

IMPROVING GRADUATE OUTCOMES THROUGH EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL FINANCE MANAGEMENT

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Abstract :

This research aims to examine the role of effective financial management in improving the quality of graduates in faculties at universities. Using qualitative research methods based on postpositivist ideology, this research uses inductive analysis to explore the natural state of objects, focusing on meaning rather than generalizations. The findings show that appropriate allocation of funds for the development and maintenance of educational infrastructure, such as laboratories, libraries and comfortable classrooms, is positively correlated with the quality of graduates. Additionally, effective financial management is directly related to the availability of educational resources. Stakeholder engagement, including government, society, and the private sector, plays a critical role in improving graduate outcomes. The research results show that graduates in faculties at universities are well prepared to enter the world of work, have a strong work ethic, and show a high level of creativity.

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran pengelolaan keuangan yang efektif dalam meningkatkan kualitas lulusan di fakultas pada perguruan tinggi. Dengan menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif yang didasarkan pada ideologi postpositivis, penelitian ini menggunakan analisis induktif untuk mengeksplorasi keadaan alami objek, dengan fokus pada makna daripada generalisasi. Temuannya menunjukkan bahwa alokasi dana yang tepat untuk pengembangan dan pemeliharaan infrastruktur pendidikan, seperti laboratorium, perpustakaan, dan ruang kelas yang nyaman, berkorelasi positif dengan kualitas lulusan. Selain itu, pengelolaan keuangan yang efektif berhubungan langsung dengan ketersediaan sumber daya pendidikan. Keterlibatan pemangku kepentingan, termasuk pemerintah, masyarakat, dan sektor swasta, memainkan peran penting dalam meningkatkan hasil lulusan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lulusan di fakultas pada perguruan tinggi dipersiapkan dengan baik untuk memasuki dunia kerja, memiliki etos kerja yang kuat, dan menunjukkan tingkat kreativitas yang tinggi.

INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in efforts to develop human resources because it can change a person's perspective and behavior from a negative direction to a positive and useful direction, and from this perspective and behavior a person can determine the quality of his resources (Abbas et al., 2024; Sabokro et al., 2021). The Indonesian education system must be able to compete with other countries in terms of goods, services, finance and human resource development (Indrawati & Kuncoro, 2021; Qutni et al., 2021; Sanjani et al., 2024). The Indonesian education system is currently facing more serious and complicated problems (Muktamar et al., 2024; Baharun et al., 2024; Fatimah & Shohib, 2023). With a score of 0.617 in 2011, Indonesia was ranked 124th out of 187 countries in this study. In ASEAN, Indonesia is in sixth position, behind Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. It is true that the state of education in the world today influences how a nation develops. Due to the fact that education is critical to developing high-quality human capital and maintaining competitiveness, factors such as faculty, expenses, and financial aid are all very important.

The ability to improve human resource standards is a requirement to realize the goals of a highly competitive national education system in an era of open and unlimited competition throughout the world (Hermawan & Arifin, 2021; Shaddiq & Irpan, 2023; Zuhdi et al., 2024). To produce innovation and new achievements, education must truly be a top priority, especially in universities where graduates must be able to compete in society (Etzkowitz et al., 2022; Faiz et al., 2023). Our country's higher education system continues to fall short of its Southeast Asian neighbors in terms of quality. Finance is one of the key factors in the quality of education (Shaturaev, 2021; Ziolo, 2021; Sanjani, 2024). Any problems with education can sometimes be traced back to funding, especially when it comes to school funding.

Previous research highlights the persistent issue of the unequal distribution of education and educational funding, which remains a significant challenge for educational institutions, particularly in developing countries. This disparity affects nearly every aspect of education, underscoring the crucial role of financial resources in the effective implementation of higher education (Maphalala & Adigun, 2021). Education costs and their management are fundamental to achieving educational objectives (Chankseliani et al., 2021), as the operational viability of educational efforts is closely tied to financial inputs (Inga et al., 2021). In contrast to industrialized nations where the state typically bears the responsibility for funding education (Mintz, 2021), developing countries often prioritize increasing local budgets and exploring diverse financing methods to support educational advancement (Hassan et al., 2022). This approach necessitates serious commitment from political leaders to enable the creation of robust education systems that can drive regional development (Dimmock et al., 2021). However, many regions still struggle to meet legal requirements, leading to a continued reliance on traditional methods and insufficient progress in reforming education systems.

