

# Effective and Professional Higher Education Management in the Era of Global Competition: A Case Study at Universidade De Dili Timor Leste

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**Abstract:** Professionalism in higher education delivery refers to the level of competence, ethics, and commitment demonstrated by all stakeholders within the institution, including lecturers, staff, and management. Professionalism encompasses aspects such as high performance standards, integrity, responsibility, and a focus on improving the quality of education and services. At Universidade de Dili, professionalism is a key factor in ensuring that all operational and academic aspects are run efficiently and effectively, and are able to compete globally. Aspects of professionalism in higher education delivery include lecturer and staff competence, ethics and integrity, commitment to professional development, good management and governance, and quality of service. At Universidade de Dili, the effectiveness of higher education delivery is the main benchmark in assessing the success of the institution in meeting the needs and expectations of stakeholders in the era of global competition. Aspects of effectiveness in higher education delivery include the quality of teaching and learning, research and publication results, community involvement and service, graduation rates and graduate absorption, stakeholder satisfaction, and operational efficiency.

**Keywords:** *Effective, Professional, Higher Education, Management, Global Competition: Universidade De Dili, Timor Leste*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In an era of complex globalization, technological advancement, and increasing demand for competent workers in various industries, universities around the world are required to provide high-quality education that is relevant to the development of science and technology, and is able to produce competitive graduates in the international job market (PARGARU et al., 2019; Zahrah et al., 2023). Higher education is expected to be the main pillar in preparing human resources who are intelligent, innovative, and ready to face global challenges (Huang, 2023; Mukhiyayeva et al., 2022; Postiglione, 2020). To remain competitive and relevant in the global arena, universities face the challenge of transforming their educational models to meet the needs of the world while maintaining standards of quality and professionalism. Therefore, understanding and implementing an effective and professional higher education model is very important.

The implementation of effective and professional higher education is becoming increasingly crucial in the era of global competence. Along with the development of technology and globalization, universities around the world are competing to improve the quality of their education. Factors such as relevant curriculum, adequate infrastructure and technology, high quality lecturers and staff, efficient financial management, good policies and governance, and international collaboration are very influential in determining the effectiveness and professionalism of the implementation of higher education (Malunga, 2022; Simangunsong, 2019; Tereshchenko & Padafet, 2023). The implementation of effective and professional higher education not only improves the quality of graduates, but also contributes to social, economic, and cultural development (Jovanović, 2023; Ofor-Douglas, 2022), has a significant impact on the quality of education, global competitiveness, and socio-economic development (Tran et al., 2023; Vachkova et al., 2022; Yue & Zhao, 2020). Effective

and professional higher education plays an important role in the global era by addressing the challenges posed by globalization and technological advances (Chowdhury et al., 2024; Jantoń-Drozdowska & Majewska, 2013; Karim et al., 2024), preparing culturally competent individuals to work collaboratively with diverse populations (Zhao et al., 2005), building the character of human resources (Ishomuddin, 2015). Universities must be able to adapt quickly to changes in the era of global competition and meet international standards. This means they must focus on developing skills that foster creative economic growth, address skills shortages, and support national development efforts.

As technology advances and job market needs change, universities must continue to develop relevant curricula, provide adequate infrastructure, and ensure high quality of faculty and staff (Karakolis et al., 2022; Voronin & Iontseva, 2021). Dynamic curricula and teaching are essential to ensure that graduates are prepared to face the challenges and opportunities of the global workforce. Advanced technological infrastructure supports more interactive and efficient teaching and learning processes. High quality faculty and staff ensure that the educational process runs well and produces competent graduates. Good financial management allows universities to allocate resources efficiently, while effective policies and governance ensure that universities operate transparently and accountably. In addition, international collaborations provide opportunities for students and faculty to learn from best practices in different countries and develop useful global networks.

