

# THE CONTRIBUTION OF INTERNAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN A UNIVERSITY ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC SKILLS

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***Abstract:** For university students, their campus is a place to develop themselves. The installment and development of values begin since the moment they become university students; through various students' organizational activities. However, there is a growing trend of 'internal organization with external nuances' in universities. It means that although the organizations themselves are internal students' organization, their organizational philosophy and values are of external influences. This trend diminishes the primary role of organizational activities to develop students' capabilities and skills; both the organizational and the academic skills. The conflict regarding this matter involves the assumptions that academic activities blunt the organizational activities, and vice versa. However, pointing fingers and blaming each other cannot solve the problem.*

***Keywords:** Students' Internal Organizations, Academic Skills, Organizational Skills.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The debate about students' organizations in universities continues over time. Some people believe that the campus life should only involve academic activities, while others insist that it should also include activities that support and promote students' personal development; i.e. the students' organizational activities. Students' organizational activities in Indonesia University of Education (UPI), particularly in the Faculty of Social Science Education, have been going on for dozens of years. This affects the characteristics of the cadres forming processes in the organizations in that Faculty. Therefore, it warrants an in-depth and comprehensive study to understand the contribution of students' organizations in the Faculty of Social Science Education of Indonesia University of Education (FPIPS-UPI) on the character development of new students.

In addition, the conflicts between the students' organizations still continue to this day. These conflicts usually involve the sentiments of external organizations in the students' organizations; as can be seen in the involvement of HMI and KAMMI in students' organizations in UPI. The regulations concerning students' organizations

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in UPI dictate that students are not allowed to use internal students' organizations for the interest and purposes of external organizations. The considerations concerning this matter have caused internal students' organizations to run rigidly; which is not supposed to be so.

The various aspects of internal organizations in university affect the pattern of cadres forming in those organizations. They take the forms, for instance, of conflicting materials and speakers in organizational cadres' forming activities. This study is expected to untangle the problems developing in students' organizations; which at one time or the other turn into physical conflicts. Conflicts in internal students' organizations can be positive if they are developed in a professional atmosphere. However, they may turn into negative results if the organizations lose rational consideration and moral control. Therefore, this study focuses on the contribution of the leadership training activities on new students' academic skills.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

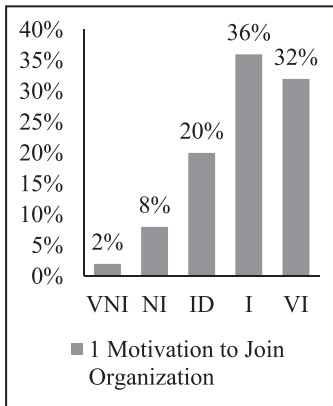
This study is conducted at the Faculty of Social Science Education of Indonesia University Education (FPIPS-UPI) using a qualitative approach. The consideration for choosing this locus is based more on the working areas of the researchers. This study is expected to enable the researchers to detect the development of cadres' forming activities in FPIPS-UPI's internal students' organizations.

The respondents of this study are the new students of 2014 classes enrolled in the 11 study programs of FPIPS-UPI. However, from this population, a sample of 146 respondents is chosen, based on the interest they display by responding to questionnaires sent to them via email. The analysis is conducted through classifying (categorizing) the data based on the focus of the study, and comparing the academic skills of the new students with the organizational skills. Through this analysis, a conclusion can be formed regarding whether or not there is positive correlation between the leadership training conducted by the internal students' organizations and the students' academic skills.

## **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

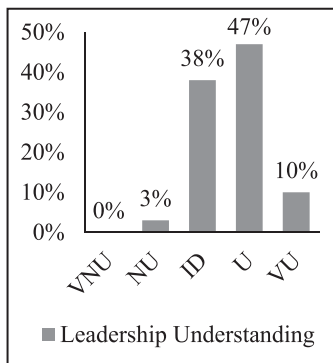
This study provides strategic values for the realization of UPI's vision to become the Leading and Outstanding University. As a university that produces educational staff and teachers, UPI is required to respond to changes in society by producing high quality graduates. To do so, the university cannot focus only on the result, but should also focus on the learning process in its campus. Several studies in developing countries reveal that individuals who will be modern human are those who are committed towards performance-based work discipline.

On the other hand, a phenomenon can still be found in UPI, in which the students spend many times to chat in the hallways of the FPIPS building. This phenomenon indicates that the students do not use their time productively. It will surely affect the quality of the university's graduates. Therefore, students' organizations should try to be more interesting for the new students, to attract them to join the organizations and lead them to more productive activities. Once the new students join internal students' organizations in the university, their academic hard skills and organizational soft skills can be developed.



