

Transforming to a Democratic Islamic University: An Application of Futuristic Approaches

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Abstract. *Change is a double-edged knife. It is both beneficial and harmful. A changing organization must first recognize the needs for change before planning a radical transformation. However, some organizations can fail to identify and devise effective measures to transform since the transforming layers are beyond overt variables: such as the aspects of ideology and metaphors. This paper is dealing with the need for change in a private university in Indonesia. Unsuccessful effort to manage the change has produced unproductive conflicts in the university. To generate an effective transformation plan, the researchers employed, ethnography, an embedded participant observation, to gather rich data. Followed by a combination of two futuristic methods namely Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) and backcasting to deeply comprehend the fabrics of the present, generate an alternative and preferred future, and present ideal measures to actualize the preferred future along with potential risks. The result suggests the university to transform all covert and overt layers in concert to be a progressive democratic Islamic university.*

Keywords. *Causal Layered Analysis; Backcasting; Democratic University; Transformation*

Abstrak. Perubahan adalah pisau bermata dua. Ia bermanfaat sekaligus berbahaya. Organisasi yang berubah harus terlebih dahulu mengenali kebutuhan akan perubahan sebelum merencanakan transformasi yang mengakar. Beberapa organisasi dapat gagal mengidentifikasi dan merancang langkah-langkah efektif untuk mentransformasi karena aspek-aspek yang ingin dirubah berada di luar variabel yang terlihat: seperti aspek ideologi dan metafora. Penelitian ini mengkaji tentang perlunya perubahan di sebuah universitas swasta Islam di Indonesia. Upaya yang tidak berhasil untuk mengelola perubahan telah menghasilkan konflik yang tidak produktif di universitas tersebut. Untuk mengatasi masalah itu serta menghasilkan rencana transformasi yang efektif, peneliti menggunakan, etnografi, suatu pengamatan partisipan yang mendalam, untuk mengumpulkan data yang kaya pada konteks penelitian. Dilanjutkan dengan kombinasi dua metode *futuristic* yaitu *Causal Layered Analysis* (CLA) dan *backcasting* untuk memahami secara mendalam keadaan masa kini, menghasilkan alternatif dan masa depan yang diharapkan, dan menyajikan langkah-langkah ideal untuk melakukan transformasi. Hasil penelitian menemukan bahwa universitas harus mengubah semua lapisan yang terlihat maupun yang kasat mata untuk dapat menjadi menjadi sebuah universitas Islam yang maju dan demokratis.

Kata Kunci. *Causal Layered Analysis, Backcasting, Universitas Demokratis, Perubahan*

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A. INTRODUCTION

There has been a number of significant movement of resistance among academia against neoliberalism in the last few years. In 2018, for example, two separate

mobilization of people sparked in the two of the most economically prospered countries on earth. The first is student-led protest which was participated by American students advocating for gun control (Witt, 2019). Although at the beginning many observers doubt the magnitude of this movement, the protesters prove them wrong by successfully assembling almost one million students at Washington DC. In other part of the world and in the same year, staffs from 65 UK's universities were protesting for the amendment of pension fund policy (Burns, 2018). The strike took two weeks of teaching days before it stopped, but its length is sufficient to break the record of the strikes' length and generated an outcry from the students over the incapacity of the universities to make for the lost teaching days. While it is not captured by mainstream global media outlets, resistant movements also take place across the world.

These resistant movements challenge the status quo, creating an uncertainty of our future. There has been studies advocating the need for rethinking the current organization system and proposing prophecies of what could happen in the near future as the aftermath of the widespread resistant movements (Bleiklie, 2018; Golden, 2018; Hursh, 2018). One thing for sure is the logic of neoliberalism or free market can no longer be fully accepted if we are to pursue a prosperous world for all.

This article, however, focuses on a smaller unit of analysis which is the vertical conflicts in an Islamic private university in Malang, Indonesia. The university was established in the 1960s and is one of the best university in the province. One of the conflict factors is that there is a discrepancy in the perception of the university's fundamental educational purposes between the university leaderships, which are largely senior staff, and the collective, which consists of the remaining academic staff and the students. To be the leading international university in Indonesia, the university is forced to reshape their management to be competitive in the Indonesian higher education market, and simultaneously correspond with the highest standards in government audits (Mulya, 2016). Surely, this is by no means the greater adaptation of the university management to neoliberal orientations. These neoliberal orientations have been challenged by the collective that perceives the shortcomings of this economically focused worldview. While the positive changes such as making it easier for graduates to get a job and more accountability among the lecturers, the university have become bureaucratic and mechanistic. The university has been perceived as a factory rather than a safe learning community for students to develop their potentials and social sensitiveness (Khoja-Moolji, 2017). In contrast, what the collective aspires to is to replace the current 'factory' system with a more humanist and participatory or democratic organizational system that opens the possibilities for aspirations, deep reflection and innovation (Wijaya Mulya, 2018).

