



**THE ROLE OF STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TO PREPARE  
INDONESIAN'S FUTURE LEADERS: A BRIDGING PROGRAM CASE STUDY THE  
ECONOMICS FACULTY OF ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF INDONESIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

The objective of the research is to examine the process. The objective of the research is to find the input of Student as they become new students, it also to explore the process of SLDP. This research is also to find out the result of SLDP after the students finished joining the program. The Bridging Program (BP) is held in 100 minutes of four meetings a week at the first two semesters of the students of the Management Departments to bridge the gap between student's life in senior high schools and the higher education state. The program also teaches students especially soft skills to be actively independent learners. The research methods employed was focus group discussion (FGD) involving students, lecturers of the Bridging Program and the Management Departments, using qualitative method that is a case study.

The results of the research show that (1) the SLDP gives some subjects—such as Islamic values, national spirit, integrity, how to become agents of change, critical thinking, organizational skill, effective communication, self-confidence, pro-activeness, assertiveness, empathy, making clear vision and mission, time management, deciding priority, reflective learning log, inclusion, synergy and research on community leaders and organization—that make students more mature to become Indonesian's future leaders. (2) After joining the SLDP, students had developed their qualified leadership that dependent on the quality of the student as an input in BP. The main outcomes are their increasingly religious consciousness, open mind, proactive, effectiveness communication, self-confidence, discipline, assertiveness, and braveness. (3) Some problems of SLDP in student's perspective are the lecture time because the better time for running SLDP class is in the morning while in the SLDP lecturers feel the poor learning facility and their status of non-permanent lecturers. (4) After finishing the SLDP, students need some

mentoring program which should be formally managed by the Management Department.

**Keyword:** *Student leadership development, bridging program, higher education*

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Leadership and leadership development are popular topics today [Williams in Ref 1]. The term is believed as the main factor that determines successful individual and even organization to adapt to change. Thus, it is a right track while educational institution started to concern on developing students' leadership through class activities.

SLDP has been practiced by Economic Faculty of the Islamic University of Indonesia through Bridging Program (BP). The program teaches soft skills to prepare the students to be young future leader.

The program has been running for almost 6 years that resulted some output. Today, many students those have experienced SLDP through Bridging Program are being activist of student organization, either intra or even extra campus. They do feel the benefits of experiences in SLDP for their activity in organization or even in professional job.

The objective of the research is to find the input of Student as they become new students, it also to explore the process of SLDP. The goal is also to find out the result of SLDP after the students finished joining the program.



## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Williams** (Ref [1]) explained that leadership development is a way to catalyze personal growth and structural change, through a set of opportunities and challenges, a support system, and enriching companionship. **Williams** (Ref [1]) presented a holistic approach to develop leadership. The approach connects faculties or capacities such as mind, heart, spirit, conscience, will, and body with values such as truth, compassion, freedom, beauty, justice, love, good, health, strength, flexibility, and the wisdom. The holistic leadership development helps people integrate, makes greater sense to him and one another, eliminate contradictions, manage tensions, and deploy his full self.

Leadership development changes from time to time. **Petrie** (Ref [2]), notes four transitions as follows:

Table 1. Four Transitions for Leadership Development

Current Focus	Future Focus
The "what" of leadership	The "what" and "how" of development
Horizontal development	Horizontal and vertical development
HR/training companies own development	Each person owns development
Leadership resides in individual managers	Collective leadership is spread throughout the network

Furthermore **Petrie** (Ref [2]) wrote four new trends in leadership development program (LDP). (1) LDP increases the focus on "vertical" development (developmental stages). (2) There is a transfer of greater developmental ownership to the individual. (3) The heroic leader declines and the collective leadership rises. (4) A new era of innovation in leadership development is coming.

**Cacioppe** (Ref [3]) explained that the involvement of senior leaders in the teaching and learning of future leaders has been shown to be a powerful and effective tool. Using leaders to develop leaders as a part of an in-house leadership development program can add considerable value with a minimum of effort and expense.

