

Research on the Three Categories of Academic Leadership from a Diverse Perspective of Education and Its Future Prospects

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ABSTRACT

Academic leadership in universities from a diverse perspective of education is an important lever in promoting the modernization of higher education governance systems and capabilities. The research on the connotation elements and functional exertion of academic leadership in universities is generally in the preliminary exploration stage, and the research on the three categories of subject, space, and time of academic leadership in universities needs to be further summarized and condensed. The systematic review of the three categories of academic leadership in universities is not only necessary for a comprehensive study of academic leadership in universities, but also a practical need to promote the deepening reform of higher education. Based on this, this study focuses on new research dimensions such as linear and nonlinear, ordered and disordered, gradual and sudden changes, in order to achieve a transition from static closure to dynamic openness in academic leadership research in universities.

KEYWORDS

Diversified education; Academic leadership; Category; Expectation

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1 Introduction

With the acceleration of the modernization process of higher education governance system and governance capabilities, the concept of leadership has been introduced into the field of education, and a new concept of "academic leadership in universities" has emerged. The relationship between academic leadership in universities and the governance system and capacity of higher education is both inclusive and causal.

On the one hand, academic leadership in universities is an organic component of the higher education governance system and governance capabilities. The governance system of higher education includes the numerous entities and their structural relationships established in the reform of the higher education system, including those involved in running schools, managing and conducting research. The academic leadership of universities includes not only the organization and its context, but also the academic and disciplinary leaders of universities and their relationships; The governance ability of higher education is a requirement for the main body of higher education governance and a condition for the governance body to achieve its governance objectives, while academic leadership in universities reflects the ability or influence of academic participants in universities to carry out governance activities and achieve governance goals. On the other hand, the construction of academic leadership in universities is a necessary condition for the modernization of the higher education governance system and governance capabilities. The higher the level of

academic leadership construction in universities, the clearer the direction and smoother the process of modernization of higher education governance system and capabilities, and vice versa. In this sense, the construction of academic leadership in universities should become a priority option for promoting the modernization of higher education governance system and governance capabilities.

Therefore, this study analyzes the research on academic leadership in domestic and foreign universities from the perspective of systems science, attempting to summarize and sort out three categories: elements and systems, functions and structures, states and processes, in order to find new research innovation points and provide some suggestions for the development of academic leadership research in universities.

2 The Three Dimensional Category of Academic Leadership From a Diverse Perspective of Education

(1) Subject category

Academic leadership in universities includes not only the radiation, attraction, and driving force generated by academic organizations during their operation, but also the excellent individual leadership and collective progress generated by university teachers and other entities in their academic careers^[2], involving the exploration of the relationship between elements and systems. The research on academic leadership in universities should not only see the overall system composed of interconnected components, but also the various elements within the system structure. The interaction between elements and systems constitutes the main category of academic leadership research in universities.

From this, it can be inferred that academic leadership in universities includes three key elements: universities, academia, and leadership. The interaction between these elements constitutes the connotation of academic leadership in universities.

(2) Key elements

Firstly, the elements of universities. Universities are the specific context for the construction of academic leadership in universities. With the advancement of the modernization process of higher education governance system and governance capabilities, universities have become increasingly the center for organizations and individuals to play an academic leadership role. By achieving the integration and collaboration between hierarchical and project-based systems, as well as between physical and virtual colleges, universities can provide good organizational support for the construction of academic leadership.

In addition, universities also have administrative leadership, whose function is to solve coordination, operation, and efficiency issues in university administrative management. Due to the generalization of administrative power and the weakening of academic power awareness, academic leadership in universities is prone to fail to play its rightful role. In other words, universities are not only situational conditions that promote the effectiveness of academic leadership, but also situational conditions that constrain the degree of its effectiveness.

Secondly, academic elements. Academic is a prerequisite for the operation of academic leadership in universities. Unlike other types of leadership, the construction of academic leadership in universities requires a certain prerequisite for knowledge accumulation, and its impact path also needs to go through a certain academic profession and academic context. Therefore, the academic element

is particularly crucial. Stefan N (2022) believes that academia should include four types: teaching scholarship, discovery scholarship, applied scholarship, and integrated scholarship.^[3] In terms of teaching and academia, the role of academic leadership in universities mainly refers to cultivating students' civic awareness, as well as the characteristics and spirit of students as future leaders.