The critical issue is that each party has not demonstrated willingness for resolution. The leadership exercise their power to force their agenda while neglecting the collective's aspirations. Conversely, the collective has taken a passive stance since past disputes and protests have resulted staff redundancies and student expels. Simultaneously, many students have left and lecturers have resign because of dissatisfactions. The level of turnover in the university is high in both the staff and the students in the last four years with almost no new academic staff despite staff shortage and around half of the students typically left in the fourth semester. These conditions potentially damage the university reputation and lower the university's grade in the

accreditation that will take place in 2020. This article will incorporate a future method called Causal Layered Analysis to generate a deep analysis of the present condition. Subsequently, the article offers a set of steps to achieve a new future through backcasting method.

Based on the issues discussed above, there are two main research questions in the present study. The first is, "What is the current situation in the university and what is a more ideal picture in the future?" The second and last research question is, "What are the required measures achieve the preferred future?"

B. METHOD

The present research employs two types of qualitative research methodology which are ethnography and foresight methods. Ethnography or embedded-observations is incorporated to obtain rich data from the research site. The researchers took four months (from March to June) to gather relevant data. The ethnographical data was then became the resource for analysis. Foresight methods analyze the fabrics of the present for the multitude purposes of reading and questioning the future, mapping the alternatives of the future and presenting scenarios which may alter the future. Specifically, this study incorporates two specific foresight methods called Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) and backcasting. Each foresight methods will be elaborated as follow.

C. RESULT AND DISSCUSSION

Causal Layered Analysis

The term Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) was coined by Inayatullah (1998, 2004) as an alternative future method. Inayatullah (1998) suggests that, unlike other future methods that emphasize one of the knowledge episteme (i.e., positivist, interactionism, post-positivism) and reads the pattern of the present, CLA is an eclectic 'post-structural approach' that aims to transform the future. CLA begins the transformation by first revealing the layers that shape the present, subsequently it transforms the future by offering novel layers that will reshape the future. These layers are litany, system, worldview and metaphor/myth. Litany is the facts or what appears at the surface, system is a set of rules that limit and allow what appears in litany, worldview is the fundamental way of knowing that overrides the rules or systems, and metaphor/myth is the hidden analogue narratives concealed in our deepest consciousness. According to CLA, metaphor is the most imperative layer because it dictates the visible layers (i.e., worldview, system, and litany) often without us being aware of it (Inayatullah, 1998, 2004; Inayatullah et al., 2016). Therefore, to transform the future is to reveal the metaphor/myth of the present, and to propose a novel metaphor/myth to embrace. This article will incorporate CLA to understand the layers that generate the conflict in the university, and propose novel layers to commence a transformation into the preferred future.

Backcasting

CLA alone is insufficient for a futurist to establish the alternative future (Inayatullah, 1998). Since CLA is imaginative and emphasizes on the abstraction of the reality, it falls short in devising feasible plans to achieve the alternative or preferred future resulted in CLA. Therefore, another future strategy, backcasting, is employed to develop strategic plans to achieve the preferred future. Backcasting refers to "a method