In the context of engineering leadership development programs, as **Crumpton-Young et al.** (Ref [4]) argued, the need to develop a holistic leadership program that entails the aforementioned skills such as the ability to control a group, critical thinking, how to be a visionary, inspirational, influential, adaptable, open-minded, people-centered, action-oriented, equitable, interpersonal, likeable, determined, confident, good communicator, credible, honorable, fair, and a networker have been identified as capabilities and characteristics essential to ensure that engineering professionals and future engineers are prepared to flourish as leaders.

According to **Michael and Modell** (Ref [5]), concerning with students, it is essential for teachers to understand the input state of students, what students already know. Secondly teachers should understand that

some of what the students bring to the classroom is flawed (incomplete or simply wrong). Thirdly it is important for teachers to understand students' prior knowledge. It means that the background of students are important to understand before learning activities continue so far. **Crumpton-Young et al.** (Ref [4]) also explained that the involvement of senior leaders in the teaching and learning of future leaders has been shown to be a powerful and effective tool. Using leaders to develop leaders as a part of an in-house leadership development program can add considerable value with a minimum of effort and expense.

The investigation of the students' leadership development programs is still interesting. Moreover, there are some factors that can influence the programs as these. Student Leadership Development Program (SLDP) in the Bridging Program of the Economics Faculty of Islamic University of Indonesia is a learning activity to develop among others future leaders. The Program teaches students to be Indonesian future leaders. So the Program actually is a leadership development program. So the focus of recent research is the role of SLDP in developing the students' leadership skill. There were five aspects of students' learning experience in SLDP program explored through focus group discussions, that is: pre-condition as the new-students, the development of character building, writing and reading skill in English, intra and extra activities, recent self-leadership capability, and students' desire of the future leadership.

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**Dharma's** research (Ref [6]) "Faktor-faktor yang Mempengaruhi Prestasi Belajar Mahasiswa Politeknik Negeri Medan" shows that internal and external factors affect the students' achievement. The internal factors investigated in the research are health, interest, and motivation while the external ones are family environment, campus, and community. The effect of the internal factors is more dominant than of the external ones.

**Lahar** (Ref [7]) in his research "Pengaruh Kepemimpinan dan Pengembangan Karir terhadap Kepuasan Kerja Guru SMA di Kabupaten Solok" concludes that the leadership and career development in senior high schools in Solok district significantly affect the teachers' satisfaction. The better headmaster lead their school, the more teachers get satisfied. The better career



development takes place, the more teachers get satisfied as well.

**Saputro et al.** (Ref [8]) did research “Pengaruh Disiplin Belajar dan Lingkungan Teman Sebaya terhadap Prestasi Belajar Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Akutansi Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta” (2012) prove that learning discipline affects students’ achievement and peer groups also affect students’ achievement. Learning discipline and peer groups wholly affect student’s achievement.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

This research was done in Bridging Program (BP) of Economics Faculty of Indonesian Islamic University in Yogyakarta. This program has been run in regular program since 2007. This program has been designed to help the new students that come from high school to be more effective in their study in university. The teaching process has been designed in student center learning in order this program can build the student character to be independent learners. Formally this BP uses the program using the subject of Business communication, English I that are writing and English II that is writing.

The student joined this BP 4 times a week that is 100 every meeting along 2 semesters or one year. In the process of this program development, the subject content has been changed many times for increasing the effective of this BP. This program is managed by contract lecturers that have been changed many times because some of them can not continue the contract in order to look for better job. In this research, it focuses on the academic year of 2012-2013 as a case research.

The research uses a case study methodology which is included in qualitative research methodology. **Creswell** (Ref. [9]) wrote a definition of case study as follows:

Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes.

This case study in this research take four years of BP; 2009/2010, 2010/2011, 2011/2012, and 2012/2013 that practices the use of Student Leadership Development Program (SLDP) in BP class.

