

# Urgency of Decision-Making Theory in Practical Leadership Process: Case Study at Faculty of Islamic Studies, Islamic University of Indonesia Yogyakarta

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**Abstract**— This paper attempts to describe the urgency of decision-making theory to help everyone, especially a leader in institutions, to understand how to process decision making in order to make the best decision in every situation. Based on the case in the faculty of Islamic Studies (FIAI) of Islamic University of Indonesia, I will try to suggest how to apply some ways and methods to be better in decision making practice.

**Keywords**— *Decision Making, Decision Making Processes, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Islamic University of Indonesia*

## I. INTRODUCTION

We had known that in our life all people face different kinds of problems. The kinds of problems are complex from easy to difficult. They are necessary to be solved. We need to understand the concept of decision making. Decision making is about deciding what action to take; it usually involves choice between options (Adair, 2010). According Lengley, et al (1995) decision making is a commitment to action, a discrete and concrete phenomenon driven by rationality (Ojimabo, 2015). Therefore, the decision makers need some ways and methods to make wise decision making become wise and not to make individuals, organizations, institutions, and communities feel harmed. Actually, in daily life, decision making practice often failed to produce good decision making. This indicates that, even at the level of governmental decisions where so many things can go wrong, good decision processes are strongly related to good decision outcomes. Anderson (2002) said that good decision processes can be learned, and we know something about how to teach them. For example, economics professors and students, who have formal training in decision making, are more likely than others to decide rationally, even when the decisions are not closely related to the content of economics courses (Larrick, Morgan, & Nisbett, 1990). (looked also Whimby & Whimby, 1975). At the higher education level, courses in decision psychology are typically focused on the presentation of research findings and theoretical explanations of these findings, providing, essentially, declarative, or factual

knowledge. Instruction in good decision-making practice is ancillary, at best, and actual practice in decision-making skills, are rare in such courses.

Anderson's statement proved that decision making theory is needed by decision makers to produce a better decision making. Lack of understanding of a theory of decision making can lead to wrong decisions. Wrong decisions cause the problem to be unsolved and eventually influencing of personal satisfaction and stability of organization. For example, a case in the Faculty of Islamic Studies, Indonesia Islamic University of Yogyakarta in 2018. When our faculty elected the dean, the majority of Senators elected one of the candidates that was unexpected by the majority of communities in our faculty. There were different choices between majority of communities in FIAI (lecturers, employees, and students) and majority of senators. The majority of communities of FIAI have evaluated that the incumbent dean did not show a good performance. He had been called upon twice by Rector of UII and given advise in order to understand his job and duties. The other fact was that he was always difficult to be called by rector and the others because his cell phone (hp) was off. Such situation always complicated anyone in communicating with him. The next fact was that he often came late to respond any problems faced by our faculty, so many problems were solved suddenly and unexpectedly. Not only late to respond the problem but he was also lack of communication. He often wrongly articulated main problems so the audience often had difficulty to understand his speech. Another evidence was based on his reality that he tended to take priority for learning than management task, whereas the main task of a dean is managerial position in organization. Based on the facts, according to the majority of communities in the FIAI, he was not feasible to lead our faculty again for the next period.

Different with the reason from the majority of communities in FIAI, the majority of senators precisely

elected the incumbent dean because he had to obey the senior communities. He was not brave to refuse pressure from them. In reality, the majority of senators elected him because they had a political interest that was profitable for them. That was the main problem, the board of senators used their rational, creativity, and judgement to select a better candidate but the reality was quite the contrary.

The different expectation between the majority of communities in FIAI and the majority of senators can disturb the stability in our faculty. Difference in satisfaction can cause swing mood of performance in the faculty. This problem is often considered by simplicity. According to the theory of decision making, that course is very important to understand. Understanding the theory of decision making can lead and help someone to select and elect the best choice in decision making practice. Decision making is not only needed in formal organizational but also needed in our daily life. In Organizational, decision making needed by a leader to select the best choice to achieve organizational objectives. Therefore, in order to make the best decisions, every leader in an organization should understand the theory of decision making.

In order to easily explain my focus in this case, I will propose three research questions to be answered in this paper. (1) What is the main course of decision making theory? (2) How is the process of decision making in the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FIAI) reviewed by decision making theory? (3) What factors influence the decision making processes in the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FIAI)?

In this simple research I used a qualitative approach and case study method. The subjects of the observation of the research were the incumbent dean and the senators. The method of data collection included observation and documentation. The location of research was the faculty of Islamic Studies (FIAI) Islamic University of Indonesia Yogyakarta at Jl. Kaliurang Km. 14.5 in Sleman Yogyakarta. Data analysis employed the interactive method from Miles and Huberman (Miles & Huberman, 1992).