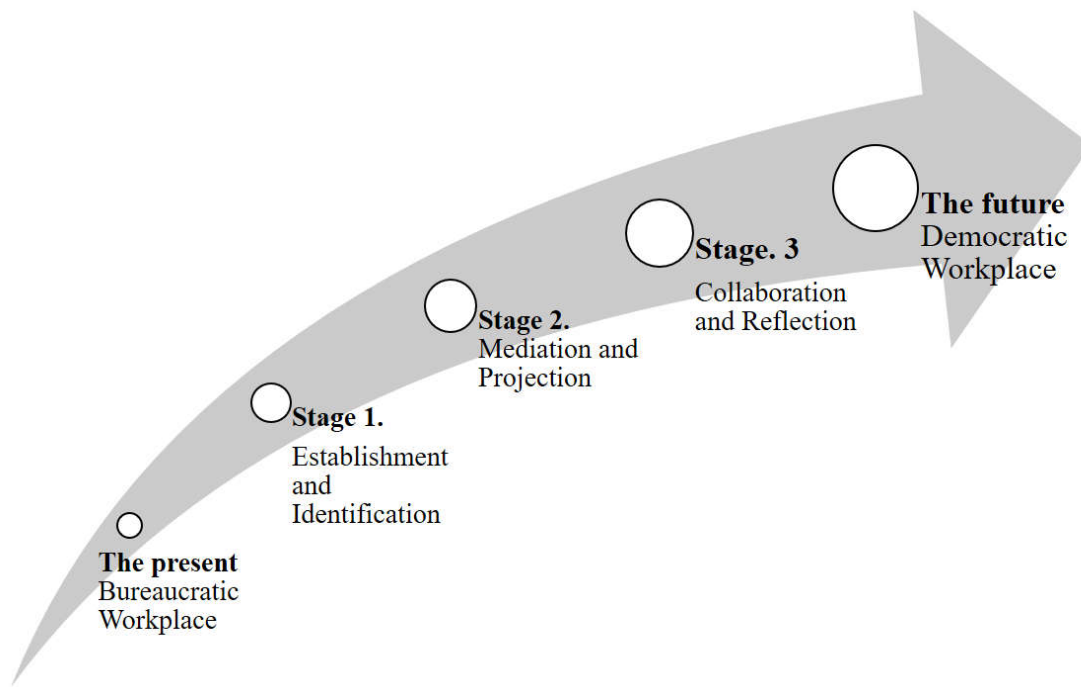
in which the future desired conditions are envisioned and steps are then defined to attain those conditions” (Holmberg & Robèrt, 2000, p. 294). Since backcasting move backward from the desired future, it enables one to formulate transformative plans toward the novel future rather than plans that in the direction of the status quo (Dreborg, 1996). Since the preferred future is the destination, it should be defined clearly.

The result of CLA is depicted in Table 1. The table consists of three columns and the middle and the right column conveniently aid the comparison of the layers of the present and the future. This table allows the reader and the future researcher to comprehend the connection and the alteration from the present into the future layers.

Table 1. The CLA of the present and the future

The level of layers	The present layers	The future layers
Litany layer	<i>Conflicts and Conflicts</i> The parties hurt each other using any means. The leadership incorporates their authority to force the collective, and the collective passively react due to detrimental experience in the past disputes.	<i>Democratic Workplace</i> Everyone works together. All stakeholders in the university are the equal participants of a working community. They aspire to be the leading psychology university in Indonesia. They successfully manage the diversity of ideas to innovate.
System layer	<i>Carrot and Stick</i> In the leadership side, punishment for rebellion and reward for the collective’s submission. In the collective side, resignation is the only available system for sounding dissatisfaction.	<i>Participatory Learning</i> The windows of participation are open for everyone. The system allows all stakeholders, regardless their positions, to contribute in relatively equal positions. There is a recognition that the system serves the people.
Worldview layer	<i>Neoliberal-Individual</i> university is a factory. The leaderships are the boss and the student and staff are employees.	<i>Socialism</i> We live to achieve a greater good for all people. No one is left behind in that everyone shares successes.
Metaphors layer	<i>David versus Goliath</i> We are eternal enemies. Either David, the hero, dies, or Goliath, the unjust king, dies.	<i>Hansel and Gretel</i> Partners in a survival mission and collaboratively work against the witch. They are also related by ‘blood’.

The preferred future envisioned in this article is derived from the result of the CLA (see table 1, the rightest column). The backcaster will aim to form a democratic organization system in the university. This means that the university can manage the diversity of aspirations and work toward a broader and more imperative university members' aspiration. This university realizes that it has to work together to face the competition ahead while it also understands the dehumanizing effect of the previous 'factory system'. More importantly, the university members no longer see themselves as either David or Goliath, but Hansel and Gretel. They are now partners in a survival mission instead of enemies. Using backcasting, the immediate condition that triggers this novel future is identified (see graph 1). Notice the steps that are required to move from the present to the future.



