (eg. postal service) and private sector services as activities of the organization as an effort to "Creating Customer Focused Organizations." Similarly, Stenberg and Austin (2007: 1), which discusses Managing Local Government Service which basically reinforce understanding of the need for strategic planning and public service system that is efficient, effective, and qualified.

The views of experts will serve as a reference in the implementation of the strategy to explain quality improvement of academic services and student in the Graduate Program State University of Makassar (PPS UNM). In fact, systems and procedures or mechanism of work applied to the PPS UNM is a reference for service providers, as well as indicators of strengths and weaknesses in the management of academic and student services. Thus, the fact that is suitable to the view of Otis D. Wolking (Scheuing and Christopher, 1993: 72) on the role of organizers or service providers in implementing the “quality strategy” through education as one of the six principles of quality.

One of the advantages of the management and service providers at PPS UNM is the ability to recruit new students in large numbers from various disciplines to compete and be accepted as a student, and at the same time have the human resources (HR) (educators / Lecturer and staff) are capable in their respective fields. HR capability is supported by the implementation of human resource development strategy. Rothwell et al (2000: xx) says that HRD is a systematic process to find and analyze the significance of HR performance gap (Zeithaml et al, 1990: 89), human resource planning performance improvements in the future, the design and development of an efficient and ethical activities in the implementation and evaluation of results. This is similar to the view Werner and DeSimone (2009: 10) regarding his training and development as one of the human resource development (HRD) function. However, PPS UNM also has weaknesses in managing and serving students who are numerous. Weaknesses and challenges faced by PPS UNM is the provision of academic and student service quality as perceived by the informant and the recipient of the service that the students are part of the internal customer PPS UNM needs to be serviced by qualified, that is efficient, effective, professional, and sustainable. This informant view in accordance with the understanding Dickinson (1999: vii) regarding the “growth through customer satisfaction.” Dickinson explains that by focusing on satisfying customer needs, the organization will automatically be more productive in the strive for human resources and technologies are applied according to customer requirements.

In order to follow up on any weakness faced by PPS UNM management, developed relevant strategies that can deliver the best direction for students, educators (Lecturer and Professor doctoral degrees), staff and society. Strategic effort applied are: 1) providing Public Service Standards and Standard Operating Procedures (Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (PERMENPAN dan RB) Number 7 of 2010 on Guidelines for Assessment of Performance Unit and the Public Service and PERMENPAN dan RB No. 35 Year 2012 on Guidelines SOP Government Administration; 2) develop the competence of human resources, based on the view Werner and DeSimone, 2009: 10); 3) provide effective administrative services in accordance MITRA (abbreviation) functions - managerial, interpersonal, technical, routines, and analysis (Quimble, 2004); 4) provides the services and

management information systems (MIS) quality, effective and efficient (based on the views O'Brien, 2013: 339, and 5) providing learning facilities and infrastructure are adequate. The selected strategy is expected to have an impact on improving the quality of academic and student services at PPS UNM.

1. Provision of Public Service Standard (SPP) and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Public services are implemented in every government agency is actually based on a reference standard of public services, abbreviated as SPP. It is important to remember normatively been regulated in the laws and regulations on various levels (Regulation of Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (PERMENPAN and RB) No. 7 of 2010 on Guidelines for Assessment of Performance Unit and the Public Service PERMENPAN and RB No. 35 2012 on Guidelines for Preparation of SOP Government Administration). Similarly, to start an activity required an initial plan that is able to provide referrals to service providers in order to provide services in an efficient, effective, and sustainable. One of the things that have been done by PPS UNM is to provide standard operating procedures (SOP), but not yet complete for all work units, so that the implementation has not been effective, sometimes wasteful of time and procedures there are convoluted.

2. Provision of Human Resources: Provision and development of human resources strategy is conceptually based on the view Robert J. Sternberg (cited in Elliot and Dweck, 2005: 17) regarding increased ability into competence and competencies into expertise. In fact, the human resources owned by PPS UNM, as well as at other higher education institutions, covers two categories of educators (lecturer) and staff (clerks staff), with various types of academic activities and administrative services are performed. The provision of appropriate strategies educators taught field is still very necessary in order to provide the best learning to students. Moreover, that the lecturers in delivering course material capable of linking the course material with the research that has been done. Another important strategy undertaken by PPS UNM management for lecturers is directly and indirectly support the professional development (lecturer) in a sustainable manner. Thus, it is understood that although the provision of competent human resources at PPS UNM is not optimal but already the direction of the pattern introduced by Stenberg.

In order for the lecture (PBM) and lecturer research is more meaningful to the students of the strategy of engagement (participation) students in lecturer research, as a minimum data collectors (enumerators) is apt to provide experience and learning for students so that no trouble making a scientific paper in the form of a thesis or dissertation for the completion of his studies. Meanwhile, for education personnel at PPS UNM, has implemented a strategy to be more competent in human resource development serve the academic community by doing training and study in accordance with the field work, so that staff are motivated to do (perform) better. Human resource development strategy has been appropriate to raise morale and

services provider to students. Benchmarking strategy is in line with the view Bensimon (1995: 594) and Werner and DeSimone, 2009: 4), the difference is in the form of PPS UNM promote comparative studies while Werner and DeSimone main focus is currently on workplace learning and performance. Further Werner and DeSimone stated that human resource development seeks to develop the knowledge, skills, productivity, and satisfaction for individuals (people), groups and organizations, and even the community, the nation, and ultimately all humanity. Then, experts (Rothwell, 2000; Elliot and Dweck, 2005; Werner and DeSimone, 2009) agree that there are different approaches appropriate strategies applied in developing the HR organization, including college and graduate programs, including through education, his training, mentoring, coaching, upgrading, and so on. HRD strategies conducted at PPS UNM has been implemented, but not maximized.