**Diagram 1: Motivation to be actively involved in internal students' organizations**

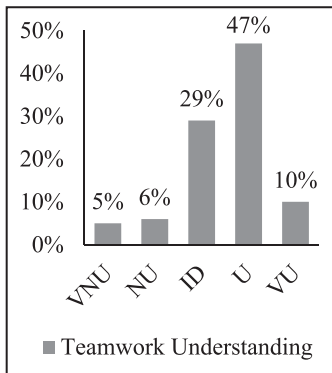
In general, students' motivation to join internal students' organizations is good. 36% of new students are interested to be actively involved in internal organizations; while on the other hand, only 2% of the new students' state that they are very not interested in joining students' organizations. This indicates that leadership training to improve students' organizational motivation is highly successful.



**Diagram 2: Understanding the leadership materials**

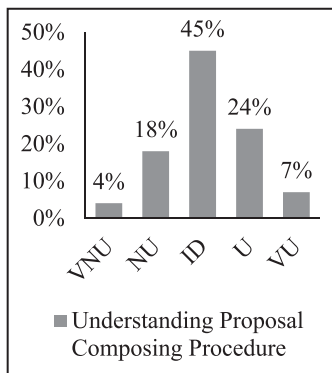
Students' general understanding of leadership materials is good. 47% of the students state that they understand the materials while 0% of the students admit

to a state of very not understanding. However, their understanding is not yet in the category if very good since there are a lot of students (38%) are in doubt about their understanding of leadership materials. Leadership training needs a more didactic method to improve new students' understanding of the material provided.



**Diagram 3: Understanding the teamwork materials**

Students' understanding of teamwork materials is in the category of Good. The data indicates that 47% of the students understand the materials on teamwork; while only 5 and 6% of the students are in the conditions of not understanding and very not understanding the materials, respectively. Considering this situation, the delivery of teamwork materials needs a little improvement so that more students can comprehensively understand the materials. Currently, only 10% of the students are in the category of very understanding; which is not much.



**Diagram 4: Understanding the procedures of composing a proposal for events**

On the aspect of understanding the procedure to write a proposal for organizational activities, the students' skills are not quite good. Only 7% of the students very understand the procedures involved, and only 24% of the students understand them. The majority of the students (45%) are in doubt concerning their understanding of the procedures to write a proposal. This suggests that the

materials concerning proposal writing should be given more attention; in terms of the allocated time, the capability of the speaker, and the relevance of the materials to the conditions the new students will face when they become actively involved in organizing the students' organizations.

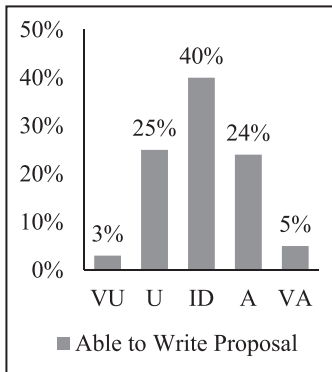


Diagram 5: Ability to write proposal for organizational activities

Students' ability to draw up a proposal for organizational events is dominated by the criteria of 'In Doubt'. Although the students who admit to be very unable to write the proposal is only 3%; most of the students are unable or in doubt. The ability to write a proposal for organizational events and activities is highly correlated with the success of the events. There will be only a small number of organizational activities and events that are successful because only 5% of the students are able to write a good proposal.

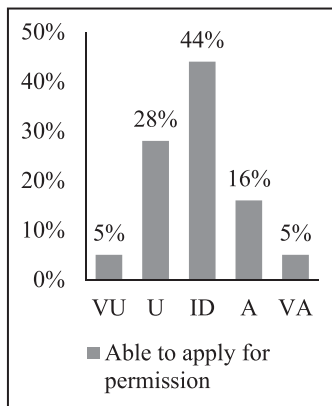
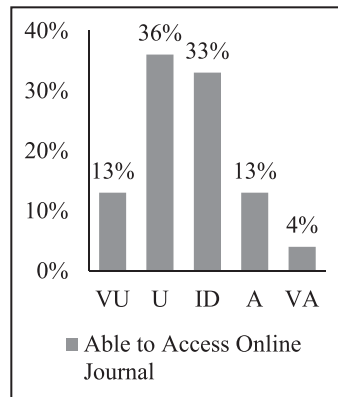


Diagram 6: Ability to apply for permission for activities

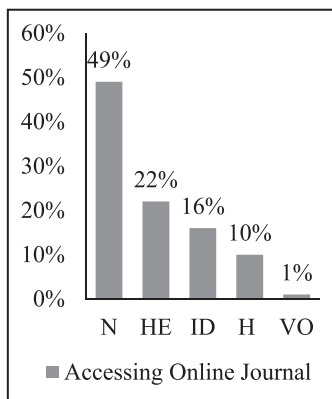
Students' ability to follow the procedures to apply for permission for conducting organizational events is in the category of not quite good. Most of the students are in doubt about their ability to apply for permission. Only 5% of the students are in the category of 'Able' and 'Very Able', in terms of this skill. Students' knowledge

and ability to apply for permission prior to conducting organizational events will determine the success of the events. Students' inability to follow procedures may result in administrative errors; which in turn will lead to the delay, or even cancellation, of the events.