## II. CONCEPT OF DECISION-MAKING THEORY

The theme of decision making have been discussed by scientists, especially in management and leadership domains. Course of decision making always correlate with leadership course. Sutisna taking Mc Camy's statement said that 'a decision achievement is a core of administration; all of nature of administrative process depends on and correlates with decision making' (Sutisna, *Administrasi Pendidikan*, 1993). Thus, it is clear that course of decision making is important for daily life because every person is necessary to understand this course but is not aware of it. Anderson said that a course should provide for stimulus learning: how to recognize a decision situation, how to recognize irrationality, how to recognize uncreative thought, how to recognize information overload, and how to recognize bad decision logic. Such a course should also teach appropriate responses for these situations, along with their underlying logic. Finally, such a

course should provide students abundant practice in applying abstract principles to concrete cases. (Anderson, 2002).

Furthermore, Anderson propose that the three secrets of wise decision making are courage, creativity, and balance in the management of complexity. The courage to be rational faces up to complexity in order to get the problem solved; creativity adds to complexity in order to achieve a more complete understanding of the problem; and balanced judgment evaluates complexity in an even-handed manner in order to reduce it to a choice of the single best alternative. Three secrets of wise decision making mentioned by Anderson will help a decision maker carry out process of decision making.

To support Anderson's statement, Kowalski and Lasley, also give solution to acquire a better decision with evidence known as evidence-based practice (EBP). They said that decision making, the core process in problem-solving, is basically a three-stage procedure: (a) identifying choices (alternative decisions), demands (e.g., expectations, job requirements), and constraints (e.g., laws, policy, lack of resources); (b) evaluating choices in relation to demands and constraints, and (c) selecting the best alternative. (Kowalski & Lasley, 2009).

According to all of the theories mentioned above it can be concluded that decision making needs knowledge and careful behaviour in order to avoid failed and wrong decisions. Decision makers should have courage to be rationality, and creativity based on intelligence and good judgement to seek of wise decision. A decision maker also needs evidence data before carrying out decision making process.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part explored data and tried to find how the process of decision making was implemented by the incumbent dean and senior senators in the process of election of new dean in our Faculty of Islamic Studies (FIAI) UII. Faculty of Islamic Studies (FIAI) UII is merged from between 2 (two) faculties, Sharia faculty and Islamic Education faculty. Two faculties become an embryo of Religion Faculty which opened in a transition period. It occurred when the name of Islamic Higher College (STI) was changed into Islamic University of Indonesia on July 8, 1945. The changing name occurred on Rajab 27, 1367 H or March 10, 1948. (FIAI, 2017). Right now, this faculty has 3 (three) under graduate programs, e.g. study program of Sharia, study program of Islamic Education, and study program of Islamic Economics. Two graduate programs, e.g. Magister of Islamic Studies (S2) and Doctoral Program of Islamic Law (S3).

Three months ago, this faculty had a general election to select the new dean. After selection of administrative and academic requirements by the organizing committee (OC), finally four candidates were selected by the communities of FIAI UII. The communities are all of fix lecturers and lecturers by contract, fix employees, and representation of student board. The selection was done to determine the best three ranks from four candidates. In this process, three

candidates were chosen proposed to the faculty senate: (1) Dr. Rahmani Timoriya Yulianti, M.Ag with 34 voters, (2) Dr. Tamyiz Muharrom, Dipl., MA with 22 voters, and Dr. Junanah, MIS with 9 voters.

In the next process, three candidates should present their action plan in an action plan forum followed by all of the communities of FIAI, especially senators. In this forum, audience was given a chance to criticize the three candidates and at the same time evaluate which was the best program for the next four years. The assessment and evaluation were based on (a) realistic program, (b) capability and communication skills in the presentation, (c) personal performance and gesture, (d) managing time at the presentation, and (e) evaluation and performance appraisal when the candidates did the tasks and duties in the previous four years. According to the assessment and observation from the junior lecturers and some of the lecturers and employees, Rahmani's action plan program was better than the others.

