

The strategic role of the senate in leadership selection in higher education institutions: A case study of UIN Sunan Kalijaga

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the strategic role of the Senate in the selection of leadership at UIN Sunan Kalijaga. This research critiques the reduction of the Senate's authority due to recent regulatory changes and examines how these changes affect leadership selection and governance in higher education institutions. This research employs a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative document analysis and quantitative survey methods. Key documents such as Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 68/2015 and related decrees were analyzed. Additionally, a survey was distributed to Senate members to assess their perceptions of the regulatory changes and their effects on the leadership selection process. The findings reveal that the reduced authority of the Senate significantly impacts the transparency and accountability of the leadership election process. Senate members express concerns that external political influences and bureaucratic involvement have undermined the meritocratic values that traditionally guided leadership selection. The study is limited to a case study of UIN Sunan Kalijaga, which may not fully represent other Islamic universities. Future research should explore the effects of similar regulatory changes in different institutional contexts to enhance generalizability. This research provides a critical perspective on the effects of governmental intervention in academic governance, particularly in leadership elections at Islamic higher education institutions. It highlights the tension between maintaining academic autonomy and the influence of external regulations.

Keywords: Senate role, Leadership election, Higher education governance, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Academic autonomy, Islamic universities.

1. Introduction

The strategic role of the academic senate in leadership elections at higher education institutions has become a key concern in the study of higher education governance¹. In many universities, the senate functions not only as an academic oversight body but also as a decision-making entity in the election of top leadership, including rectors or deans. However, how the senate plays its strategic role in this process still requires thorough examination, especially in the context of Islamic universities, such as UIN Sunan Kalijaga. Existing studies often focus on general universities, while the literature on the senate's role in faith-based institutions remains limited in international discussions. This raises questions about how the strategic role of the senate is enacted in leadership elections at UIN Sunan Kalijaga and what factors influence the senate's decisions².

Shattock³ Shattock asserts that the active involvement of the senate in university governance can strengthen leadership quality and enhance institutional accountability. Higher education institutions

Syahrul, "Readines Frame: Analisis Kerangka Kesiapan Dalam Transformasi Pendidikan Tinggi (Pengalaman IAIN Kendari)," *Jurnal*¹

Al-Ta'dib 9, no. 1 (2016): 162–80.

Altbach, Philip G. *The Globalization of Higher Education: Challenges for the Academy and Nation-States*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins²

University Press, 2009).

M. Shattock, "University Governance: Trends, Patterns, and Implications.," *Higher Education Quarterly* 3, no. 2 (2013): 111–27,³

<https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2013.771867>.

have become a focal point for public sector organizations. Higher education governance has become a major concern in the 21st century. The practices of public accountability governance are often adopted by various public sector organizations, with higher education institutions being one example⁴. These institutions are educational establishments that provide learning services to society in order to master advanced knowledge. Universities serve as agents of change, capable of promoting and pioneering transformation in various aspects toward a modern society. In line with these changing demands, universities must enhance their quality orientation, particularly in the selection of leadership⁵ such as rectors.

The dynamics of leadership elections in higher education institutions reflect the complexity of internal political interactions. Research indicates that senate members are often involved in power negotiations and political alliances to support certain candidates in leadership elections. This phenomenon shows that leadership elections are not always based on academic achievements or institutional vision, but also involve personal and group political interests within the senate⁶. Research on UIN Sunan Kalijaga is important to understand how internal political interests influence the senate's decisions in leadership elections and whether this is consistent with the academic values upheld by the institution. The senate is often regarded as a body with great responsibility to ensure that the election process is conducted fairly and transparently. However, in many cases, this process is criticized for its lack of transparency and for external influences, such as government or other institutions, that may affect the election outcome⁷.

The balance between institutional autonomy and external intervention is one of the challenges in university leadership elections. In some countries, particularly in Asia, including Indonesia, the government still plays a major role in determining university leadership, either directly or indirectly⁸. At UIN Sunan Kalijaga, as a public Islamic higher education institution, significant involvement from the relevant ministries or the central government could be a factor influencing the election process. Therefore, this issue will examine how the senate maintains the university's autonomy in leadership elections amid potential external interventions.

In Indonesia, the role of the university senate in rector elections is governed by several regulations, including Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 14 of 2014. This regulation grants the senate significant authority in selecting and recommending rector candidates. However, the issuance of Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 68 of 2015, followed by technical guidelines outlined in Directorate General of Islamic Education Decrees No. 7293 of 2015 and No. 3151 of 2020, reduced the senate's authority in the rector election process. The senate's role was limited to providing qualitative assessments of the rector candidates, without directly influencing the final decision. These regulatory changes have raised concerns among academics regarding the transparency and accountability of the rector election process in higher education institutions⁹. Good University Governance (GUG) is the foundation of educational management in universities as modern organizations. According to the Directorate General of Higher Education (DIKTI), GUG aims to ensure that universities are accountable institutions. The principle of accountability is closely tied to the university's mission of fulfilling its governmental mandate¹⁰.