Graph 1. The backcasting result

Put the result of backcasting (graph 1) into words, three stages are necessary to transform the present. The first stage is establishment and identification. This stage establish a third party that works as neutral observers and they identify the aspirations and perceptions of both conflicting groups. The second stage, mediation and projection, refers to mediational conversations of the two groups to deal with the conflict. The metaphor 'Hansel and Gretel' can be used to appreciate the formulation of democratic organization system while also recognizing the market competition. This stage also facilitate the projection of university members' aspirations. Derived from these aspirations, collaborative ideas and projects can be proposed. Finally the last stage is collaboration and reflection. In this stage, all university members blend in many projects that are developed in the previous stage. They then reflect on the whole process of transformation. These stages of transformation requires new roles and resources to ensure the success of these stages. Following sections will discuss these new roles and resources at each stages.

Establishment and Identification

New Role

At the first stage, a new role is established and it is neutral observers. The neutral observers consist of any of the students, the academic staff or part of the leadership. They identify themselves as 'neutral'. The neutrality helps in making the conflicting parties to be open for communication with the neutral observers (Wall Jr, Stark, & Standifer, 2001).

New resource

Since being neutral observers is a not function of their formal tasks, the neutral observers must allocate two resources, which are their time and emotions, to communicate with the members of the parties to identify the aspirations of both parties. The information gathered will be used to identify some common ground between the parties' aspirations.

Mediation and Projection

New role

At the next stage, the neutral observers take a new role, which is a mediator. This means they facilitate constructive communication between the two conflicting parties. By constructive, the communication should focus on projecting positive possibilities if a reconciliation is reached. The mediation can propose ideas and projects that address the aspirations and enable the collaboration among all of the university members.

New resource

The mediators may propose some organizational development activities that focus on providing essential resources for effective conflict management. These resources are positive attitudes toward conflicts, and knowledge and skills of conflict management. Examples of activities in conflict management are 'good listening' trainings, 'creating Win-Win solution' workshops, and 'dealing with strong feeling' courses.

Collaboration and Reflection

New role

At the last stage, the mediators transform into co-leaders of collaboration. They facilitate the implementation of ideas and projects that are proposed in the previous stage. The mediators also diagnose the progress of the mediation process and introduce measures for any emerging issues.

New resource

Based on the processes that have been undergone by university members, new organization system is discussed. This new system is a democratic system that allows greater participation of university members in decision making. Novel programs may be introduced as part of the new system. For example, university forum is functioned to listen to aspirations and generate key decisions by university members and university.

Challenges and Opportunities

Some challenges potentially arise in the transformation process. Firstly, conflict resolution is not easy. It requires the conflicting parties to be transparent about themselves and put trust to conflict resolution (Fisher, 1983; Wall Jr et al., 2001). The leadership may think that they have to negotiate for reducing their authority while the collective is afraid of the possibilities that the mediation fails and it puts them in a worst

place. Secondly, this article proposes democratic workplace as the future litany with 'socialism' as the new worldview that may yield challenges to many university members. Neoliberalism has been the logic of the global world or a 'taken-for-granted common sense' for most people (Harvey, 2007). Thus, while democratic workplace and socialism are perceived to be ideal in this article, they are foreign notions for many Indonesian. The university members may not be ready for the new system and worldview. Taken all together, the proposed transformation is radical. Such transformation can fail because resistances from those who feel uncertainties (Burnes, 2011; Todnem By, 2005).

However, the transformation also offers some opportunities. By having a more democratic system, the university opens for many ideas that possibly generate 'out of the box' projects. While the democratic system may increase the time needed for decision making, the morale of the university members can be increased since they feel appreciation to their aspirations. The rate of turnover among staff and students may be greatly reduced and it is beneficial for the university. The university have more human resources to achieve its goal and strive further in the market competition. More students also mean more monies for the university. Finally, the time needed to transform is planned to be ten months. This time frame is considered to be sufficient for the transformation to take place and soon enough to ensure the result can be achieved before a new academic year. To help comprehend the whole transformation better, we present some potential changes, risks along with opportunities which are critical to anticipate issues in implementing the plans resulted in backcasting.

Changes, risks, and opportunities of all stages

As suggested by Rahim (2002), one of many key factors to resolve conflicts is communication. Unfortunately, the current situation at the university is not an ideal space for communication. Due to the conflict, it appears that bridging the two conflicting parties is almost impossible. Therefore, there is a need of another party which can help to intervene. Indeed, this party should be formed. This is the main objective of the Establishment and Identification stage.