3. Effective Administrative Services: Effective provision of administrative services performed by changing systematically the various components of the administrative tasks and units of academic and student services available at PPS UNM. System changes made in the improvement of the system at the service counters which have been considered not able to provide excellent service to students. Efforts were made according to the needs and complaints of students who submitted. According to the PPS UNM management to anticipate complaints that students needed a modern office administrative service system that effectively and efficiently. According Quimble (2004) that the model of modern office administration systems include managerial, interpersonal, technical, routines, and analysis functions, or abbreviated MITRA.

Although all the MITRA functions not ye optimally run on PPS UNM, but one of the systems that support the effectiveness of the implementation of the MITRA functions is to provide staff to provide services for students at each course of study, so that staff focus to carry out their duties and functions. Provision of staff is the realization of managerial functions by the management PPS UNM, in the form of distribution of staff in various work units, so that routine tasks are done with the support of infrastructure and existing technology enables technical functions implemented. Similarly, human relations horizontally and vertically fellow academicians PPS UNM created as a form of implementation of the interpersonal function, and ultimately became the subject of analysis PPS UNM management as the responsible execution of MITRA functions. In other words, the provision of staff-based courses in addition to supporting the implementation of the MITRA functions, also facilitate coordination between PPS UNM-led (horizontal coordination) and between leadership and staff (vertical coordination) in addressing and resolving issues of administrative services and student faced.

4. Services Information Systems and Management: Services and management information systems (MIS) at PPS UNM has not been implemented effectively.

This can be seen in such things as: a) Internet access that is sometimes problematic, b) the information presented there is sometimes not up-to-date, c) integrated service of academic management information systems (SIMPADU) which is sometimes not effective, d) the availability of online data that is still minimal. Based on that reality is required a systematic coordination, so that the information and management services can run well. Conceptually, in line with the view of Maracas and O'Brien (2013: 6-7) on the main areas of information systems knowledge needed by professionals or service providers, as well as the application's main functions and role of management information systems, namely the information systems that support the process and activities of the organization, decision-making, and the competitive advantage of the organization. Based on these three functions are then implemented in PPS UNM is only the first function and the second, while the third is not even a concern by the competent authorities.

5. The provision of facilities and infrastructure: In addition to the constructive steps PPS UNM management, during this time the management, especially the assistant director of administration and finance continued to pursue the provision of adequate infrastructure in the implementation of academic and student services. Providing facilities for students already show the development and progress today. This is the right strategy and the choice should be maintained, but this is a problem for these facilities was less able to be maintained. In other words, the maintenance of facilities and infrastructure strategies of academic and student at PPS UNM is low or not maximized. As a result, a lot of infrastructure that is "broken prematurely" or dormant in treatment, there is even a type of facility that is too late to repair the PPS UNM management. So, conceptually strategy effective administrative services in accordance with the views Zeithaml et al (1990: 91), but the difference is in the maintenance and control functions in PPS UNM, not efficient. Based on the description, presented a prototype model of appropriate strategies approach to improve the quality of academic service and student affairs (see figure 1).

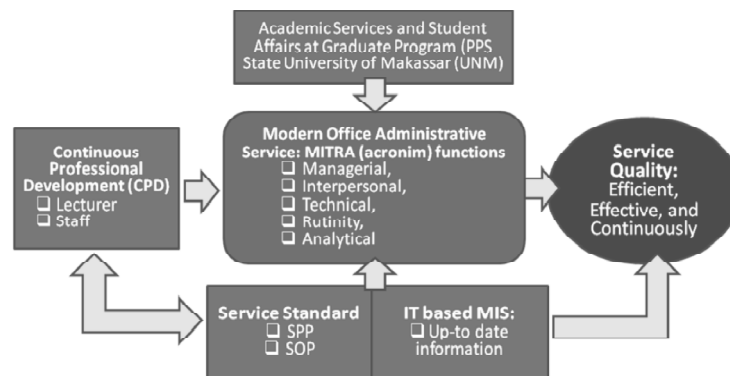


Figure 1: Service Quality Improvement Strategy of Academic and Student Affairs

CONCLUSION

Strategies approach adopted to improve the quality of academic service and student affairs at PPS UNM has been basically in accordance with the views of experts, with different quality dimension in five aspects: 1) the provision of Public Service Standards Strategy and Standard Operating Procedures have not been fully effective; 2) Human resources Development Strategy through education, training, mentoring, coaching, and comparative studies as a benchmark implemented but not maximized and sustained; 3) Strategies administrative services through applying the MITRA function - managerial, interpersonal, technical, routine, analytical implemented but not yet effective and efficient; 4) Strategies service provision and management information systems based on information technology applied quite effectively and efficiently; and 5) the provision of facilities and infrastructure strategy is quite effective in supporting the smooth process of academic and student services at PPS UNM. Research recommendation is focused on the revitalization strategy to the all functions of academic services and student affairs.

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