As a body that holds a strategic role in the selection of academic leadership, the university senate is responsible for maintaining the integrity of the rector election process. At UIN Sunan Kalijaga, prior to regulatory changes, the senate played a central role in the rector selection process by assessing the

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- Aristanti Widyaningsih, "Model Penilaian Implementasi," no. July (2020): 1491–1509.⁴
 Kadek Hengki Primayana, "Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia Dalam Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan Di Perguruan Tinggi," *Jurnal* ⁵
Penjaminan Mutu 1, no. 2 (2016): 7, <https://doi.org/10.25078/jpm.v1i2.45>.
 Clark, Burton R, *The Higher Education System: Academic Organization in Cross-National Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California ⁶
 Press, 1983).
 De Boer, Harry, Jon File, dan Liudvika Leisyte, "Governance Reforms and Organizational Responses," *Higher Education Quarterly* 86 ⁷
 2 (2014): 133–50.
 Johan P Ollsen Peter Maassen, *University Dynamics and European Integration* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007).⁸
 Kementerian Agama RI., "Peraturan Menteri Agama Nomor 68 Tahun 2015: Pengangkatan Dan Pemberhentian Rektor Dan Ketua ⁹
 Pada Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Yang Diselenggarakan Oleh Pemerintah." (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama RI, 2015).
 Khoirul Fuad and Hani Apriyanti, Werdi, "Implementasi Good University Governance (Gug) Pada Perguruan Tinggi Islam ¹⁰
 Swastadi Jawa Tengah," *Majalah Ilmiah Solusi* 16, no. 1 (2018): 148–76.

academic, managerial, and moral competencies of rector candidates. However, after the regulatory change, the senate's recommendations became less binding, with the final decision resting with the Ministry of Religious Affairs¹¹. This shift has led to concerns about potential political interference in the leadership selection process.

The diminishing role of the senate in rector elections mirrors a global trend where governments are increasingly involved in university governance. Research by Goedegebuure et al. (2009) in Europe shows that universities with senate involvement in leadership selection tend to have greater institutional stability. The involvement of the senate in academic leadership selection allows for a more transparent and meritocratic process¹².

In several universities in the United States and Canada, the senate continues to play an important role in ensuring that academic leaders are chosen based on competency rather than political interests. Jones¹³ argues that universities that maintain an active senate in decision-making processes are more successful in achieving their academic and administrative goals. This governance model allows universities to better safeguard their autonomy from external interference.

On the other hand, Marginson¹⁴ on the other hand, Marginson highlights that universities that preserve autonomy through a strong senate are better equipped to navigate political and bureaucratic challenges. In the context of UIN Sunan Kalijaga, the restriction of the senate's role in rector elections has raised concerns that selected candidates may not fully meet the university's academic and strategic needs.

In the international context, a study by De Boer et al¹⁵ points out that government intervention in university leadership elections often results in excessive bureaucratization and reduces academic independence. This has also occurred at UIN Sunan Kalijaga following the enactment of new regulations, where the senate's role in rector elections has been further diminished. This reduction in the senate's authority has the potential to lower accountability in the selection process and increase the risk of politicization.

Before the regulatory changes, the senate at UIN Sunan Kalijaga had full authority in providing recommendations for rector candidates, assessed from their academic competence and moral integrity. However, after the regulatory changes, the senate's role was limited to qualitative recommendations that did not influence the final decision. This has raised concerns that the rector election process has become more bureaucratic and less transparent¹⁶.

In the process of rector elections, the university senate bears a significant responsibility to ensure that the selected leader can safeguard academic autonomy and lead the university in facing global challenges. Nugroho¹⁷ states that without the full involvement of the senate, the rector selection process risks becoming more closed and vulnerable to conflicts of interest.

A strong university senate plays a crucial role in maintaining good and sustainable governance¹⁸. Berdahl dan Altbach¹⁹ have shown that universities with fully empowered senates in rector elections are generally more successful in maintaining leadership quality. An active senate helps to prevent political influences that could compromise institutional integrity.

