Crisis management in psychology education: The role of leadership

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Abstract The case of learning in psychology education becomes important to recognize the challenges of learning and the role of leadership in managing crises when the learning process changes completely from what was planned. This paper was prepared by studying and referring to the research results on crisis management and learning events during the Covid-19 pandemic. A literature review was conducted to explore important lessons learned during general and psychology education. The use of information technology is the main challenge and at the same time a solution to carry out continuous learning. Leaders need to have competence in managing crises that occur. One of them is by using a proactive approach and prioritizing comfort in the learning process.

Keywords: managing crisis, learning in psychology, information technology, competence

1. Introduction

Psychology education is a conscious effort based on planning to organize formal education in psychology. Like education in general, psychology education is an attempt to achieve something with the concept of learning strategies that encourage the use of appropriate knowledge and information processing (Pressley et al. 1989). Psychology education continues to strive for every learning effort to produce competent graduates in academic and cognitive terms (Schunk 2005). The education system is something that must be realized. Especially cognitive awareness about the involvement of students whose goal is to improve competency (Burleson 2005). Such as creativity and self-actualization. The process is carried out in a curriculum system that is spread over many courses. The system runs with a standardized learning program. Standardized programs are carried out by paying attention to the analytical power of students and based on technology (Chatti et al. 2012). The learning system that has been compiled is used as a reference to carry out the learning process of psychology education.

The learning program contains many academic levels. The path in question is psychology education for the doctoral, masters, professional psychologist education, and bachelor of psychology levels (AP2TPI 2016). Each level has a degree of achievement that must be obtained and learning outcomes with tiered levels of complexity. The higher the level, the level of achievement and output, the more it requires a more efficient review process (SkepAP2TPI 2013; SkepAP2TPI 2015; SkepAP2TPI 2019a; SKepAP2TPI 2019b). The entire process of face-to-face learning and learning in the laboratory is carried out to obtain results and produce outcomes that are beneficial to society (Istijanto 2020). Learning meetings in theory classes and practicum are also required to achieve the goals targeted by the study program (Heikkinen 2011). The same also happens in the process of writing the final project; every progress of the guidance is to achieve graduates who have competence in psychology and produce outputs that contain elements of novelty (Sovacool et al. 2018).

However, the covid pandemic has changed everything, including the world of education in developing countries (Tadesse and Muluye 2020), professional education such as social work and psychology education must be change follow global change (Fahrudin and Yusuf 2020). Therefore, managerial skills are needed in the management of psychology education. This paper focuses on the significance of leadership in psychology education in crisis management throughout Covid-19. The most prevalent occurrences include the transition to online learning, changes in instructional and educational methodologies, the constraints of face-to-face interactions, the influence on mental health and well-being, the increased need for flexibility and adaptation, and chances for creativity and cooperation. These changes need educators and students to adapt to new teaching and learning approaches, all while addressing the pandemic’s mental health and wellness issues. For the leaders of psychology education (deans or heads of study programs), a new governance model in resolving crises in an agile and seamless manner is required so that psychology education can function as it should.
2. Challenges of psychology education in the pandemic period

The study program is not a single entity that has consequences for successfully implementing psychology education. There are human factors, and there are environmental factors. Humans and the environment are two entities needed to run a learning program (Asvio et al 2017). Students who are in a conditional environment tend to find it easier to carry out their learning programs and successfully complete them. But the environmental conditions that are filled with disruption have definitely reduced academic commitment and the quality of learning. As happened two years ago, a pandemic occurred, and a lockdown policy was issued. Learning activities change drastically (González-Calvo et al 2022). At the beginning of the lockdown period, gatherings of many people were prohibited because there was a policy of large-scale social restrictions. Programs that actually run face-to-face are replaced with virtual mechanisms via an online network. Students and lecturers are active from home. Likewise, the study program manager monitored from home. Educational programs that are planned to be carried out formally are forced to be carried out with high flexibility. Study program organizers do not yet fully have the facilities and infrastructure to equalize the learning process online, but the education program must continue to run and achieve its goals. The quality of carrying out the learning process, learning outcomes, and outcomes are the most subject to policy flexibility.