This research focuses on input of the new student in the early of BP class, the process of SLDP in BP class, and finally the impact of SLDP process toward students’ leadership development. The time frame of research is divided into two part; during BP class that is used in this research is three parts: in BP class 2009/2010, 2010/2011, 2011/2012, and 2012/2013, and after BP class; 3 months, 15 months, 27 months, and 39 months.

Methods to collect data are focus group discussion (FGD), observation, and documentation. The FGD involved 12 students of the Management Department and Economics Department of the Economics Faculty of Islamic University of Indonesia from academic year 2009/2010, 2010/2011, 2011/2012, and 2012/2013. The 12

students involved in the FGD are selected as representatives of their leadership ability. The observation is done by the Bridging Program lecturers in the classrooms.

**Data Credibility Test.** Verification for assessing the validity of the theories that have been made based on the case studies or studies that have been obtained. Verification is done in a way to validate data obtained through cross-checks and re-check, performing a variety of necessary confirmation for both personal and group, as well as digging it back together with relevant experts (**Stake in Ref [10]**).

**Data Analysis Method.** Interpreting the data, or to see relationships and patterns that exist and ultimately done naturally generalization (**Stake in Ref [10]**). It uses the relationship (correspondences) and pattern (patterns) between the internal and external elements in the organizational innovation. In reference to **Lincoln and Guba (cited by Denzin et al.** in Ref. [11]) that the goodness is based on the type of trustworthiness and authenticity. **Swandt (cited by Denzin et al.** in Ref. [11]) said that in research, authenticity can be found if the researchers do emphatic identification that is an action for making a living psyche of an actor to understand the motive, belief, will and the actor thought.

### IV. RESULTS

The result of collecting data through Focused Group Discussion (FGD) consists of three sections including (1) Input of early students, (2) Process of SLDP in BP Class, and (3) Output of SLDP and student’s hope toward future leadership.

#### 4.1. Input of Early Students

The FGD process showed the facts that Economic Faculty of UII was not their first choice for most students. They didn’t independently decided to enroll the recent faculty, some of them enrolled within their friend allurements, family obsession, and after they had failed to enroll into state university. This fact was stated by **Juang (2010)**, **Lutfi (2009)**, and **Tika (2010)**. **Tika** said “I chose UII since I was embittered after I had failed to enroll to UGM” This situation impacted to the level of early students’ quality. This condition was confirmed by BP lecturer that appraised most of their students those are relatively passive style, low motivated personality, and non-considered school background. **Ridwan** said “Most of my students are inferior, not confident, and also low communication ability”.

The family background has also impacted to the condition of BP early students input. The FGD process found that some of student has crucial problem within their parents and their relatives, such as they have to face parent divorce, disharmony relationship, orphaned, and also unfair treatment between children. This situation was experienced by **Lutfi (2009)**, he said “I was expelled from my own home, since I was disagree to my parent suggestion to continue my parent business”. The similar fact was also confirmed by one of BP lecturer. **Najmu** said “The students



didn't get adequate care and attention from each parent, yet they seek another object to share their problem".

#### 4.2. Process of SLDP in BP Class

The process of SLDP in BP class is divided into two semesters. Semester I entitled **Character Building** includes five steps, *intrapersonal skill, interpersonal skill, communication skill, team work, and independent learner*.

Each step emphasizes on certain character building values; *first step*, the students are hoped to study on national spirit, self-confidence, Islamic values, activeness, making clear vision and mission, time management, and deciding priority, *step two*; empathy, assertiveness, inclusion, synergy, how to become agents of change, and research on community leaders and organization, organizational skill. *Step three*; effective communication. *Step four*; problem solving, team work, group presentation. *Step five*; independent learner, critical thinking, respect, and integrity.

Meanwhile semester II entitled **Writing and Reading Skill**. This topic includes three phases; *Independent Learner II, Writing, and Reading*. The last two phases are done in the same time.

In semester II, the student get two credits; Bahasa Inggris I and Bahasa Inggris II. In Bahasa Inggris I (Writing Phase) the students get three sub-phases; *independent learners II, mini-research, and writing essay*. In Bahasa Inggris II (Reading Phases), the student get also three sub-phases; *independent learner II, reading skill and public speaking*.