This study examines how variables such as curriculum and teaching, infrastructure and technology, quality of lecturers and staff, financial management, policy and governance, and international collaboration affect the effectiveness and professionalism of higher education delivery at the Universidade de Dili. In general, the research problem is How can an effective and professional higher education delivery model be implemented at the Universidade de Dili in the era of global competition? Furthermore, this question is developed based on the focus of the research, so that the formulation of the problems proposed are: (1) How do the curriculum and teaching implemented at the Universidade de Dili affect the effectiveness of higher education delivery? (2) To what extent do the infrastructure and technology available at the Universidade de Dili contribute to professionalism in higher education delivery? (3) How does the quality of lecturers and staff (Quality of Faculty and Staff) affect the effectiveness of higher education delivery at the Universidade de Dili? (3) How does the financial management implemented at the Universidade de Dili affect professionalism in higher education delivery? (4) How do policies and governance at the Universidade de Dili affect the effectiveness of higher education delivery? (4) How does international collaboration carried out by Universidade de Dili affect professionalism in the provision of higher education?, and (5) How does the interaction between curriculum and teaching, infrastructure and technology, quality of lecturers and staff, financial management, policies and governance, and international collaboration affect the effectiveness and professionalism of the provision of higher education at Universidade de Dili?

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Effectiveness and professionalism in the provision of higher education are very important to achieve optimal educational goals. Effectiveness refers to the ability of a university to achieve desired outcomes, such as high graduation rates, increased research quality, and the development of relevant skills for students (Mattos et al., 2023; Yue & Zhao, 2020). Professionalism ensures that all processes and practices in education are carried out according to the highest standards, including ethics, integrity, and academic excellence (Das & Das, 2023; Jovanović, 2023). This is important to ensure that graduates are ready to face the global job market and are able to contribute positively to society. In this context, effective and professional universities are able to create a learning environment that supports the intellectual, emotional, and social development of students. This is important to produce graduates who not only have knowledge and skills, but also positive values and attitudes. In addition, professional universities also attract more quality students and staff, increasing their reputation and competitiveness at the global level. Many studies have discussed various aspects of higher education delivery. For example, studies on the importance of a curriculum that is relevant and responsive to changes in the labor market show that a good curriculum can increase graduate employability (Majdi, 2023; Moustafa et al., 2023). Research on the role of technological infrastructure in higher education found that the use of technology can increase interaction and collaboration between students and

lecturers, as well as support distance learning (Kamarudin, 2022). Infrastructure and technology play a vital role in higher education, influencing teaching, research, and the overall student experience. The integration of information technology infrastructure in universities has been shown to improve supply chain performance, support decision-making processes through big data management, and enhance student learning experiences (Ansari et al., 2022; Sukums et al., 2023). In addition, the use of technology in higher education institutions has been associated with improving access, equity, and quality of education (Jena & Das, 2024). Studies on the quality of lecturers and staff show that high-quality lecturers have a significant impact on student academic achievement (Simanjuntak & Tri Wahyuni, 2021).

Financial management in higher education involves aspects of financial autonomy (Hong, 2023), Total Quality Management (TQM) (Shafqat et al., 2021), strategic planning (Mwila, 2024) and electronic payment systems as part of efforts to improve the quality of financial management and sustainability of higher education institutions (Madu et al., 2022). All have not discussed financial management in relation to the effectiveness or professionalism of higher education administration. Meanwhile, research on the implementation of service governance policies during the Covid19 pandemic provides direct contributions to organizations in higher education (Tumoka, 2021) and systematic literature reviews on the dimensions of higher education service quality in international publications (Saiful Khozi & Hilmansyah, 2021). Existing research on international collaboration in higher education covers various important aspects in the development of educational institutions, including workforce strengthening (Porta et al., 2020), goals, models, and practices of international partnerships (Ma & Subbiondo, 2022), and dual agendas in international partnership programs (Kassie & Angervall, 2022). The relationship with the effectiveness and professionalism of higher education has not been directly studied. However, although many studies have discussed these aspects separately, there are still few studies that integrate all these variables into one comprehensive higher education delivery model. This study aims to fill this gap by developing a model that includes all important variables and testing it in a specific context, namely the Universidade de Dili in Timor Leste. This study attempts to fill this gap by developing an effective and professional higher education delivery model that includes various important variables. The case study of the Universidade de Dili in Timor Leste provides a unique context, given the specific challenges and opportunities faced by universities in developing countries. The novelty of this study lies in the integration of various important variables into one comprehensive model that can be applied in universities. This approach provides a holistic view of how various aspects of higher education delivery interact and contribute to effectiveness and professionalism. In addition, this study also focuses on the Universidade de Dili in Timor Leste, providing a unique and contextual perspective that is rarely discussed in the literature.