While previous research has extensively explored the challenges related

to the unequal distribution of education and educational funding, particularly in developing countries, several critical gaps remain. There is limited understanding of the specific mechanisms through which funding disparities directly impact educational quality and outcomes in different regional contexts. Most studies have generalized the issue without delving into the unique socio-economic and political factors that influence education funding at a local level. Addressing these research gaps could contribute to a more nuanced understanding of education funding challenges and inform the development of targeted policies and practices to enhance educational equity and quality across diverse contexts.

This research introduces novelty contributions to the field of education funding and equity. It provides a context-specific analysis of funding mechanisms, exploring unique socio-economic and political factors at the local level, which have been overlooked in previous studies. By investigating innovative financing strategies such as public-private partnerships and community-based models, the research offers new insights into bridging the funding gap.

The objective of this research is to evaluate the role of effective financial management in enhancing the quality of graduates from the Faculty of Islamic Religion at the University of Muhammadiyah Bandung. The research seeks to explore innovative financing strategies that can bridge the funding gap and assess their long-term effects on educational equity and quality. Additionally, this study intends to investigate the political dynamics and governance structures that play a critical role in the successful implementation of education funding policies. By adopting a comparative approach, this research is expected to contribute best practices from research findings that can be adapted to improve education funding models.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research aims to present the results of an analysis of education financing management in improving the quality of graduates at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, Muhammadiyah University, Bandung. This research is included in the qualitative research category, using inductive or qualitative analysis which emphasizes meaning rather than generalization in its findings (Caggiano & Weber, 2023). Qualitative research methodology based on postpositivist theory is used to examine existing natural conditions. With this approach, this research seeks to identify specific factors that influence education financing and how these factors impact the quality of graduates.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, which enabled researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the financing management processes and strategies at the faculty (Wutich et al., 2021). In this research, interviews were conducted involving one leader and one financial staff at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, Muhammadiyah University, Bandung. Observations are carried out to see directly how the financing management process is carried out, while documentation includes collecting and analyzing documents relevant to

education financing. With this approach, this research seeks to identify specific factors that influence education financing and how these factors impact the quality of graduates, as well as providing in-depth insight into best practices in education financing management that can be applied to improve the quality of education in higher education.

Data analysis in this research involves a data reduction process to select relevant main points (McMullin, 2023). Data reduction, carried out simultaneously during data collection, facilitates retrieval and coding of certain aspects. Presentation of data, carried out through matrices, diagrams or graphs, maps data systematically for analysis and drawing conclusions. Conclusions are drawn by testing the correctness and suitability of the meaning of the data, ensuring validity through checking different sources and techniques. Qualitative data analysis using inductive methods is used to conclude the dynamics of relationships between phenomena, with the validity of the data guaranteed through triangulation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Education financing management is very important because it plays a crucial role in determining the quality and accessibility of education (Demir et al., 2021; Chankseliani et al., 2021; Ulumuddin et al., 2023). With effective financing management, educational institutions can strategically allocate funds to improve educational infrastructure, facilities, and technology. These investments create a better learning environment, support innovative teaching methodologies, and provide adequate educational resources (Ulumuddin, 2023; Moyo & McKenna, 2021; Baharun, 2024). All of these aspects contribute to improving the quality of education and student learning outcomes, ensuring that education is not only of higher quality but also more accessible to different levels of society. Thus, good financing management is the key to achieving effective and sustainable education.

Wise allocation of funds allows faculty to build financial reserves, deal with budget fluctuations, and make necessary adjustments to maintain the continuity of the educational process (Salmi & D'Addio, 2021; Benigno et al., 2022). It also supports professional development for teachers and staff through continuous training and learning, which in turn improves the quality of teaching and student learning experience. By focusing funds on the right priorities and implementing strict supervision, the Faculty of Islamic Religion of the University of Muhammadiyah Bandung can maximize the positive impact of education investment, improve the quality of graduates, and ensure that all students receive the quality education they need to succeed in the world of work and society. An emphasis on effective financing management will support the achievement of these goals by optimizing existing resources, improving educational facilities, and ensuring high-quality teaching.