Learning tools and online networks have not been fully prepared by students and lecturers. Learning from home is then carried out more flexibly, with control over the quality of sober learning (Manuaba et al 2022). Learning takes place through a message-sharing platform. Even though the learning discussion process by using chat is not used effectively to produce discussion conclusions (Hutahaean et al 2019). Lectures in the laboratory are the greatest difficulty because the tools for practice can only be used in the psychology laboratory room. Courses that require laboratories are a burden because it is very difficult for students to understand (Khan et al 2021). Because students and lecturers do not have the tools, the practicum is carried out live streaming. Lecturers search for relevant videos, are given as lecture material, and students are given written assignments (Ortiz and Levine 2022). Students who are working on their final project are constrained in the process of methodological guidance in psychology and difficulties in being able to access or collect research data (especially experimental research). Students feel dissatisfied with the final project guidance they receive (Purnami et al 2022). The time to complete the study was delayed due to circumstances, which resulted in delays in building a career (Satpathy and Ali 2020).

Pandemic disruption can come suddenly (D'Auria and Smet 2020). Advanced knowledge and technology can only read his cues but not anticipate and hold them. The experience of the Covid-19 pandemic has become a test that provides lessons in organizing psychology education. It cannot be known more certain that there will be disruptions in the future. Education administrators and actors need to be prepared to deal with sudden disruptions (Klusmann et al 2022). The quality and quality of learning is an important aspect that can support the acquisition of student competence (Asvio et al 2017). This study intends to explore the lessons learned during the Covid-19 pandemic, to then be used as a basis for developing general strategic constructs related to learning in psychology education.

3. Leadership and crisis management during a pandemic: lesson to learn

The coronavirus (COVID-19) is a pandemic illness that impacts the education systems of various socioeconomic level nations (Wajdi et al 2020). The United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has acknowledged that the coronavirus pandemic epidemic has had an influence on the world's education system (UNESCO 2020b). Many pandemics have occurred throughout human history, affecting human life, education, and global economic growth (Editors 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic is not just a global health crisis; It is also a catalyst for reimagining the way we want to live going forward. From the economic system to the continuous educational process. Leaders as decision makers have the opportunity to move away from the status quo and make positive changes (Buchel et al 2022) for the benefit of the faculty they manage. Changing circumstances due to the pandemic are one of the distractions that cut off the previous assignment. In the world of education, this is termed educational interruption; the educational process is interrupted for a moment because changes are required along the way (Bozkurt et al 2020). Change really needs the role of the leader to decide to make changes or maintain what is there (Oreg and Berson 2019). The leadership role in managing the crisis is localized in areas where conditions are changing. Leaders are seen to exert certain patterns by empowering circumstances or those that the pattern directs. Adaptation to work teams whose leadership is directive is lower when the team experiences changing tasks, but leaders whose attitudes are empowering are higher (Sanchez-Manzanares et al 2020).

The concept of leadership and crisis management changes the traditional attitude of adhering to the rules to an implementation of leadership that produces the right solutions (Fener and Cevik 2015). Crisis environments require immediate decision-making and implementation. Sisman and Turan (2002) states that crisis management requires leaders who have a vision. In the modern world, visionary leaders possess foresight for the future, identify realistic visions and goals for the future of the organization, and motivate subordinates to make them happen. The most significant burden regarding crisis management is the fact that some leaders prefer to stick to the rules. Since they want to see all their actions and operations declared according to law, they cannot make an immediate decision in the event of an unforeseen event. This affects the management of the organization negatively (Ahmad 2020).
According to Kadibesegil (2008), in carrying out crisis management, a true leader also needed who has a solution in dealing with every type of crisis, that’s why they are optimistic. This energy affects others around them because crises are times when people desire a change of circumstances and the creation of a difference. Common solutions become invalid in times of crisis. A true leader changes the status quo and, of course, makes a difference. In this sense, leadership is not a “duty” but an unavoidable responsibility. Another important point of crisis management is the achievement factor (Emerson et al. 2009). It is not only necessary to perform tasks but also to reflect all the characteristics of leadership. Because crisis management is a series of activities that are implemented in a planned, systematic and rational manner to eliminate the problems encountered (Jung and Song 2015), then the leader must be able to make decisions, then form a work team to implement these decisions and make new decisions according to the field.