The selection of the University of Dili – Timor Leste as a case study in this study has several strong and relevant reasons. Since gaining independence in 2002, Timor Leste has experienced many changes in its education system. The University of Dili, as one of the main higher education institutions in the country, plays a significant role in shaping education policies and implementing academic programs that are in line with national development needs. The strategic role of the University of Dili in human resource development in Timor Leste makes it a relevant subject to examine how higher education institutions can adapt and thrive in a global context. Timor Leste, as a developing country, faces various challenges in improving the quality of its higher education, including limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and the need to improve the quality of lecturers and staff. Understanding how these variables play a role in this context can provide valuable insights for similar universities in other developing countries. Thus, the selection of Universitas de Dili – Timor Leste as a case study in this dissertation is not only relevant but also provides a comprehensive perspective on the dynamics and challenges of higher education delivery in the era of global competition. This study is expected to provide significant contributions to the development of an effective and professional higher education model, not only for Timor Leste but also for other developing countries. With the formulation of the problem and objectives that have been prepared, this study is expected to provide comprehensive guidance to improve the effectiveness and professionalism in the delivery of higher education, especially at Universidade de Dili, and in general in the context of developing countries.

## **2.1. Higher Education Management**

Higher education management studies how to manage and organize higher education institutions to achieve strategic goals. Higher education management requires more than conventional administration to maintain competitiveness, quality, and relevance at the global level. Rapid adaptation to global economic, social, and technological changes is the need for higher education in the era of globalization. This shows how important good management is to address these issues. Planning, organizing, directing, and controlling resources to achieve educational goals are all aspects of higher education management.

Higher education management focuses on achieving ideal outcomes, such as improving the quality of graduates, the relevance of the curriculum, and adequate learning experiences. This is known as effectiveness. However, higher education professionalism relates to the ethical standards, expertise, and responsibilities expected of faculty and management. Professionally managed institutions tend to be more responsive to industry and student demands and focus on continuous development. Therefore, professionalism and effectiveness complement each other; effectiveness in higher education management creates an environment of professionalism, and professionalism supports the achievement of effectiveness goals. The framework provided by higher education management theories, such as systems theory, contingency theory, organizational change theory, and transformational leadership theory, is used to understand and improve the quality of education.

## **2.2. System Theory**

An organization is viewed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy's system theory as a system consisting of various components that interact with each other to achieve certain goals. A university is a higher education system consisting of students, lecturers, administrative staff, curriculum, infrastructure, and management. Each of these elements is very important to achieve educational goals. System Theory emphasizes that these elements must work together to be effective and professional. For example, a good curriculum must be supported by qualified lecturers, adequate facilities, and created based on alumni feedback and industry needs. All these components must work together well and support each other for good results from management.

System theory emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach in managing higher education, where all elements must be well coordinated to produce the desired output. According to this theory, the effectiveness of a university is determined by how well these components work together to achieve common goals. The main components of a higher education system include curriculum, infrastructure, quality of faculty and staff, financial management, policy and governance, and international collaboration. Higher education effectiveness can be defined as the ability of a system to achieve educational goals through the effective management of its elements. In the context of professionalism, systems theory encourages collaboration between institutional units; this enables innovation and best practices. Organizations can identify and address issues that hinder performance and enhance professionalism by using a systemic approach. This allows them to adapt to changes in an era of global competition.

## **2.3. Contingency Theory**

According to contingency theory, there is no one ideal method of managing an organization, instead, the success of management depends on the specific situation and context. The specific organizational situation determines the level of management success. The environment, organizational culture, and internal structure influence how management operates. This theory in higher education suggests that effective management approaches can be tailored to the local socio-political, economic, technological, and cultural conditions of the university. Contingency theory emphasizes the flexibility and adaptability of management, and implements various strategies (differentiation) to address changes and problems.

Effectiveness can be achieved by responding to the unique needs of students, communities, and the job market. Professionalism in the context of contingency theory requires higher education managers to develop relevant skills and knowledge to face varying challenges. This creates a work environment that encourages increased competence and innovation, so that institutions can remain competitive at the global level.