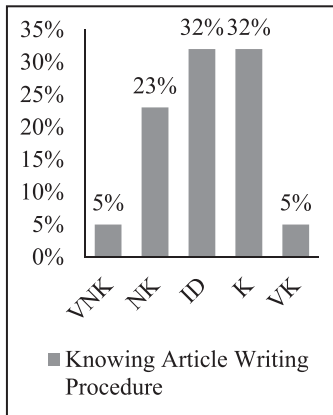
**Diagram 7: Knowing the procedures of accessing journal online**

Students' knowledge concerning the procedures to access online journals is in the category of not quite good. 36% of the students are unable to access journals via Internet, and only 17% of the students are in the category of 'Able' and 'Very Able'. Therefore, the ability to access international journal via Internet should be seriously considered as one of the materials in students' leadership training.



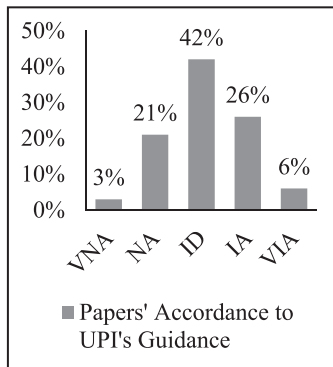
**Diagram 8: Have accessed e-journals in the library**

The new students' condition, in terms of their accessing e-journals, is in a poor condition. 49% of the students have never accessed e-journal. Only 1% of the students are in the category of 'Very Often' in accessing e-journal. The fact that the FPIPS building is equipped with Internet hotspots in the first, second, fourth, and sixth floors does not contribute greatly in terms of students' access to e-journal.



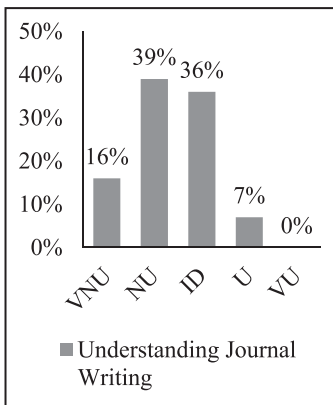
**Diagram 9: Knowing the procedures of writing papers in accordance with paper writing guidance from UPI**

Students' knowledge of the procedure to write papers in accordance with the guidance from UPI is in the category of 'Good'. Both categories of 'In Doubt' and 'Knowing' consist of 32% of the students. The categories of 'Very Not Knowing' and 'Very Knowing' are comprised of 5% of the students, each. Students' knowledge of the procedure of paper writing in accordance with the guidance from UPI needs to be improved, so that those in doubt can improve to the categories of 'Knowing' and 'Very Knowing'.



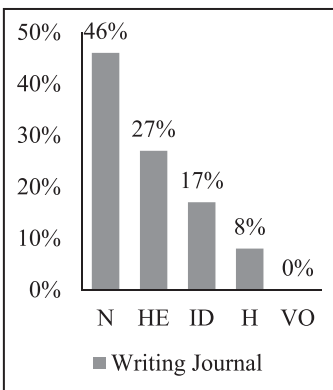
**Diagram 10: Writing papers for every subject in accordance with the academic writing guidance from UPI**

Students' papers that are in accordance with the guidance from UPI are in the category of 'Good'. The data indicates that 32% of the students are in the category of 'Very In Accordance' and 'In Accordance'. However, most of the students (42%) admit that they are in doubt, in terms of the accordance of their papers to UPI's guidance. Institutional intervention from the lecturers is needed so that the writing of papers for every subject is in full accordance with the university requirements.



**Diagram 11: Understanding the procedures of writing articles for academic journal**

New students' knowledge on article writing is not good. 55% of the students are in the category of 'Very Not Knowing' and 'Not Knowing', and only 7% of the students know how to write journal article. Students' ability to write articles has linear correlation with the number of articles they write. Therefore, a training of article writing should be conducted to improve students' knowledge on the matter.



**Diagram 12: Have written article for academic/scientific journal**

The diagram indicates that 46% of the students never write an article for journals, and only 8% have written journal article. This is an unfortunate condition for the development of academic culture for the new students. Students' critical thinking skills are developed and improved when they are able to write the result of their critical thinking. The ideas or topics that should be focused on the students' leadership training are: the importance of work program (schedule), leader's mentality, personal awareness, art, teamwork, ways to master lesson materials, more simulations, public speaking, and religious materials.



## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that the leadership training in students' organizations is inadequate to respond to the academic demands of the new students. There is a discrepancy between the organizational materials and the academic materials in this training. This is counterproductive since a student with excellent organizational skills should also have good academic skills so that they can be a role model for future generations.

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