Leader needs to have the ability to manage pandemic situations (Beilstein et al. 2021). For example, the ability to develop a leadership style, focuses on building a motivated team of high performers. Leaders are able to position their organizations as successful organizations. The leader must be able to provide inspiration about the possibility (Abdullah and Anwar 2021) of finding newer situations, to shape the future. Leaders can manage knowledge appropriately to deal with uncertainty.

One of the main characteristics of modern management policy is to assume potential problems. Strategic management of crises is carried out as a continuous process and not a job that must be completed on time (Silveira et al. 2023). Furthermore, take rational managerial precautions in times of crises that arise for reasons of natural, political, economic, external, and unpredictable environments and apply preventive measures successfully (Peker 2000). Meanwhile the research results. The crisis management process can generally be divided into five distinct stages can be show in the figure 1:

![Crisis Management Approach](https://www.malque.pub/ojs/index.php/msj)

**Figure 1 Crisis Management Approach (obtained from Sahin et al. 2015).**

a) Prediction stage; Crises are usually accompanied by several early warning signals before they occur (Renn et al. 2022). These signals are very important because they can provide useful and important information about crises. Determination and identification in a timely manner to prevent the occurrence and potential damage due to crises. If top leaders do not follow and evaluate carefully, then it is inevitable to grapple with crises. The operational management of education carried out by the study program has dissolved into chaos.

b) Prevention stage; systematically following early warning signals is not a sufficient solution against crises. Top leaders make arrangements with the crisis management team to protect the organization (Branicki 2020) from potential damage from the crisis according to the significance of the existing signals. At this stage, the leader must try to minimize risks and be able to compensate for risky decisions with expected returns. If a crisis is unavoidable, preparation activities will help control the crisis. Preparation and prevention are to protect the educational process that should be carried out by the study program. The absence of both resulted in the learning situation getting messy and chaotic.

c) Control stage; although, in some cases, the early warning, prevention, and protection mechanisms work effectively, control procedures must also be complied with in order to properly deal with the crisis. On the one hand, motivation must be provided among personnel. On the other hand, policies that generate anxiety and stress should be avoided whenever possible (WHO 2020). The education manager, in this case, does not only carry out the monitoring function of his policies but shows an acting role for all parties who are part of the education process.

d) Recovery phase; at this stage, short and medium-term recovery mechanisms must be put in place. In other words, this stage contains the replacement of losses with new income. Organizations or institutions that have successfully faced a crisis must immediately act to normalize the situation (Lidskog et al. 2020). To achieve this goal, resources, processes, and personnel must be directed according to a predetermined strategy. Here, the purpose of recovery carried out by education managers is to resolve the crisis and benefit from the crisis. Restricted spending, centralized management, and suspended authority by lower-level managers must move step by step to their pre-crisis positions.
e) Evaluation stage; To eliminate the negative effects of post-crisis, leaders can do the following: (1) systematically organize training programs, (2) rehabilitate the work environment, (3) reward successful personnel for their valuable performance in the crisis process, (4) transforming the crisis management team into a solution development team, and (5) preparing strategic reports for long-term productivity and efficiency programs (Sahin et al 2015).

The field of education is no exception; the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have created a crisis. In order to be able to balance amid educational goals and changing circumstances, an appropriate approach is needed, namely an approach in accordance with the framework of a crisis management approach. In general, the most widely used solution to continue the educational process is online learning (Pramana et al 2021). But perhaps its use is not based on a crisis management approach. Because online learning brings another crisis for lecturers as educators, namely the crisis of using information technology (Fernandes et al 2021). The same is the case with students; it is difficult to follow learning because it is done online (Widyaningrum et al 2022).

Left issues during Covid-19 are very dynamic in nature, and can be seen in many perspectives. But the most appropriate perspective is learning about solving problems in many situations, and still maintaining the standard of lecture learning outcomes. Proper and strong connections, are the key to successfully solving problems. In this context, leaders really see how valuable cooperation is within the organization. The Covid-19 pandemic has created the biggest obstacle in conducting academic learning (Giatman et al 2020). The toughest effect of this is that decision-making is drastically weakened. Though decisions are indispensable in work. The strength and drive of the leader go a long way in maintaining connections between the entire work team (Goleman et al 2009). But the leader’s weak drive can divorce the team with its job responsibilities