## **2.4. Organizational Change Theory**

Organizational Change Theory, as proposed by Kurt Lewin, includes three main stages: unfreezing (unfreezing the status quo), changing (making changes), and refreezing (standardizing changes). This theory emphasizes the importance of preparing the organization for change, implementing the change, and ensuring that the change is sustainable. The unfreezing process involves identifying and assessing policies or practices that are no longer relevant or effective, preparing the university for change by communicating the reasons for the change and the expected benefits. The changing stage is the implementation of the change, which may include the introduction of new technology or innovative teaching methods. The refreezing stage ensures that the change is integrated into the culture of the organization and becomes standard practice.

Organizational change theory focuses on how higher education institutions can manage and adapt to change. The theory emphasizes the importance of change management to improve the effectiveness and professionalism of universities. The change process includes identifying what needs to be changed, planning, implementing, and evaluating. For successful implementation, all stakeholders must participate in the process, and effective leadership and communication are required. To remain competitive, universities must be able to adjust and adapt to changes in the global environment.

Often, higher education institutions need to make changes to improve efficiency. This includes making policy changes, incorporating new technology, and creating new curricula. Professionalism is closely tied to the success of organizational change. Education staff must be ready, adaptable, and committed to adapting and improving performance. Therefore, institutions that focus on change management can increase productivity and create a strong culture of professionalism.

## **2.5. Transformational Leadership Theory**

James MacGregor Burns created the theory of transformational leadership, which states that a transformational leader has the ability to inspire and motivate his followers to achieve greater goals. Innovation, morale enhancement, and a clear organizational vision are encouraged by these leaders. They also encourage students and staff through training, mentoring, and career development opportunities.

Transformational leadership consists of four main components: idealistic influence (idealistic influence), inspirational motivation (inspirational motivation), intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Transformational leaders are not just good managers; they are change agents who can encourage organizations to adapt and innovate.

Transformational leadership is essential in higher education to encourage change, innovation, and quality improvement. Transformational leaders are able to build a clear vision, motivate others, and create a collaborative and inclusive work environment. Universities can improve the professionalism and effectiveness of education through effective leadership.

Organizational effectiveness increases as a result of the innovation and collaboration encouraged by good leadership. The type of leadership applied greatly influences professionalism. Leaders who prioritize professional development and work ethic will create an environment that supports individual and organizational growth. The ability to lead well is essential to increasing productivity and professionalism in the increasingly competitive world of higher education.

## **2.6. Global Competition in Higher Education**

Competition between institutions in various countries to attract students, outstanding teachers, and other international resources is called global competition in higher education. If higher education institutions want to maintain or improve their position in the global arena, they must create strong differentiation and marketing strategies. The paradigm of higher education has been changed by globalization, which forces higher education institutions to adapt to international standards of management, research, and teaching (Altbach, 2004). Higher education must adapt to international standards, use new technologies, and become more competitive to achieve global competence.

In the context of effectiveness, global competition forces institutions to become more efficient in the use of resources, improve curricula, and apply new technologies in order to compete in the global market. Professionalism in higher education means that institutions must comply with international

standards in terms of teaching, research, and management. Global competition demands high professionalism from all parties involved, including lecturers, administrative staff, and management. Institutions that cannot meet these standards will find it difficult to compete globally. Some related theories include:

### **2.7. Global Competition Theory**

According to global competition theory, organizations, including higher education institutions, must compete on the international stage to attract students, staff, and resources. Globalization, technology, and global mobility drive this capability. To compete globally, higher education institutions must improve the quality and relevance of their programs. In the context of higher education, universities must compete for the best students, qualified teaching staff, and research funding, as well as academic reputation. This requires a strong approach to promoting education, establishing partnerships with international organizations, obtaining international accreditation, and ensuring that education is of high quality. Improving educational services, research, and international networks are part of the global competition strategy.

Effectiveness in this context can be measured through the achievement of academic and non-academic goals, such as graduation rates, graduate employability, and international research publications. Professionalism in global competition theory relates to how institutions prepare and engage staff and students in facing global challenges. Institutions must ensure that all members have the skills and knowledge necessary to compete in the global marketplace, and adhere to high ethical and professional standards.