The next steps was election process in senate faculty forum. Actually, the process of election was running smoothly, but the problems arose when some of the senators did not consider the election process before and performance in the action plan presentation forum. There were political interest among the senators. Parts of them tried to be objective but some of the senators were unconcerned and attempted to win their candidate although their candidate was not better than the others. Some of the senators tried to appoint the gender issue. They believed that a leader should be a male. Their reason was based on QS. An Nisa, 34:

"Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard. But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance - [first] advise them; [then if they persist], forsake them in bed; and [finally], strike them. But if they obey you [once more], seek no means against them. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted and Grand" (Digital, 2002)

Based on the verse above, the majority of senior senators had been influenced by this principle so that they did not consider the practical leadership in other institutions, such as in Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta as the dean who leads the faculty of Islamic Studies is a female. Besides the reason, they also argued that a leader is analogous to the practice of praying (salah). In the case of salah a leader should be a male not female. Finally, the new dean of FIAI UII was Mr. Tamyiz Muharrom who defeated the other candidates, e.g. Mrs. Rahmani and Mrs. Junanah. After knowing the result of election, Harsoyo, the former rector of UII from 2014 to 2016, felt disappointed and then said to me that some senior senators at FIAI UII did not use common sense in the selection process. He had evidence that the incumbent dean could not work well during his previous leadership period.

According to observation, the reasons from some senior senators in FIAI were not consistent with the reality in practical leadership in UII, because there are two new female deans in UII for the next four years. They are Mrs. Miftahul Fauziah at the faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture and Mrs. Linda Rosita at the faculty of Medical. Although the result was unexpected by the majority of communities in FIAI UII, in fact, the new dean is Mr. Tamyiz Muharrom. He had been inaugurated by the new rector of UII, Mr. Fathul Wahid, on June 2, 2018. The result had become bad evidence in decision making process of leadership practice.

If reviewed by the theories of decision making processes suggested by scientists, like Anderson, Kowalski and Lasley, and others, the practice of decision making to select the new dean as part of the leadership process in FIAI UII has shown that the majority of people, especially senior senators at FIAI UII did not understand well the principle of decision making. The process of decision making should be done with wisdom. Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines 'wisdom' as: '...Capacity of judging rightly in matters relating to life and conduct; soundness of judgment in the choice of means and ends.... (OED, 1933, pp.191-192) (looked up also in (Anderson, 2002)).

In order to use wisdom, anyone should have the courage to be rational, creativity to manage a problem structuring, and balanced judgement to evaluate complexity in an even-handed manner in order to reduce it to a choice of the single best alternative. Between the three wise aspects of decision making, courage is the major factor in decision making processes. The argument is based on the fact that intelligent people often do not have in taking decision when facing a difficult problem. Likewise, intelligent people who need too much balanced judgement do not necessary on decision making processes because it will inhibit the process of decision-making practice. It is important for decision makers to produce the best decision making by understanding the way to analyses evidence as illustrated in following figure.

Required Practitioner Expertise



Figure 1. Stages of evidence-based practice in the context of required practitioner expertise

Source: (Kowalski & Lasley, 2009)

The stages of evidence-based practice from Kowalski & Lasley above will help decision makers in every organization to prepare data to support the process of decision making.

A process of decision making not only need the criteria based on theory, but it also influenced by one factors. There are two main factors, internal factors and external factors. In internal factors, decision making is influenced by psychological factors, such as an interest, motivation, intelligent, and experience. At external factors, a decision making process is influenced by culture, education and environment. In detail, Marcol, who takes the statement from Schwartz (1998, 42), said that more specific research on decision making in sociology shows that people are not born with preferences; preferences are shaped by family, friends, religious institutions, and larger communities (Marcol, 2007). What Marcol and other scientists said had been proven by the evidence from the practical decision making at FIAI UII, in fact, some senior senators chose the dean based on knowledge about religion, political interest, and their experiences.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the research problems, research processes and data analysis, it can be concluded that: a. the role of decision-making theory is very important for decision makers to acquire the best choice and make wise decisions. There are three aspects of wise decision making, i.e. courage, creativity, and balanced judgement. The three aspects will be optimal if supported by evidence based on data; b. the decision-making processes at FIAI UII have not yet run in accordance with the procedure for withdrawal of a good decision. Stakeholders did not use the right consideration in making decision. Balanced judgement, creativity and evidence based on data recorded from any candidates was not used in the decision making so that the result of decision making was not feasible with the expectation of the majority stakeholders in FIAI UII. c. two major factors in decision making processes are internal and external factors.

Evidence from the process of decision making in FIAI UII should become an important lesson for decision makers, because a decision making process needs several requirements to be done. Non-adherence to the procedure of decision making can cause negative effects. So, everyone who has concern with decision making, such as students, decision makers, and some leaders, should learn this theme in order to become wise decision makers.

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