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- Kementerian Agama RI., "Peraturan Menteri Agama Nomor 1 Tahun 2023. Judul: Perubahan Tentang Pengangkatan Dan¹¹ Pemberhentian Rektor Pada Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Yang Diselenggarakan Oleh Pemerintah." (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama RI, 2023).
- D. Bruce Johnstone, Madeleine B. d'Ambrosio, and Paul J. Yakoboski, "Higher Education in a Global Society," *Higher Education in a*¹² *Global Society*, 2010, 1–224, <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781849805315>.
- Jones Glen A, "Academic Governance in North American Universities: Perspectives and Challenges," *Journal of Higher Education*¹³ *Management* 88, no. 2 (2017): 35–50, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2017.1252259>.
- Simon Marginson, "Higher Education in the Global Knowledge Economy," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 2, no. 5 (2010):¹⁴ 6962–80, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.05.049>.
- Harry de Boer, "Bureaucratic and Political Influences on University Governance: A Cross-National Comparison," *Higher Education*¹⁵ *Policy* 23, no. 1 (2010): 67–82, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1057/hep.2010.25>.
- J Boer, H. F. D., & File, "High Education Governance Reforms across Europe," *Higher Education*, 2009, 32,¹⁶ http://www.utwente.nl/cheps/publications/Publications2009/C9HdB101_MODERN_PROJECT_REPORT.pdf.
- Riant Nugroho, *Tata Kelola Perguruan Tinggi: Mengelola Universitas Di Era Globalisasi* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2020).¹⁷
- Sihite and Saleh, "Peran Kepemimpinan Dalam Meningkatkan Daya Saing Perguruan Tinggi: Tinjauan Konseptua."¹⁸
- Garnet Grosjean Hans G. Schuetze, William Bruneau and, *University Reform and Governance in Higher Education*, ed. Heejin Park¹⁹ (Los Angeles: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

One example of the senate's success in rector elections can be observed in universities across Europe and the United States. There, the election of academic leaders overseen by the senate has produced leaders who are better able to meet the challenges of global higher education. This model underscores the importance of the senate's role in maintaining the academic and administrative quality of universities²⁰.

With the regulatory changes at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, rectors selected through a more bureaucratic process are perceived as less capable of meeting the university's strategic demands. This is due to the senate's limited role in providing a thorough evaluation of candidates, particularly in terms of their moral integrity and academic vision²¹.

In the context of higher education, a fully functioning university senate plays a crucial role in ensuring that the selection process for academic leadership is transparent and meritocratic²². This enables the university to ensure that the selected leaders truly possess the competencies needed to lead the institution.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze how the strategic role of the senate in leadership selection at UIN Sunan Kalijaga can be reinforced, especially after the regulatory changes that limit the senate's role. By strengthening the senate's role, the university can better ensure that the selected leader is an individual with a clear academic vision, a strong track record, and the ability to meet global challenges.

2. Method

The qualitative approach was conducted through an analysis of related documents, such as the Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 68 of 2015 and technical guidelines through the Directorate General of Islamic Education Decrees No. 7293 of 2015 and No. 3151 of 2020, which focus on regulatory changes regarding the senate's role in rector elections. This approach is essential to understand how these regulations affect institutional governance and the senate's role.

Meanwhile, the quantitative approach was carried out by distributing questionnaires to members of the senate at UIN Sunan Kalijaga. These questionnaires were designed to measure the senate members' perceptions of the impact of regulatory changes on the rector election process, the quality of the selected leadership, and the level of transparency and accountability in the process. Relevant references for this mixed-method research approach can be found in Creswell's²³ studies, which advocate for the use of a mixed-method approach to explore complex social phenomena requiring triangulation between quantitative and qualitative data in a single study.

This research used purposive sampling to select participants, namely members of the senate at UIN Sunan Kalijaga who were directly involved in the rector election process before and after the regulatory changes. This technique ensures that the collected data comes from sources with deep knowledge and direct experience relevant to the study. References on purposive sampling can be found in Patton's research²⁴ which explains that this method is ideal for qualitative research that requires the selection of participants based on specific experiences or characteristics.

Qualitative data were collected through document analysis and semi-structured interviews with senate members. The document analysis was conducted by evaluating the regulatory changes related to the rector election and the senate's role. Interviews were used to explore senate members' views on these changes. Quantitative data were gathered through a questionnaire designed to measure senate members' perceptions of transparency, accountability, and the impact of new regulations on leadership quality. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale to ensure clearly measurable and quantitative results. This data collection method aligns with Yin's approach²⁵, who recommends combining interviews and document analysis for research focused on policy changes and their impact on institutional structures.

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- Glen A, "Academic Governance in North American Universities: Perspectives and Challenges."²⁰
 Harry de Boer, "Bureaucratic and Political Influences on University Governance: A Cross-National Comparison." 76²¹
 Sulistyowati Irianto, *Otonomi Perguruan Tinggi Suatu Keniscayaan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2012).²²
 J. W Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Sage Publications, 4th ed., vol. 4 (Los Angeles, ²³ 2014).
 M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*, Sage Publications, vol. 3 (Thousand Oaks, California, 2002).²⁴
 R. K. Yin, *Applications of Case Study Research*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2011).²⁵

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, developed by Braun & Clarke²⁶, to identify the main themes emerging from the interview and document data. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS statistical software, focusing on descriptive statistics to understand the participants' general perceptions. To ensure research validity, data triangulation techniques were employed between interview results, document analysis, and questionnaire outcomes. The reliability of the instruments was tested using Cronbach's Alpha to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire responses, following the guidelines provided by George & Mallery²⁷.