### **2.8. Innovation Theory in Higher Education**

The innovation theory in higher education emphasizes that innovation is key to surviving and thriving in today's dynamic world. Innovation can include the development of new curricula, the use of new technologies, innovative teaching methods, and new management and leadership strategies. To face the challenges and opportunities that arise from the dynamics of globalization and technological advancement, innovation must be carried out. Innovation in higher education is not only limited to academics but also community development, management, and student services are also undergoing changes. This can include the use of digital technology in learning, the creation of study programs that are in line with industry demand, and the automation of operational processes. Innovative universities have the ability to adapt to rapid changes in the world of education and industry while providing students with a better education. The effectiveness of higher education can be improved through innovation by ensuring that learning and administrative processes become more efficient and relevant. Professionalism is also enhanced through innovation, as staff and lecturers need to continuously develop their skills and stay up-to-date with the latest developments in their fields. Institutions that encourage innovation will create a dynamic and progressive work environment, which in turn enhances their global reputation and competitiveness.

### **2.9. Theory of Internationalization of Higher Education**

The theory of internationalization of higher education states that it is important for higher education to consider international and intercultural aspects. Internationalization can include student and staff mobility, international research collaborations, and curriculum development that reflects an international perspective. This can be achieved through exchange programs, collaboration with foreign universities, and curriculum development that reflects an international perspective. Internationalization includes student and staff mobility, worldwide curriculum, international research collaborations, and building collaborations with educational institutions abroad. The purpose of internationalization is to improve the quality of education, broaden students' horizons, and prepare them to work in a diverse world.

The effectiveness of higher education is enhanced through internationalization by broadening the horizons and skills of students and staff, so that they are better prepared to face global challenges. Internationalization also fosters professionalism by setting global standards in education and research, and promoting cross-cultural cooperation and understanding.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Research Approach**

This study uses a mixed methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive picture of the model of effective and professional higher education delivery at Universidade de Dili in the era of global competition. A qualitative approach was used to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences, views, and perceptions of lecturers, staff, and students regarding the implementation of higher education at the Universidade de Dili. This method involves in-depth interviews and participant observation. While the quantitative approach is to measure research variables objectively through data collection using questionnaires. This study uses a case study design to understand in depth how independent variables (curriculum and teaching, infrastructure and technology, quality of lecturers and staff, financial management, policies and governance, and international collaboration) affect the effectiveness and professionalism in the implementation of higher education at the Universidade de Dili.

#### **3.2. Population and Sample**

The population of this study was all lecturers, administrative staff, students, and alumni at the Universidade de Dili, Timor Leste. The sample was taken using a purposive sampling technique, namely selecting respondents who were considered to be the most knowledgeable and experienced regarding the topic being studied. The selection of purposive samples was carried out to ensure that the data collected was relevant and informative, and represented various perspectives in the higher education environment at the Universidade de Dili. Purposive sampling allows researchers to obtain rich and in-depth data. A large sample size was selected to increase the validity and reliability of the research results. The sample consisted of 100 lecturers and administrative staff, and 200 students and alumni.

#### **3.3. Data Analysis Techniques**

Data collected from the questionnaire will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to identify patterns, relationships, and differences between variables. Data from interviews and FGDs will be analyzed qualitatively to gain deeper insights. The collected data were analyzed descriptively to describe the characteristics of the sample and the distribution of respondents to the research variables. Descriptive statistics used include frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. To test the research hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was used. This analysis is used to determine the extent to which independent variables (curriculum and teaching, infrastructure and technology, quality of lecturers and staff, financial management, policy and governance, international collaboration) affect the dependent variables (effectiveness of higher education delivery and professionalism in education delivery). and path analysis to understand the interactions between independent variables.

Descriptive analysis provides an overview of the data, while multiple regression analysis allows researchers to test the simultaneous effects of multiple independent variables on the dependent variable, providing a deeper understanding of the relationships between these variables. All statistical analyses were conducted using JASP 0.19.0 for Windows software.

To validate the results, triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of primary and secondary data to ensure consistency of findings. In addition, in-depth interviews with several key respondents were conducted to strengthen and validate the survey results. Data triangulation increases the internal validity of the study by comparing multiple data sources and data collection methods, and provides a more comprehensive and in-depth picture of the phenomenon being studied.

### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1. Implementation of Effective and Professional Higher Education**

Management strategies to improve the efficiency, quality, and relevance of the curriculum and educational programs are part of the implementation of effective and professional higher education. To achieve this goal, various strategies are used, including curriculum renewal, improving the quality of teaching, and developing human resources, including administrative staff and lecturers. To address

global dynamics and maintain relevance in higher education, universities must adopt innovative and adaptive management methods (Kezar 2014). The effectiveness and professionalism of higher education depend on a relevant curriculum, high-quality teaching, high-quality research, and optimal student services. The model to be created will be assisted by literature research on best practices in the implementation of higher education.

#### **4.2. Effectiveness of Higher Education**

The effectiveness of higher education includes the achievement of academic goals through effective resource management and effective learning processes. Graduation rates, increasing employability of graduates, quality of research, and student satisfaction levels are indicators of effectiveness. Effectiveness also includes the ability of the institution to adapt to change and innovation, optimal utilization of resources, such as teaching staff, facilities, technology, organizational performance achievements, and student satisfaction with academic and administrative services. To achieve educational goals, proper planning and implementation are needed. Effectiveness also includes the ability of the institution to adapt to change and innovation. Factors that influence effectiveness include the quality of teaching, relevant curriculum, adequate facilities, and good administrative support. Evaluation of effectiveness can be done through various indicators such as graduation rates, student satisfaction levels, and research results.

#### **4.3. Professionalism in Higher Education**

In higher education, professionalism means applying moral principles, honesty, and responsibility in all aspects of operations. Professionalism also means being committed to improving quality. Research ethics, effective teaching and administration, professional development, and transparency and accountability are some aspects of professionalism. It also means that universities must have clear policies and procedures to ensure that all members of the academic community adhere to high standards. Professionalism in higher education involves applying ethical standards and excellence in all aspects of university operations. Professionalism includes a commitment to continuous quality improvement, academic integrity, and adherence to a code of ethics. In addition, professionalism includes the implementation of transparent and accountable management practices, as well as the development and maintenance of staff and lecturer competencies.

#### **4.4. Educational Quality Theory (Total Quality Management/TQM in Education)**

TQM is an approach that emphasizes continuous improvement in the educational process with the participation of all parties. In higher education, TQM includes the involvement of all members of the organization, customer orientation (students), and the use of data for continuous improvement as an effort to improve overall quality. In addition, TQM includes the development of relevant curricula, improving the quality of teaching, and continuous evaluation of lecturer and student performance. The application of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles including a focus on customers (students and other stakeholders), a data-based approach to decision making, and a student-based approach in higher education can improve effectiveness and professionalism.

Effectiveness in higher education can be achieved through the application of TQM principles, such as customer (student) focus, continuous improvement, and data-driven decision making. Professionalism in the context of TQM means that all members of the institution are committed to high quality standards and are actively involved in the quality improvement process. By implementing TQM, institutions can enhance their reputation, improve educational outcomes, and ensure the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

#### **4.5. Previous Research and Its Differences with This Research**

Studies related to curriculum and teaching, infrastructure and technology, quality of faculty and staff, financial management, policy and governance, and international collaboration. Previous studies have examined the individual role of each variable, but rarely have they combined all of these variables in one model. This study is unique in that it integrates various aspects into one comprehensive framework and tests it in the context of Universidade de Dili in Timor Leste.



#### **4.6. Relationship Model between Independent and Dependent Variables**

This study aims to understand how curriculum and teaching, infrastructure and technology, quality of lecturers and staff, financial management, policy and governance, and international collaboration affect the effectiveness and professionalism in the implementation of higher education at Universidade de Dili. The independent variables in this study are:

a) Curriculum and Teaching

Curriculum and teaching are key components in the implementation of higher education that affect the effectiveness and professionalism of educational institutions. At Universidade de Dili, curriculum and teaching play a central role in determining the quality of education provided to students. A good curriculum must be relevant to the needs of industry and the development of science and support the achievement of competencies expected of students (Moustaffa, 2023; Rianto et al., 2022). Teaching, on the other hand, includes the process of how the material is delivered by lecturers and received by students (Musharianto & Aditya, 2022). Teaching includes the methods and techniques used by lecturers to deliver teaching materials (Rehman et al., 2013). The quality of teaching is influenced by the skills and competencies of lecturers and the pedagogical approaches applied (Kim Anh, 2024).