On the Establishment and Identification stage, a party of neutral subjects are gathered to establish a third party. This party will be the key player in resolving the conflicts that we have understood so far. The first task of the the third party is to be neutral observers which objectively and comprehensively uncover the aspirations of the two poles. These aspirations are needed to be the basis for the next stage. To establish the third party and identify the conflicting parties' aspirations is the first critical step. Since this party is neutral, both conflicting parties can communicate more openly to the third party.

The third party requires new resources to be incorporated. Indeed, since this party is informally established and the member of this party is a volunteer, there is no financial incentives and, possibly, time allocation for their works. Thus, the third party shall sacrifice their personal spare time. Along with time issue, the third party, which was involved to no initial conflict, has to be emotionally invested to the conflict resolution process. Both of this demanded resources may render the third party inconvenient.

However, the third party can be suspected by both conflicting parties as promoting other interests. The two conflicting parties may assume the existence of the third party as partisan to either one side, or neither of the sides and, thus, a new interest

party. The third party, then, must draw a clear boundary in which the members of the third party should understand and follow. This boundary can help the third party to appear as completely neutral to both the conflicting parties.

Subsequently, after its credibility established, the third party may commence the next stage which is mediation and generation. Credibility and integrity of the mediators is integral for generating faith among the conflicting parties toward the third or mediator party (Wall, 2001). This stage is most fundamental stage since it is the ultimate purpose of the third party to bridge the reconciliation between the two conflicting parties while producing a compromise.

The third party approaches both conflicting parties and set a mediation meeting for both parties to gather. In this meeting, the third party plays the role of a mediator in which they help the conflicting parties to set aside their differences and primarily focus on matters that are important for both parties.

This mediation meeting can fail and it must be anticipated. The conflicting parties may not be ready for a compromise and so they are firm with their previous position. The tension between the two conflicting parties can be escalated to a higher degree and leaves the conflict bigger than before. Consequently, the mediators must develop skills of conflict management and, ideally, develop the same skills to both conflicting parties. The skills are expected to enhance the outcome of the mediation

If the mediation succeed, it is assumed that conflict is resolved through the shift of focus. While it is each party's interest as the focus before, the party's interest will be replaced with a collective aspiration. These aspiration shall encompass novel ideas, systems that are more inclusive and more acceptable.

Finally, the third party arrive at the last stage of the conflict resolution which is the stage of collaboration and reflection. Collaboration aims to embed all members of both conflicting parties to work together. Their collaboration is directed to achieving the established collective experience. All members of the university shall reflect on their experience to enable more future collaborative works. In this phase, it is expected that all there is no more divisions and all members are becoming one again.

However, some members may respond differently to the novel condition. Perhaps, they lose their dominance or power and so they unable to access resources which are accessible for them previously. Changes are not always render a positive effect for everyone and, therefore, some are reluctant for changes (Burnes, 2011). As a consequence, these members may try to recreate the previous situation by reviving the divisions among the united, collective party for their interest.

To anticipate this issue, the self-interested member must be identified and be approached. Their interests than can be classified. For interest that may not be beneficial it must be negotiated, conversely, interest that may not be in conflict with the collective aspiration can be absorbed for the enhancement of the novel aspiration. There is no way for a democratic organization to exist without the appreciation of the minor aspirations in the mind of the majorities in the organization.

D. CONCLUSION

This article set out to solve the conflict between two parties in the university and transform the bureaucratic university into a democratic university. These goals are achieved through several steps. A causal layered analysis is conducted to understand the

causal layers of the present and to formulate novel layers of the alternative future. New metaphor 'Hensel and Gretel' is offered to replace the 'David and Goliath' to accomplish an alternative future of democratic-workplace. The future is radically different than the status quo in which in the future, the university puts collegialism above managerialism. This alternative future is subsequently used in backcasting analysis to develop conditions or steps that are necessary to achieve the alternative future. Three conditions or steps are proposed. They are establishment and identification, mediation and projection, and collaboration and reflection. These three steps focus on a conflict resolution and collective work among the university members to embrace the alternative future.

Recommendations

While transformation is risky, it is necessary and it presents opportunities that are beneficial for the university. The university can grow to be more proficient in dealing with intergroup conflicts and establishes a democratic working culture and system that allows greater participation of all university members. This future may increase the morale of university members so the university can retain more resources (humans and monies), and stimulate creative ideas and projects to meet the demand of the market competition.

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