Improving Educational Infrastructure

Improving educational infrastructure is a crucial factor in efforts to improve the quality of education and the quality of graduates. The appropriate

allocation of funds for the development and maintenance of infrastructure, such as laboratories, libraries, comfortable classrooms, and information technology facilities, is positively related to a more effective teaching and learning process (Asiyai, 2022; Fomba et al., 2023). Adequate infrastructure not only supports academic activities but also increases students' motivation to learn and facilitates the development of practical skills needed in the world of work. Additionally, a good infrastructure allows teachers to implement innovative and interactive learning methods, which can improve student understanding and engagement. In the context of higher education, adequate facilities also support research and development activities, which ultimately contributes to the improvement of the reputation of such educational institutions. Therefore, investment in educational infrastructure is a very important long-term investment to achieve the goal of quality and highly competitive education.

"Educational infrastructure plays a very important role in improving the quality of education. Adequate facilities, such as laboratories, libraries, and comfortable classrooms, can support a more effective teaching and learning process. For example, with good laboratories, students can conduct experiments and hands-on practice that deepen their understanding." (I-dk, 12/4)

The results of the interview revealed that educational infrastructure plays a crucial role in improving the quality of education. Adequate facilities, such as laboratories, libraries, and comfortable classrooms, greatly support a more effective teaching and learning process. The resource person explained that with a good laboratory, students can conduct experiments and hands-on practice, which deepens their understanding of the subject matter. This is in line with the expression by one of the employees who stated that the existence of adequate facilities and fulfilled infrastructure can affect the quality of service and graduates.

"We have made several significant improvements, including classroom renovations, the addition of multimedia facilities, and the purchase of the latest books for the library. This improvement allows for a more interactive learning process and supports more varied teaching methods. For example, with multimedia facilities, lecturers can use various media to explain the material in a more interesting and clear way." (I-pg, 14/4)

The results of the interviews show that the improvement of educational infrastructure significantly contributes to the improvement of the quality of education. Adequate facilities, such as laboratories, libraries, and comfortable classrooms, are essential to support an effective teaching and learning process. Classroom renovations, the addition of multimedia facilities, and the purchase of the latest books have created a more interactive learning environment and supported a variety of teaching methods. With multimedia facilities, lecturers can use various media to explain the material in a more interesting and clear way,

which in turn deepens students' understanding. This infrastructure upgrade not only enriches the learning experience but also increases the effectiveness of teaching, demonstrating how vital the role of good infrastructure is in achieving the goal of quality education.

The improvement of educational infrastructure has been proven to significantly improve the quality of education through its influence on the teaching-learning process and student motivation. Research by Osaigbovo & Osaigbovo, (2021) shows that adequate educational facilities, such as modern laboratories, well-equipped libraries, and comfortable classrooms, have a positive impact on student learning outcomes. The study emphasizes that the renovation of facilities and the addition of technology, such as multimedia facilities, allows for more dynamic and interactive teaching. Technology applied in teaching not only helps lecturers in delivering material more effectively but also increases student engagement in the learning process. This improvement is in line with the finding that good facilities encourage students to participate more actively and delve deeper into the subject matter, ultimately contributing to the achievement of better educational goals and higher academic outcomes.

Financial Management and Resource Availability

Effective financial management plays an important role in ensuring the availability of adequate resources for educational institutions. Wise budget allocation and management allow institutions to prioritize spending on crucial aspects such as educational facilities, staff training, and the purchase of teaching materials. With good financial management, institutions can optimize the use of funds to improve the quality of resources, such as modernizing laboratory equipment, updating library collections, and improving infrastructure. In addition, efficient financial management also ensures the existence of a reserve fund to deal with budget fluctuations and unexpected crises. This not only supports the smooth running of day-to-day operations but also ensures that all aspects of education get the attention they deserve. With the availability of guaranteed resources, educational institutions can create a better learning environment, support the professional development of staff, and improve the learning experience of students, ultimately contributing to the achievement of higher educational goals.

Effective financial management at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, University of Muhammadiyah Bandung is very crucial in an effort to improve the quality of graduates. With the right allocation of funds for educational needs, such as facility renovations, the purchase of the latest educational technology, and training for teachers, these faculties can create a learning environment that is conducive to the development of students' skills. The availability of adequate resources allows the faculty to provide quality facilities, such as modern laboratories and a well-equipped library, which directly contributes to improving the quality of learning in the Faculty of Islamic Studies. In addition, investment in training and professional development for teaching staff ensures that they have the latest skills and knowledge to deliver effective and relevant teaching. With good financial management, the Faculty of Islamic Religion,

University of Muhammadiyah Bandung not only supports daily operations but also improves the quality of education received by students. As a result, graduates from this faculty, who have received a quality education in a resource-rich environment, will be better prepared to face the challenges of the world of work and make a more significant contribution in their professional fields, as well as have the competitive advantages necessary to succeed in an ever-evolving society.