Curriculum and teaching are important parts of the higher education system, which determine the quality of graduates and the relevance of education to the needs of the global job market. A well-designed and competency-based curriculum can improve the quality of education. The curriculum should be designed to support active learning and authentic assessments that reflect the capabilities needed in the real world (Holliday et al., 2015; Murtaqiatusholihat et al., 2023). The curriculum in the era of globalization must consider cross-cultural competence and international perspectives (Leask, 2015).

Curriculum and teaching are key components in the provision of higher education that influence the effectiveness and professionalism of educational institutions. At Universidade de Dili, curriculum and teaching play a central role in determining the quality of education provided to students. The curriculum encompasses the entire learning plan prepared by the institution, including courses, teaching materials, and evaluation methods. The curriculum is a framework that guides teaching and learning. It covers various aspects such as educational objectives, course structure, teaching materials, and evaluation standards. A good curriculum should be developed in accordance with the results of periodic evaluations, relevant to the needs of industry and the job market, in accordance with scientific developments, and support the achievement of expected competencies from students. Teaching, on the other hand, includes the methods and techniques used by lecturers to deliver teaching materials that are acceptable to students. The quality of teaching is influenced by the skills and competencies of lecturers and the pedagogical approaches applied. Thus, it is important to know the innovations of lecturers in teaching and the use of technology in teaching. The relevance of the curriculum to the needs of industry and society, flexibility and ease of adaptation of the curriculum, involvement of lecturers, alumni, and industry in curriculum development, innovative and participatory teaching methods, and integration of technology in teaching are important in efforts to organize effective higher education.

b) Infrastructure and Technology

Infrastructure and technology are crucial components in organizing higher education that support the quality of the teaching and learning process and institutional management. Infrastructure includes physical facilities such as buildings, classrooms, laboratories, and other supporting facilities, learning environments that affect student learning experiences and lecturer performance. Adequate facilities support an optimal learning process and provide comfort for users. Technology includes hardware and software used to support learning, administration, and communication. Information and communication technology (ICT) available in educational institutions contributes to the effectiveness of teaching and learning as well as institutional administration. Both play an important role in creating an effective and efficient learning environment.

Infrastructure and technology play an important role in supporting the learning and administration process of higher education. According to Akinyemi and Bassey (2012), adequate infrastructure, including laboratory facilities, classrooms equipped with modern technology, and good internet

access, can improve the effectiveness of education. Information and communication technology (ICT) has become a vital component in higher education, enabling access to global educational resources and distance learning (Means et al., 2013). Educational infrastructure consists of physical facilities (classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and supporting facilities) and learning environments that affect student learning experiences and lecturer performance. Adequate facilities support optimal learning processes and provide comfort for users. Information and communication technology (ICT) available in educational institutions contributes to the effectiveness of teaching and learning as well as institutional administration. ICT includes hardware, software (LMS, MIS), network infrastructure (internet connection), and technical support. The availability and quality of physical facilities, accessibility and reliability of information and communication technology, and the use of ICT in the learning process will encourage the effectiveness and professionalism of higher education.

c) Quality of Lecturers and Staff

The quality of lecturers and staff is a key factor in determining the effectiveness and professionalism of higher education delivery. High-quality lecturers and staff play a key role in ensuring the achievement of educational goals, through effective teaching, quality research, and efficient administrative services. According to Ramsden (2003), lecturers who have pedagogical competence, high academic qualifications, and relevant professional experience can provide quality teaching. In addition, continuous training and development for lecturers and staff are essential to maintain professional standards (Knight et al., 2006).

The quality of lecturers includes academic qualifications, pedagogical skills, research and publication capabilities, and commitment to self-development and the institution. Quality lecturers not only have in-depth knowledge in their fields, but are also able to deliver materials effectively and support the intellectual development of students. The quality of administrative and support staff is essential to support the daily operations of educational institutions. Quality staff are able to provide efficient, friendly, and responsive services to the needs of lecturers, students, and other parties involved. The quality of staff includes educational qualifications, administrative skills, communication skills, and professional development. Academic qualifications, professional competence, motivation and job satisfaction, professional development, and performance of lecturers and staff are essential to ensure effective and professional institutional management.

d) Financial Management

Good financial management is a prerequisite for the sustainability and professionalism of higher education. According to Altbach et al. (2009), higher education institutions require effective financial management strategies to ensure optimal resource allocation and support academic programs. Transparency and accountability in financial management are also essential to build trust and credibility of the institution (Johnstone & Marcucci, 2010).