3. Result and Discussion

The results of the questionnaire collected from the senators of UIN Sunan Kalijaga and the senators of Islamic Religious State Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) provide deep insights into their perceptions and experiences regarding the strategic role of the senate in the selection of leaders at higher education institutions. Several key themes emerged from the analysis of this questionnaire data, including the level of knowledge about regulations, assessments of the changes in the senate's role, positive aspects of the senate's role, areas needing improvement, and additional suggestions proposed by the senators.

Level of Knowledge Regarding Regulations (PMA No. 11 of 2014 and PMA No. 68 of 2015) Most respondents indicated that they had a relatively high level of understanding of the regulations governing leadership elections in higher education institutions. The majority of respondents stated that they were either "familiar" or "quite familiar" with PMA No. 11 of 2014 and PMA No. 68 of 2015. This suggests that the senators are well aware of the legal framework that shapes the rector election process at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, which serves as the foundation for carrying out their duties.

Assessment of the Changes in the Senate's Role in Leadership Elections. One of the key questions in the questionnaire focused on how senators viewed the changes in the senate's role in rector elections after the enactment of PMA No. 68 of 2015, compared to PMA No. 11 of 2014. This can be seen in the graph below:

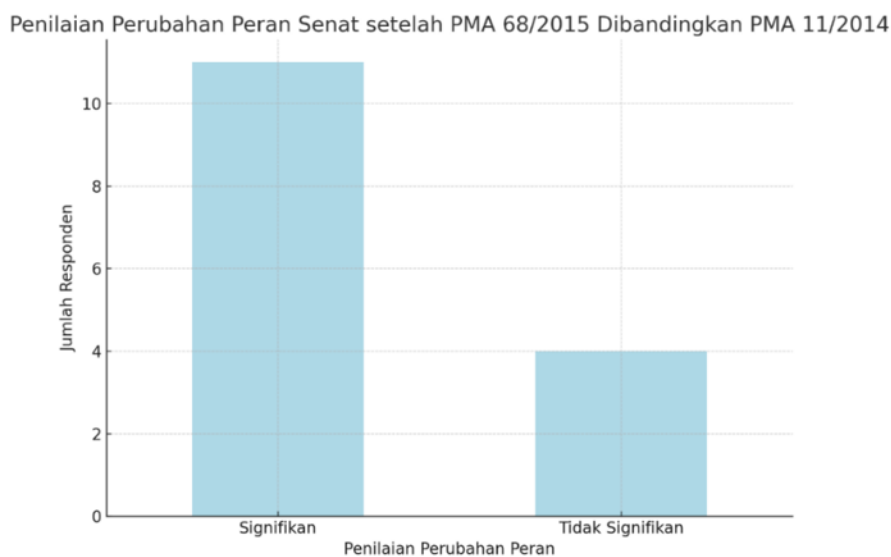


Figure 1.

Based on the graph displaying the results of the senate's role assessment after the enactment of PMA No. 68 of 2015 compared to PMA No. 11 of 2014, several important insights can be drawn

V Braun, V., & Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101, ²⁶
<https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a>.

P. George, D., & Mallery, *SPSS for Windows Step by Step: A Simple Guide and Reference*, 4th ed. (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2003).²⁷

regarding the perceptions of UIN Sunan Kalijaga senators. The Majority See Significant Changes: The graph shows that most respondents assessed the changes in the senate's role as "Significant," including categories such as "Very Significant," "Significant," and "Quite Significant." This indicates that the majority of senators felt that the implementation of PMA No. 68 of 2015 had a substantial impact on their role in the rector election process. They likely experienced a significant shift in the mechanism of senate involvement, both in terms of authority, responsibility, and internal dynamics they encountered.

This perception suggests that the new regulation has indeed changed how the senate functions within the university governance system. Senators who saw the changes as significant were likely responding to a clearer or more structured shift in power or responsibility, possibly in terms of providing recommendations or deeper involvement in the selection process.

On the other hand, a small number of respondents perceived the changes in the senate's role as "Not Significant." Senators in this group felt that despite the introduction of new regulations, there were no substantial changes in day-to-day practices or real influence on rector elections. They may have observed that although there were regulatory changes, the practical implementation did not experience meaningful change, or they might still face similar challenges as before.