"Effective financial management greatly affects the availability of resources in our faculty. We always ensure that existing funds are allocated wisely for a variety of purposes, from facility renovations to the purchase of teaching equipment and materials. With careful budget planning, we can prioritize urgent needs and avoid waste." (I-keu, 16/4)

The results of the interviews show that effective financial management in the Faculty of Islamic Religion, University of Muhammadiyah Bandung has a significant impact on the availability of resources. Good financial management ensures that available funds are used wisely for a variety of important purposes, including facility renovations, equipment purchases, and teaching materials. A well-thought-out budget planning process allows faculty to prioritize urgent needs and minimize waste. In this way, the allocation of funds becomes more strategic and efficient, supporting optimal resource management and ensuring that the necessary educational facilities and teaching materials are available to support the teaching and learning process. It also helps in creating a conducive educational environment and preventing potential problems that can arise due to lack of funds or ineffective management.

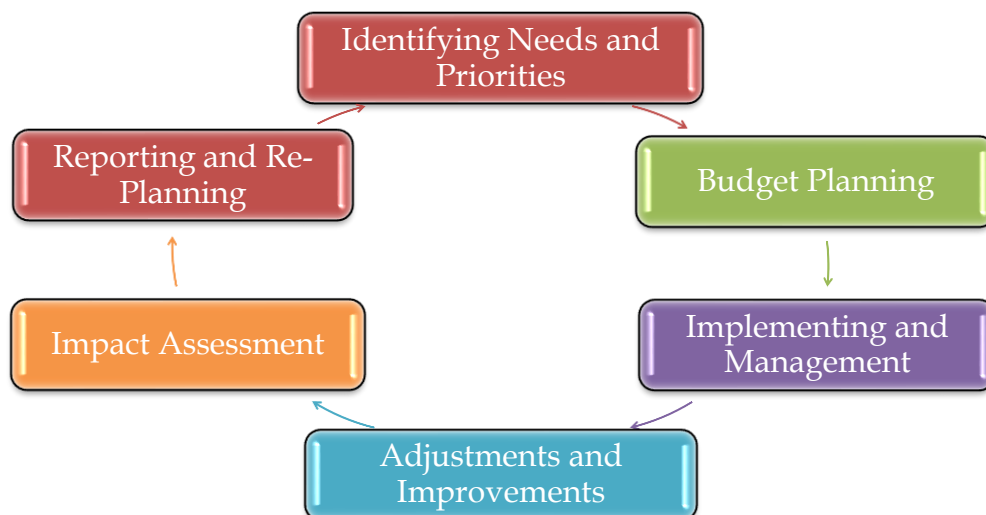


Figure 1 Financial Management Cycle

The Financial Management and Resource Availability Cycle at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, University of Muhammadiyah Bandung consists of interrelated steps to ensure the efficient and optimal use of funds. Starting with the Identification of Needs and Priorities, the process includes data collection

through interviews, observations, and document analysis to assess faculty needs and identify areas that need urgent attention. In the Budget Planning stage, the budget is prepared to allocate funds for facility renovations, equipment purchases, and training, so that top priorities can be accommodated effectively (Abbas et al., 2024; Sabokro et al., 2021). Furthermore, in the Implementation and Management stage, funds are used in accordance with the budget plan, followed by monitoring and evaluation to ensure the right allocation of funds and address issues that arise. Adjustments and Improvements are made to overcome shortcomings or changes in needs, while Impact Evaluation assesses the contribution of investment to the quality of education and graduate outcomes. Finally, Reporting and Replanning compiles a report on the results of the evaluation and budget adjustments for the next period, helping to plan for better use of funds in the future. With this cycle, faculty can effectively manage finances and resources, support the development of facilities and programs, and improve the quality of education and graduate outcomes.

Stakeholder Involvement in the Financing Process

Stakeholder involvement in the education financing process plays a very important role in ensuring the success and sustainability of education programs. Stakeholders, including governments, communities, private institutions, and non-governmental organizations, contribute to the funding and management of educational resources. With the support of these various parties, educational institutions can access more diverse and adequate funds, which allow them to meet the necessary infrastructure, technology, and training needs. Stakeholder engagement also ensures that various perspectives and community needs are considered in decision-making regarding budget allocation and education priorities. In addition, active participation from stakeholders strengthens transparency and accountability in fund management, as well as creates beneficial synergies in designing and implementing education policies.