Financial management in higher education institutions is the process of managing financial resources to ensure sustainability and operational effectiveness and support the achievement of academic and administrative goals. Good financial management includes budget planning, efficiency in budget management, funding and sources of funds, accountability and transparency in the use of funds, and investment and management of assets. At Universidade de Dili, effective financial management is essential to ensure that the institution can operate efficiently and support various academic and non-academic activities.

e) Policy and Governance

Policies and governance in higher education institutions are essential foundations that influence all operational and academic aspects. Policies include the rules, procedures and guidelines established to guide the activities of the institution, while governance refers to the systems and processes used to manage and oversee the institution. At Universidade de Dili, effective and transparent policies and governance are key to achieving educational goals, ensuring accountability and building trust among stakeholders (Amaral et al., 2002). According to the OECD (2008), good governance includes efficient organisational structures, participatory decision-making and effective oversight.

Policies cover a wide range of areas, including academic, administrative, financial, and ethical. Good policies are formulated by considering the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders and are implemented consistently to achieve the goals of the institution. Good governance involves a clear organizational structure, appropriate distribution of responsibilities, and oversight and accountability mechanisms. Effective governance ensures that decisions are made in a transparent and participatory manner, and that the institution is managed efficiently and responsibly. Governance includes organizational structure, decision-making, oversight and accountability, and transparency. A clear organizational structure, clarity and consistency of policies, stakeholder participation in the decision-making process, transparency and accountability in governance, and effective policy implementation will encourage effective and professional higher education.

f) International Collaboration

International collaboration is an important aspect in the era of globalization that can improve the professionalism of higher education. This collaboration can include student and lecturer exchange programs, joint research, and strategic partnerships with foreign educational institutions (Knight, 2004). International collaboration can broaden global horizons, improve the quality of education, and strengthen academic networks (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

International collaboration in higher education institutions is an effort to build relationships and cooperation with institutions, organizations, and individuals abroad. The main purpose of international collaboration is to improve the quality of education, research, and community service through the exchange of knowledge, culture, resources, and technology. At Universidade de Dili, international collaboration is one of the important strategies to face the challenges of globalization and increase competitiveness at the international level. Aspects of international collaboration include student and lecturer exchanges, research, publications and conferences, curriculum development, mobility and connectivity. The number and quality of international partnerships, mobility of students and staff (lecturers, education personnel), collaboration in research and international publications will have an impact on the professionalism of higher education.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The effectiveness of higher education delivery refers to the extent to which higher education institutions are able to achieve their goals and missions, and provide significant positive impacts on students, staff, and the wider community. This effectiveness covers various aspects, ranging from the quality of teaching and learning, research output, social contribution, to operational efficiency. At Universidade de Dili, the effectiveness of higher education delivery is the main benchmark in assessing the success of institutions in meeting the needs and expectations of stakeholders in the era of global competition. Aspects of the effectiveness of higher education delivery include the quality of teaching and learning, research and publication output, community involvement and service, graduation rates and graduate absorption, stakeholder satisfaction, and operational efficiency.

The quality of curriculum and teaching, research and publications of lecturers and students, graduation rates (completion of studies on time), improvement of student competencies (competencies relevant to the job market), student and alumni satisfaction, and achievement of institutional targets and accreditation are important parameters of the effectiveness of higher education delivery.

Professionalism in higher education delivery refers to the level of competence, ethics, and commitment demonstrated by all stakeholders within the institution, including lecturers, staff, and management. Professionalism encompasses various aspects such as high performance standards, integrity, responsibility, and a focus on improving the quality of education and services. At Universidade de Dili, professionalism is a key factor in ensuring that all operational and academic aspects are run efficiently and effectively, and are able to compete at a global level. Aspects of professionalism in the provision of higher education include the competence of lecturers and staff, ethics and integrity, commitment to professional development, good management and governance, and quality of service.

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