Next, the research findings on PTKIN's assessment of changes in the senate's role after the enactment of PMA No. 68/2015 compared to PMA No. 11/2014 are shown in the following graph:

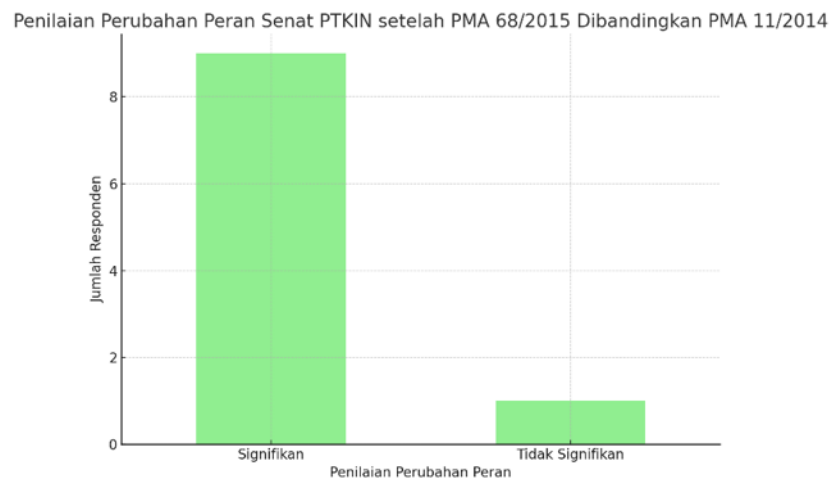


Figure 2.

The PTKIN in the graph above assessed the changes in the senate's role as "Significant" after the enactment of PMA No. 68 of 2015 compared to PMA No. 11 of 2014. The majority of senators felt that this new regulation had a tangible impact on their role in the rector election process. This reflects a recognition that this regulatory change has influenced both the authority and the functions of the senate, particularly in terms of decision-making related to leadership selection.

Meanwhile, respondents who rated the changes as "Not Significant" indicated that there was a perception that the changes in the senate's role did not have a substantial impact on its function. Despite the implementation of the new regulation, they felt that the senate continued to operate in a similar capacity as before, or the changes were not significant enough to alter the existing practices.

Next, the impact of the senate's reduced authority under PMA No. 68 of 2015 on the Quality of Leadership at UIN Sunan Kalijaga can be seen in the following graph:

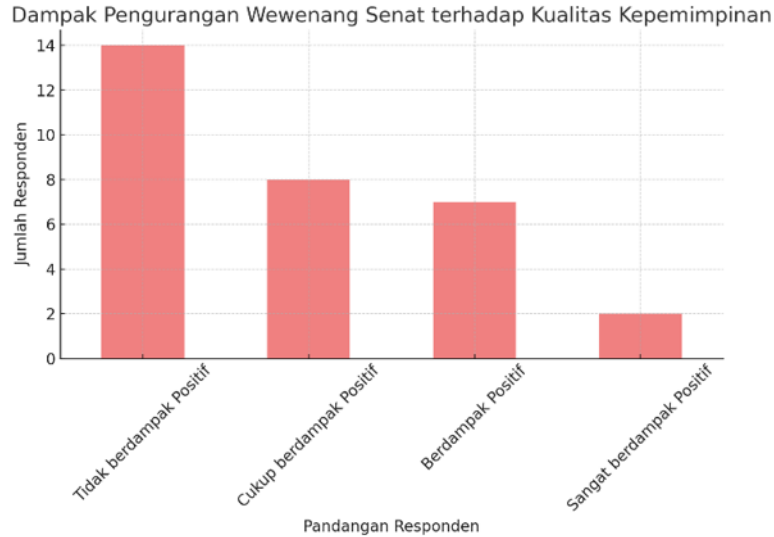


Figure 3.

The graph shows the senators' perceptions regarding the impact of the senate's reduced authority on the quality of leadership at UIN Sunan Kalijaga. The results indicate a division of opinions among the respondents. Some senators believe that the reduction of the senate's authority under PMA No. 68 of 2015 has affected leadership quality. This may suggest that the diminished involvement of the senate in the rector election process is seen as impacting the leadership's competence, possibly due to the lack of more in-depth academic filtering from the senate. However, there are also some senators who feel that the reduction of the senate's authority has not significantly impacted leadership quality. This perspective may stem from the belief that leadership quality is more determined by the process and individuals involved in the election rather than the senate's role itself.

This study also examined to what extent the senate's role in rector elections is still considered important after the implementation of PMA No. 68 of 2015, as illustrated in the following graph:

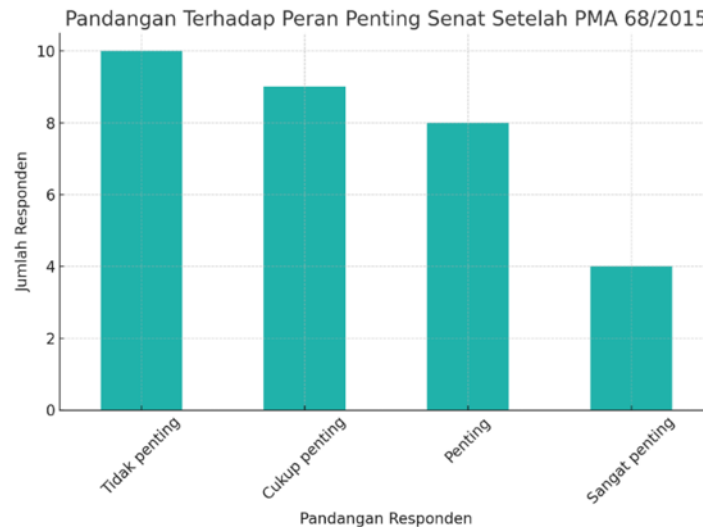


Figure 4.