Finally, leadership elements. Leadership is the inherent essence of academic leadership construction in universities. Academic leadership in universities is one of the important fields of leadership research. In order to deeply explain the connotation of academic leadership in universities, it is necessary to trace the connotation of leadership. Rod (2022) believes that leadership is the process by which individuals or groups of leaders motivate organizational members through persuasion and role models to achieve collective goals. In addition, there are also viewpoints in the academic community that "leadership is a tool to assist members within a group in achieving their goals"^[1]. Previous research on the connotation of leadership has focused on multiple perspectives such as influence theory, process theory, and capability theory. While enriching the connotation of leadership, multiple perspectives have also increased the difficulty of understanding academic leadership in universities.

3 The Innovative Path of Academic Leadership from a Diversified Perspective of Education

(1) Development trends

Academic leadership in universities is not the unique ability and influence of a certain academic role or position, but rather an endogenous and externalized force that all members of the university organization can possess. Through literature review^[1-3], it can be concluded that research on academic leadership in universities can be divided into three categories: elements and systems, functions and structures, and states and processes. The relationships between these three categories and their internal dimensions are shown in Figure 1.

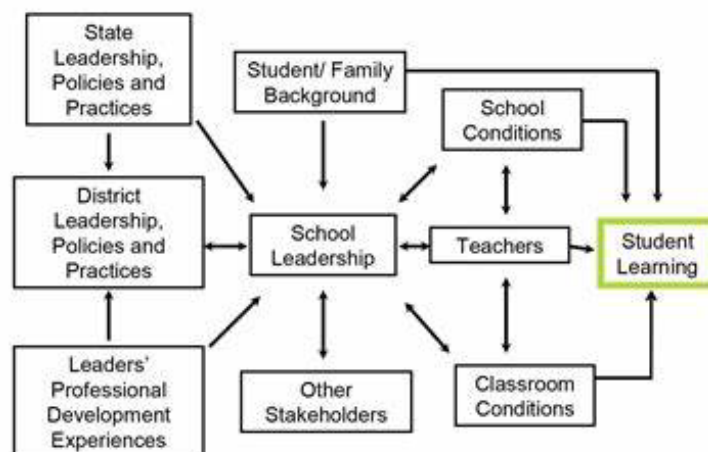


Fig. 1. Categories and dimensions of leadership

Specifically, firstly, the main scope of academic leadership research in universities involves two dimensions: elements and systems. The elements and system dimensions mainly reveal the connotation composition and multiple levels of academic leadership in universities. The former includes three parts of elements: university context, academic conditions, and the essence of

leadership. The latter includes macro level policy elements, meso level formal organizational and rule elements, and micro level subject elements. Secondly, the spatial category of academic leadership research in universities involves two dimensions: functional and structural. The functional and structural dimensions mainly present the functional role and arrangement and combination of elements of academic leadership in universities. They not only demonstrate the explicit, implicit, and negative functions of academic leadership in universities, but also reveal the respective functions and interactions of factors such as university charter, academic committee, university academia, and faculty within the structure, thus forming the overall structure of academic leadership in universities. Thirdly, the time scope of academic leadership research in universities involves two dimensions: state and process. The dimension of state and process mainly highlights the specific development state and functional process of academic leadership in universities. There are two types of states in the research of academic leadership in universities: theoretical research and practical research, and its functional process can be explored from two aspects: the process of applying leadership and the process of operational research.

(2) Future outlook

Universities are a complex dynamic system that requires continuous material, energy, and information exchange with the surrounding environment during the dynamic and open process to maintain the vitality of the university system. Although existing research has delved into the interaction of internal and external factors and system linkage in universities, most of it focuses on exploring academic leadership within university organizations, making it difficult to reveal other characteristics of the complex system of universities, such as dynamism, openness, and orderliness. With the deepening development of the modernization of higher education governance system and governance capabilities, based on the characteristics of the university system, research on academic leadership in universities should not only be considered based on the existing three categories, but also be based on new research dimensions such as linear and nonlinear, orderly and disorderly, gradual and sudden changes, in order to achieve a shift from relatively static closed to more dynamic and open research on academic leadership in universities, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Scope Outlook of Academic Leadership

Category	Existing dimension	Future dimension	Emphasis
Subject category	Elements and Systems	Linear and Nonlinear	Focusing on exploring internal and external interactions in universities
Spatial category	Function and Structure	Orderly or Unorderly	Focusing on characteristics such as nonlinearity, orderliness, and dynamism, making it more dynamic and open

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