According to the result of FGD process, it is acknowledged that SLDP through BP class gave them benefit to develop their leadership capacity. The students experienced different impression during their involvement in each semester in BP class. The process of SLDP during semester I gave them more positive impact toward their leadership values.

The significant values that they absorb during semester I including; inclusiveness, professionalism, proactivity, braveness, teamwork, plurality, self awareness, self confident, and activeness. In accordance to those values, Syamsul said "I was still awkward, ashamed, and rarely communicating to other before BP class, soon after I was feeling motivated to try to communicate even being messy. In other hand, Yevi said "Even I have weakness in certain subject such as accounting, and I got C, but I never give up to rise and to struggle"

The lecturer also acknowledged that during semester I they felt more effective to inspire their students with values of leadership. This fact is related to the topic of semester I that much more emphasized soft skill rather than hard skill. In accordance, one of the lecturer, Ruli said "I feel easier to manage the class during this semester, since the topic is relevant to students' needs on values of life"

Semester II that including independent learner II, writing and reading much more emphasized on hard skill. It focuses on reading skill, public speaking, mini research, and writing essay. In this phase, the student get more assignment, either group or individual.

The topic of semester II, Writing and Reading, represented subject of Bahasa Inggris I and II in students'

credit. Eventhough, the topic of writing is aimed to develop students' ability in research and writing essay in Indonesian language. It is applied since the students' writing ability in even Indonesian language is still in low level. Meanwhile, their English language ability should be developed through Reading and Speaking that represented subject of English II.

The students felt the benefit of writing class that could develop their writing ability. Faza (2010) said "Even lecturer didn't lecture by English in writing class, but the class really assisted me through writing essay assignment (i.e. writing 10 pages essay). For me, the most significant impact is follow up of the class". Fikri (2010) also said "I got step by step guideline to write during Semester II".

#### 4.3. Output of SLDP

The FGD process found the result of SLDP that the students are motivated to be future leaders those who are brave, honest, authentic, pluralist, close to the people, distinct, religious, and fair.

The students try to apply the values within their activity in student organization, either extra or intra campus. Today, some of them are involved in intra campus such as, LEM (Executive Student Institute), Ekonomika (Student Press Institute), JAM (Member of Mosque Association), Entrepreneur Community, and Management Community. Even in extra campus, the students are involved in such as HMI (Indonesian Student Association), IMAYO (Yogyakarta Student Association), and other social organization. Some outstanding activities had been reached by Fieda who joined Summer Course in Korea with her own desire and Tika who joined exchange program to do apprenticeship in teaching English for primary school during 2 months in Taiwan. Tika could join this activity because she joined some organizations in outside UII such as AISEC in Diponegoro University in Semarang and then she know the exchange program.

#### 4.4. Students' Hope

The FGD process' results showed that the students hope to be ideal leader in their future. The ideal leaders are those who has strong leadership character in the certain society.

Hary, the student of 2009 year said "to be the distinct, fair, brave, and not discriminative (race, social, religion) since we are unified under principle of "Bhineka Tunggal Ika". Consistently to develop Indonesia to be more progressive; intellectually, socially, and in every sector of life".

In other hand, Lutfi said "the next 2020, Indonesia will be the 6<sup>th</sup> greatest economic of the world. I'm prepared to be local leader by involving into political area, to make sure that local state budget is distributed to the right people".

#### 4.5. Analysis

SLDP program held at the Faculty of Economics UII bridging programs have been successful in shaping the character of a leader within the student who is ready to become the leader of the nation in the future. This success can be seen from the aspect of their understanding of the



importance of the character that they get in the classroom and its application in daily life. Students assume that the material in class can not show their leader character. Strengthening of character arising from the influence of motivational lecturer to students. Motivation is provided by the lecturers make the students changed from that previously did not understand the purpose of life becomes better understood what the student should do for themselves and the surrounding environment.