The graph above shows that the majority of respondents still believe that the senate plays an important role in the rector election process, despite the reduction in their authority. This indicates that

the senate's role, although formally limited, is still seen as a strategic component in the election process, especially in providing academic considerations and ensuring that the election process remains fair and objective.

However, a small number of respondents felt that the senate's role has become less important after the regulatory changes. This may stem from the view that the final decision on the rector election is now largely determined by external parties or individuals outside the senate, thereby limiting the senate's influence.

From these results, it is clear that even though the senate's authority has been formally reduced, the perception of the senate's importance in maintaining leadership quality and the rector election process remains strong among the majority of respondents. This suggests a push to strengthen or maintain the senate's role as part of an effective higher education governance system.

The questionnaire analysis from UIN Sunan Kalijaga senators and PTKIN senators offers several important dimensions. Both groups of senators showed that they perceive PMA No. 68 of 2015 as bringing significant changes to the senate's role in the rector election process. Most respondents, from both UIN Sunan Kalijaga and PTKIN, felt that the senate's authority had been reduced, directly impacting the leadership selection process. This change was deemed significant by the majority of senators, particularly regarding the senate's role in providing academic input and safeguarding the integrity of the rector election.

These findings are significant because the phenomenon of changes in the role of collegial bodies in universities is not unique to Indonesia, but is also a concern in higher education governance globally. This research can enrich the international academic literature on how government regulations can alter internal governance mechanisms in universities and what implications this has for leadership selection. By focusing on how the reduction of the senate's role affects leadership quality and governance, this study can provide valuable comparative perspectives at the global level.

One of the key findings, which can be highlighted as a novelty of this study, is the perception that even though the senate's role has been formally limited by PMA No. 68 of 2015, the majority of senators in both institutions (UIN Sunan Kalijaga and PTKIN) still believe that the senate plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity and quality of the rector election process. This indicates that despite the formal reduction in the senate's role, there is a hope and belief that the senate can still function as an oversight body that ensures transparency and accountability in the rector election.

In the international context, many universities in various countries have similar collegial bodies that function to balance executive power and maintain a democratic and participatory selection process. The novelty of this research is that although regulations in Indonesia reduce the formal role of the senate, the senate is still regarded as having an important oversight function. This opens up broader discussions on the importance of maintaining a balance of power in university governance, both in developed and developing countries.

The potential for policy reform based on local academic experience includes proposals from senators to revise statutes or restore some of the senate's authority, as was regulated previously. Some PTKIN respondents specifically suggested that the senate should regain greater voting rights in rector elections, similar to the mechanism in the Ministry of National Education. At UIN Sunan Kalijaga, some respondents also emphasized the importance of granting the senate a clearer and more significant percentage of voting rights.

This can be linked to literature on higher education governance that discusses how policy reforms based on local academic experience can contribute to strengthening governance systems. In the international context, many studies highlight the importance of integrating input from local actors (such as university senates) in designing policies that are more inclusive and adaptive to institutional needs. This research can contribute to the global discussion on how governance reforms can be carried out by involving internal university actors, ensuring that the resulting policies are more effective and relevant.

The questionnaire results also show significant variation in the senators' knowledge of PMA No. 11/2014 and PMA No. 68/2015. In some cases, respondents indicated that they were unfamiliar with these regulations, while others were very familiar. This knowledge gap is important to note because it

suggests that although regulations have been implemented, uneven understanding among key actors (senators) may affect the effectiveness of policy implementation.

In the international context, this knowledge gap can be linked to the literature that discusses the "policy-practice gap," or the discrepancy between policy and its implementation in practice. This research can provide an important contribution to discussions on the importance of better socialization and education in implementing regulatory changes in higher education institutions, enabling internal actors such as the senate to perform their roles more optimally.

4. Discussion

The theories related to this research can be further explored through the discussion of the above research findings, focusing on several key aspects:

4.1. Higher Education Governance Theory

Modern higher education governance emphasizes the importance of transparency, accountability, and participation in decision-making processes, particularly in the selection of academic leaders. The Good University Governance (GUG) model underscores the significance of accountability and transparency to ensure that rector elections are conducted meritocratically, free from political or special interest group interference²⁸. The role of the university senate in this governance system becomes crucial, as they represent the academic community responsible for safeguarding the institution's integrity and ensuring that the selected candidates have adequate academic and managerial capacities²⁹. In some contexts, the reduction of senate authority, as seen at UIN Sunan Kalijaga following the enactment of Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 68 of 2015, raises concerns about increased government intervention, which could undermine the university's academic independence³⁰. In other countries, such as the United Kingdom, university governance reforms have shown that a strong senate can help maintain a balance of power and ensure that leadership selection is still based on academic competence and moral leadership³¹. Therefore, strengthening the senate's role in the election of academic leaders at UIN Sunan Kalijaga would be a crucial step in maintaining university governance integrity, in line with the accountability and transparency principles advocated by GUG.