According to Hazaa et al (2021) mastery of information technology is an important influence in responding the challenges of the crisis that occurred, and this mastery is integrated into crisis management solutions. Generally, the approach used by leaders in carrying out crisis management establishes a systematic framework (Christine et al 1998), and innovative steps (Sahin et al 2015) is as shown below:

**The Escaping Approach:**
In this approach, it is necessary to follow the internal and external environment continuously and improve prediction methods about the future before the crisis. This approach is very close to the proactive approach. Managers try to predict the possibility of a crisis from the start, and find procedures that allow the organization to avoid a crisis (Vašíčková 2020). To prevent the negative impact of the crisis, top management must determine the needs and key values of the organization to set projected goals. It is also important for top management to inform personnel about policies, share values, and transfer philosophies. In addition, it is a prerequisite for identifying problems, finding effective solutions, and building a flexible, dynamic, and enthusiastic corporate structure for easy practice.

**The Solving Approach:**
This approach depends on predicting conditions before a crisis and on timely steps to solve problems during a crisis. During a crisis, current conditions must be clearly understood and identified and behaved realistically and patiently. In addition, several efforts, such as a systematic collection of information for effective decision-making, extra opportunities for staff at various levels, reduction of time pressure, and detailed identification of crisis sources, should be carried out. The leader carries out the arrangement of work processes appropriately and is oriented toward solving problems (Thielisch et al 2021).

**The Proactive Approach:**
According to this proactive approach, top management should generate alternative solutions to potential crises. Due to preventive measures, construction companies that can adapt their production and marketing activities to crisis conditions can become financially successful when their competitors are in a state of panic. A proactive attitude in crisis management is defined as an initial step to view the crisis as a whole, integrate, and take strategic steps (Abo-Murad and AL-Khrabsheh 2019)

**The Reactive Approach:**
This recovery approach can be chosen by top leaders in the face of unexpected crises. Under these conditions, leaders usually make aggressive decisions during crisis meetings. Precisely in managing a crisis, leaders are considered to have failed to understand the crisis that is happening, and failure occurs because a reactive attitude actually provides many limitations for leaders to restore their organizations (Fast et al 2022).

**The Interactive Approaches:**
This integrated approach evaluates the crisis process before, during, and after a crisis. Due to the information obtained in this process includes ongoing organizational learning and self-control mechanisms. Permanent communication and flow of information are provided for the benefit and reputation of all stakeholders. Interactive is not an approach that emphasizes procedures for conveying information in confusing situations. Interactive means using multiple methods to complement each other and all of them applied simultaneously (Fast et al 2022). Communication in crisis management is communication that is delivered transparently, especially in leaders providing challenges that affect the best performance (Szczepańska-Woszczyña 2015).
Crisis, in general, are filled with complex changes (Klemm et al 2019). It requires executives to lead and manage effectively. Addressing today's most pressing needs is management work. Leaders need to make immediate choices and allocate resources (McNulty and Marcus 2020). The leader’s pace must be quick, and his actions determine success. The process of leading is done by guiding subordinates to the best end result during this time arc. The leader’s focus should be on what might happen next and be ready to fulfill it. That means leaders are able to see beyond the immediate to anticipate the next three, four, or five hurdles.

4. Conclusion

Forthcoming, there may be more recent pandemic disruptions, and this will bring about a more complicated crisis than Covid-19. Because it can spread suddenly, a pandemic is something that is difficult to predict. But this does not mean that education managers give up, let the educational process run irregularly, and give super leeway. The pandemic is hard to predict, but the experience two years ago provided an important lesson to be able to anticipate it. Governments need to have the ability to manage crises appropriately, and these competencies are needed to deal with crisis-filled situations. Not only referring to the period two years ago, but the future also needs to be considered for the leader to be able to design the progress of the psychological education process he manages. Through this competence, the Heads of Faculties and Psychology Study Programs are no longer shackled in crisis situations. Any obstacles and difficulties that exist can be solved with the right strategy. That is a strategy with a proactive approach. It cannot be ruled out any more that information technology will become something mandatory. Information technology learning compulsory psychology education is built to be; (1) the education section, (2) implemented, (3) controlled, and (4) evaluated for improvement to be more effective. Information technology is used not only as a companion but also as an integrated part of the psychological education process. Its very importance of continued innovation and adaptation in the field of psychology education, especially in light of ongoing technological advancements and changing societal needs.

Ethical considerations

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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