Conditions of students who have no motivation in the first meeting, makes a challenge for lecturers in teaching students. In students focus group discuss, show that UII lectures at the faculty of economics was not the first goal, so just a college student without having learn and study motivation. In SLDP process, students experience a variety of experiences. Character development programs in first semester had provide new understanding about the importance of character in life. In this process, students struggling with their thinking whether they are doing so far is correct or not. At this stage the student has not been able to apply what they got in the first semester into their lives. However, this condition will be the foundation for the next process.

In the second semester, students are exposed to saturation conditions because teaching activity is very different. The students get reading and writing materials. However, with the capability in the first semester about an understanding of character plus lecturer motivation, the student is able to adapt to these conditions. They seek another activity that comfortable to them by beginning to follow a variety of activities on and off campus such as entrepreneurship, following the conference, association, religious social activities, student competitions to student exchange activities abroad. After participating in these activities, they begin to be comfortable with what they are doing. They also realize that in fact following SLDP program is very useful.

After SLDP program is completed, students already have an understanding of what they should do. Experience they get in SLDP and activities outside, it makes students able to take part in various activities. Not only that, students can also become a leader in the organization, becoming a pioneer of social and environmental activities, improve the ability to entrepreneurship, and has hopes to empower communities and contribute to nation building. This is the character of a leader who had formed during SLDP program. Students are ready to jump in and play a role in lead society as well as being a pioneer of the nation's progress.

## V. CONCLUSION

### 5.1. Conclusion

The results of the research show that:

1). The input of early student in SLDP at the Economics Faculty of Islamic University of Indonesia, mostly are in low level. It is indicated by their low motivated personality, passive attendance, and not from reputable schools. Part of early students have critical family problem such as parent divorce, disharmony relationship with family.

2). The process of SLDP in semester I emphasized on soft skill education, character building. Meanwhile in semester II, the process emphasized on hard skill, writing, reading, and speaking. The process of SLDP in semester I is more effective than in semester II to develop students' leadership values. SLDP gives some subjects—in character building phase such as Islamic values, national spirit, integrity, how to become agents of change, critical thinking, organizational skill, effective communication, self-confidence, pro-activeness, assertiveness, empathy, making clear vision and mission, time management, deciding priority, reflective learning log, inclusion, synergy and research on community leaders and organization—that make students more mature to become Indonesian's future leaders. In Second Semester the student got English I and II that expressed in Writing and reading which felt hard to be learnt by students but they were happy to join it.

3). The real output of process is that the students are motivated to become future leader those who are brave, honest, authentic, pluralist, close to the people, distinct, religious, and fair. They are also motivated to be activist in various student organizations, either internal or external campus. After joining the SLDP, students had developed their qualified leadership that dependent on the quality of the student as an input in BP. The main outcomes are their increasingly religious consciousness, open mind, proactive, effectiveness communication, self-confidence, discipline, assertiveness, and braveness. After finishing the SLDP, students need some mentoring program which should be formally managed by the Management Department while they also have joined some organization and show outstanding activities.

4) Some problems of SLDP in student's perspective are the lecture time because the better time for running SLDP class is in the morning. In the SLDP lecturers feel the poor learning facility and feeling different of their status become non-permanent lecturers that along near 7 years the lecturer come and go forever!

### 5.2. Recommendation

Based on the results and analysis, the research recommends that:

1) The dean and department committee can discuss more deeply that related to unhappy condition of the student in the second semester if it compare to their first semester to choose the best cover and content of BP Program to be more effective in achieving the organization vision and mission.

2) The dean and the department committee can improve the role of their permanent lecturers in teaching process to support the students who are low in quality to be higher in their consciousness to become future leaders.

3) The BP Lecturers can evaluate the performance of their teaching process that can increase higher of their roles in motivating students to become future leaders without making the students were too dependent to the BP.

4) The subject matters can be evaluated integrally in order to have an united character building program not only one year bridging program but it can be integrative program which more immanent for building the students character.



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