4.2. Academic Leadership Theory

Leadership is the ability to influence a group to achieve goals³². Leadership can also be defined as a complex process where a leader influences subordinates to execute and achieve the vision, mission, tasks, or objectives that advance and unite the organization³³. Leadership is necessary to drive an organization forward³⁴. Leadership in the context of higher education differs from other sectors because it involves the management of complex intellectual and academic resources. One relevant theory in the selection of leaders in higher education is Collaborative Leadership Theory, which emphasizes the importance of cooperation among various stakeholders to achieve institutional goals. Collaborative leadership in universities aims to create collective and participatory decisions, considering input from various parties, including the university senate³⁵. The senate, as the collective representation of academics, has the responsibility to ensure that the selected leader can execute the academic and administrative vision aligned with the university's mission. This principle of collaboration among stakeholders has been proven effective in fostering innovation and creativity in the workplace. Research shows that when team members are involved in decision-making processes, they are more likely to share

A. G Bakker, *Governance and Accountability in Higher Education: Global Perspectives* (Routledge, n.d.),²⁸

Simon Margison, "Higher Education and Public Good," *Journal of Education Policy* 23, no. 3 (2008): 325–42.²⁹

Stensaker, Bjorn, dan Jens Jungblut, *Reinventing Higher Education: The Promise of University Governance Reform* (Springer, 2019).³⁰

Deem, Rosemary, Sam Hillyard, dan Mike Reed, *Knowledge, Higher Education, and the New Managerialism: The Changing Management*³¹

of UK Universities, ed. Oxford University Press (Oxford, 2007).

Encep Syarifudin, "Teori Kepemimpinan," *Alqalam* 21, no. 102 (2004): 459, <https://doi.org/10.32678/alqalam.v21i102.1644>.³²

Sulthon Syahril, "Teori-Teori Kepemimpinan," *Jurnal Sosial Dan Keagamaan*, 4, no. 02 (2015): 209.³³

Alfia Miftakhul Jannah et al., "Karakteristik Kepemimpinan Dalam Pendidikan Di Indonesia," *Alsysis* 1, no. 1 (2021): 138–50,³⁴

<https://doi.org/10.58578/alsysis.v1i1.30>.

Sullivan, William M, "Higher Education as a Moral Enterprise," *Liberal Education* 92, no. 2 (2006): 36–43.³⁵

innovative ideas and actively engage in problem-solving³⁶. This approach can also enhance overall team performance³⁷.

Furthermore, Transformational Leadership Theory is also relevant in the context of selecting academic leaders, especially in terms of a leader's ability to bring about positive changes in the university. Leadership is not only about the leader, nor is it merely about how important a position or place in the organization or community is. Leadership is a partnership pattern³⁸. A transformational leader has the capacity to inspire and motivate their members to achieve higher goals while adapting to the global challenges faced by universities. In the process of selecting academic leaders, the senate plays a crucial role in ensuring that the chosen candidate possesses transformational leadership qualities capable of effectively leading institutional changes. Transformational leaders can set examples³⁹.

However, the reduction of the senate's role in leadership selection, as experienced at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, raises concerns that the selection process may no longer focus on the candidate's transformational abilities. The senate, which previously played an active role in providing academic and moral evaluations, now has a more limited role, potentially weakening the competence-based and meritocratic selection process⁴⁰. This is important because academic leaders selected without in-depth assessment by the senate may struggle to implement the university's long-term academic vision and address evolving global challenges.

4.3. Government Intervention in Higher Education Theory

Government intervention in higher education often occurs in the form of regulations and policies governing institutional autonomy. This theory explains that the government plays a role in maintaining educational standards, improving accessibility, and ensuring education quality. However, such intervention can also create institutional dependence on the government and reduce institutional autonomy. In Indonesia, for example, government intervention in the election of leaders in religious higher education institutions, as seen with the implementation of Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 68 of 2015, has shifted authority from the university senate to the central government in rector elections. The implementation of this regulation, as seen at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, limits the senate's role in leadership selection and raises concerns about potential politicization of the process. Other studies also indicate that such interventions often exacerbate academic freedom and spark dissatisfaction among academics.