The involvement of stakeholders in the financing process at the Faculty of Islamic Studies, University of Muhammadiyah Bandung has a significant impact on the quality of education by expanding available resources and increasing the effectiveness of the use of funds. Through collaboration between the government, the private sector, and the community, faculty can gain support in the form of funding, facilities, and expertise, which not only enriches the learning experience but also allows for innovation in teaching methods and curriculum. Actively engaged stakeholders assist faculty in identifying and addressing challenges faced, as well as providing constructive feedback for continuous improvement. This support creates strategic partnership opportunities that expand networking and opportunities for students, such as internships and scholarships, increasing their readiness to enter the workforce. By engaging stakeholders effectively, the Faculty of Islamic Studies, University of Muhammadiyah Bandung can build mutually beneficial relationships, create a more dynamic learning environment, and ensure the productive use of resources to improve the quality of education and graduate outcomes.

"The involvement of stakeholders in our faculty has a great influence on improving the quality of education. We work closely with various parties, including the government, the private sector, and the community, to get the necessary support. For example, we often receive assistance from the government in the form of grants that are used for the renovation of facilities and the purchase of educational equipment." (I-dk, 11/4)

The results of the interviews show that the involvement of stakeholders in the Faculty of Islamic Religion, University of Muhammadiyah Bandung has a significant impact on improving the quality of education. Collaboration with various parties, including the government, the private sector, and the community, allows faculty to obtain various forms of crucial support. Assistance from the government, in the form of grants, is used for the renovation of facilities and the purchase of educational equipment, which directly improves learning and teaching conditions. The renovation of the facility helped to create a more comfortable and modern educational environment, while the purchase of new educational equipment allowed for the implementation of more effective and innovative teaching methods.

"Support from stakeholders has a big positive impact. With better facilities and the latest technology, the learning process has become more interactive and effective. Students have access to a range of resources that support their academic and professional development. For example, internships and scholarships provided through this partnership help them better prepare for the world of work" (I-pgw, 15/4)

The results of the interview revealed that the involvement of stakeholders in the Faculty of Islamic Religion, University of Muhammadiyah Bandung had a significant positive impact on improving the quality of education. Collaboration with the government, the private sector, and the community allows faculty to obtain much-needed support, such as grants for facility renovations and the purchase of educational equipment. This support improves infrastructure and introduces the latest technology, which makes the learning process more interactive and effective. Enhanced facilities and access to a wide range of resources enhance students' learning experience, facilitating their academic and professional development. In addition, the internship and scholarship programs provided through this partnership provide practical opportunities for students to prepare for the world of work, showing how stakeholder engagement not only enriches the educational environment but also supports students' career readiness.

The involvement of stakeholders in education plays a crucial role in improving the quality of education and the effectiveness of learning. Research by Dey and Berkley (2022) shows that collaboration with various external parties such as the government and the private sector can expand access to resources needed for the improvement of educational infrastructure and technology. This is in line with the findings put forward by Smith and Clark (2021), who

emphasized that external support such as grants not only improves facilities but also improves the quality of teaching by introducing innovations in the teaching and learning process. Another study by Johnson et al. (2023) identified that strategic partnerships, including internship and scholarship programs, provide students with valuable practical opportunities for their career readiness, which supports better academic and professional outcomes. These findings support the results of interviews that show that stakeholder engagement significantly enriches students' learning experiences and facilitates their development, and proves that collaborative approaches can optimize the impact of support on education.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the discussion on Improving Educational Infrastructure, Financial Management and Resource Availability, as well as Stakeholder Involvement in the Financing Process at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, University of Muhammadiyah Bandung shows that these three aspects synergistically contribute to improving the quality of education. Improving educational infrastructure, through facility renovation and technology addition, creates a learning environment that is more supportive of the teaching and learning process. Effective financial management ensures the right allocation of funds for various needs, so that the availability of resources such as facilities and training for teachers can be well maintained. Stakeholder engagement, including government, the private sector, and the community, expands available resources and supports a range of educational initiatives, such as internship and scholarship programs, which are instrumental in improving student readiness for the workforce. The integration of these three aspects helps the Faculty of Islamic Studies, University of Muhammadiyah Bandung in creating a better educational experience, improving graduate outcomes, and facilitating the academic and professional development of students.

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