Government intervention in higher education theory explains the state's role in regulating and supporting the higher education sector through policies, regulations, and funding. Governments are often involved in ensuring equitable access, improving education quality, and aligning curricula with national socio-economic needs. This intervention can take the form of education subsidies, institutional regulations, and policies that support research and development⁴¹.

4.4. Institutional Change Theory

Institutional change theory examines how institutions, including educational institutions, adapt and change in response to external pressures such as policy changes, societal needs, and technological developments. Institutional change is not only structural but also involves cultural and internal practice changes, with external policies like government regulations often driving institutional change⁴².

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- Reeves, John, "Collaborative Leadership and Innovation in the Workplace," *Journal of Leadership Studies* 10, no. 2 (2019): 33–45.³⁶
 Shah, Ali, and Jenna Allen, "Effects of Collaborative Leadership on Employee Performance and Engagement," *Nternational Journal of Business Management* 12, no. 5 (2021): 78–92.
 Binti Maunah Fitri Wahyuni, "Kepemimpinan Transformasional Dalam Pendidikan Islam," *Southeast Asian Journal of Islamic Education Management* 2, no. 2 (2021): 146, <https://doi.org/10.23917/iseedu.v5i1.15993>.
 Izma Azhari and Ma'mun Sutisna, "Pengaruh Kepemimpinan Transformasional Terhadap Kepuasan Kerja," *Jurnal Riset Bisnis Dan Investasi* 2, no. 1 (2016): 143, <https://doi.org/10.35697/jrbi.v2i1.69>.
 De Boer, Harry, Jon File, dan Liudvika Leisyte, "Governance Reforms and Organizational Responses," *Higher Education Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (2010): 133–50, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2273.2010.00444.x>.
 Harry de Boer, "Bureaucratic and Political Influences on University Governance: A Cross-National Comparison."⁴¹
 David Lee, "Institutional Change and Policy Response in Higher Education," *Journal of Institutional Theory* 14, no. 1 (2019): 12–28.⁴²

Institutional change in higher education often occurs slowly due to internal resistance within organizations. Research suggests that such changes require strong leadership and broad support from stakeholders⁴³

Institutional change theory helps explain how higher education institutions, such as universities, adapt to regulatory changes and external dynamics. One relevant theory is Collegial Governance Change Theory, which focuses on how changes in collegial structures, such as university senates, affect decision-making processes. At many universities, regulatory changes often affect the role of the senate in leadership selection. At UIN Sunan Kalijaga, the regulatory changes that reduced the senate's role in rector elections reflect institutional change dynamics, where decision-making power shifts from the academic community to the government⁴⁴.

This aligns with global trends showing that many governments tend to take over some university authority to ensure that universities align with national policy agendas. However, this raises concerns about the loss of university autonomy and how this change could impact the quality of higher education. Organizational Resilience Theory is also relevant in this context, as it explains how institutions like universities can adapt to regulatory changes while maintaining their academic integrity⁴⁵.

In this case, UIN Sunan Kalijaga faces the challenge of balancing compliance with government regulations and maintaining good governance principles, including accountability and transparency in rector elections. The senate's ability to act as an independent oversight body becomes increasingly important to ensure that these institutional changes do not undermine the university's academic values and strategic vision.

5. Conclusion

From the research findings on the strategic role of the senate in leadership selection at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, it can be concluded that regulatory changes, particularly with the implementation of Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 68 of 2015, as detailed in Directorate General of Islamic Education Decrees No. 7293 of 2015 and No. 3151 of 2020, have significantly impacted the role of the senate. This new regulation has reduced the senate's authority in the rector election process, which previously played a central role in providing recommendations, assessing academic competence, and considering the moral integrity of rector candidates. As a result of this reduction in authority, concerns have arisen among academics that the leadership election process has become more bureaucratic and vulnerable to external intervention, potentially reducing transparency and accountability.

This research also shows that, despite the formal limitation of the senate's role, senate members still feel the importance of their role in maintaining the integrity and quality of the rector election. This reflects a desire for the senate to continue functioning as an independent oversight body to ensure that the rector election is based on meritocracy, rather than political interests.

Additionally, there is a push from some senators, both at UIN Sunan Kalijaga and other State Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN), to revise the existing regulations and restore some of the senate's authority. This proposal aligns with international higher education governance practices, where collegial bodies such as the senate still play an important role in maintaining a balance of power and ensuring a fair and transparent selection process.

Overall, this research provides important insights into the dynamics of governance changes in religious higher education institutions, particularly in the context of leadership elections, and their implications for leadership quality and institutional governance. Policy reforms that take into account the experience and input of internal actors, such as the university senate, are expected to strengthen the senate's strategic role in leadership selection in the future.

Jennifer Martin, "Leadership and Institutional Change in Higher Education: A Study of Organizational Resistance," *Leadership Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (2019): 34–52.
 Deem, Rosemary, Sam Hillyard, *Knowledge, Higher Education, and the New Managerialism: The Changing Management of UK Universities*.
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