



Education Leadership in Strengthening Indonesia-Russia Cooperation: Higher Education Development Strategy in the Global Era

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Abstract

Background. Higher education leadership is a strategic factor in building academic collaboration, improving human resource quality, and expanding research and innovation networks.

Aims. This research aims to explain the role of educational leadership in strengthening Indonesia-Russia cooperation as a strategy for developing higher education in the global era.

Methods. The research uses a qualitative approach and a literature review. Data were obtained from various secondary sources, including articles in reputable national and international journals, scientific books, policy documents, and publications on educational leadership, university internationalization, educational diplomacy, and Indonesia-Russia cooperation. Data analysis techniques include identification, selection, synthesis, and interpretation. This approach aims to develop a comprehensive understanding of the strategy for advancing higher education cooperation.

Result. This research finds that visionary, transformational, collaborative, and adaptive educational leadership is the main factor in the success of international cooperation development. Cooperation can be carried out by (1) exchanging students and lecturers; (2) joint research; (3) scientific publications; (4) *dual degree* programs, as well as strengthening academic networks.

Conclusion. However, implementing cooperation still faces various challenges, such as differences in regulations, language barriers, limited funding, and universities' limited internationalization capacity.

Implementation. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen institutional governance, digital transformation, improve human resource competence, and develop sustainable strategic partnerships.

Keywords: educational leadership, Indonesia-Russia cooperation, higher education, internationalization, educational diplomacy.



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INTRODUCTION

Globalization has brought a paradigm shift in education delivery, from one originally oriented to domestic needs to a system increasingly open to international collaboration. Education is no longer seen as an instrument of human resource development, but also as a strategic means to strengthen relations between countries through knowledge exchange, innovation, research, and academic mobility. Educational leadership plays an important role because it determines the direction, strategy, and success of educational institutions in building cross-border cooperation networks. Education leaders are required to have a global vision, the ability to build collaboration, and the capacity to integrate national interests with the dynamics of international education (Turwelis et al. 2022).

In recent years, educational cooperation between Indonesia and Russia has shown significant development. The relationship between the two countries is not only realized through student and lecturer exchanges, but also includes joint research, curriculum development, academic forums, and strengthening partnerships between universities (Purnama et al. 2020). The collaboration is part of the internationalization strategy of higher education which aims to improve the quality of human resources, expand access to science and technology, and strengthen the competitiveness of universities at the global level. With international collaboration programs, educational institutions have the opportunity to develop learning innovations, increase research productivity, and expand sustainable academic networks (Raihan, Eliza, and Efreyanti 2025).

The Russian state understands that the internationalization of education is one of the important instruments in strengthening the country's position in the global arena. Russia's education policy in recent decades has shown a transformation from a domestically oriented approach to strengthening international education networks as part of national development strategies (Fadillah 2023). Russian universities are encouraged to increase international cooperation, attract foreign students, and expand research collaborations with various countries, including Indonesia. This approach shows that education has developed into an instrument of diplomacy that is able to strengthen bilateral relations while increasing the influence of a country through the development of science and innovation.

Indonesia places the internationalization of higher education as one of the strategies in improving the quality of education. policies on student exchanges, development of joint degree

programs (*joint degree*), collaborative research, and academic enhancement demonstrate the government's commitment to expanding international cooperation. Cooperation with Russia has strategic value because both countries have great potential in the development of science, technology, energy, health, agriculture, and artificial intelligence (Shenderova, Morris, and Comai 2026). Therefore, the success of the implementation of the cooperation is not only determined by government policies, but also influenced by the effectiveness of leadership at the university level who is able to translate policies into real collaborative programs.

Concept Educational Diplomacy explained that education is a form of *soft power* which countries can use to build international relations peacefully through the exchange of knowledge, culture, and academic values. In contrast to political and economic diplomacy, which is often oriented towards short-term interests, educational diplomacy contributes to building trust, strengthening relationships between societies (*people-to-people relations*), as well as creating long-term mutually beneficial cooperation (Etomes et al. 2024). In this perspective, universities not only function as educational institutions, but also as actors of diplomacy that contribute to the development of bilateral relations between countries through joint academic and research activities.

The success of education diplomacy is greatly influenced by the quality of educational leadership. College leaders have responsibilities in building an international vision, developing collaboration strategies, developing institutional networks, managing resources, and creating an organizational culture that supports internationalization (Arslan and Sezgin 2026). Transformational and collaborative leadership is believed to be able to improve the ability of institutions to face global challenges while making optimal use of international cooperation opportunities. In the context of Indonesia-Russia cooperation, educational leadership is an important factor that determines the successful implementation of various cross-border academic programs

Things such as curriculum integration, strengthening networks between educational institutions, and institutional collaboration are factors that affect the improvement of the quality of education in Indonesia and Russia. This explains that it is not enough for education cooperation to be supported only by formal policies, but requires leadership that is able to integrate various resources, build inter-institutional communication, and develop learning systems that are adaptive to global changes. Educational leadership, which specifically examines how university leaders

build, develop, and maintain educational cooperation between Indonesia and Russia, is still relatively limited. Previous studies have focused more on policy implementation or the effectiveness of cooperation programs without explaining in depth the role of strategic leadership as a factor that links policy with collaborative practices at the institutional level. The research *gap* shows the need for studies that integrate the perspectives of educational leadership, internationalization of higher education, and educational diplomacy in one analytical framework. This study aims to analyze how educational leadership plays a role in strengthening educational cooperation between Indonesia and Russia. This study is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of the concept of education leadership in the context of international education diplomacy, as well as provide practical recommendations for governments, universities, and other stakeholders in designing education collaboration strategies that are more effective, sustainable, and able to increase the competitiveness of higher education in both countries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Educational Leadership in the Era of Education Globalization

Globalization has become a major factor driving the transformation of education systems in various countries. The development of information technology, the increasing mobility of students and lecturers, the growth of international cooperation, and competition between universities have changed the way educational institutions are managed. In this context, educational leadership is no longer seen only as the ability to manage an organization administratively, but also as a strategic ability to build a global vision, develop international networks, and create an innovative and adaptive academic culture. (Ramadhan et al. 2026). explained that educational leadership in the era of globalization needs to adopt a perspective *Glocal Leadership*, namely leadership that is able to integrate global demands with local values so that educational policies and practices remain relevant to the needs of society without losing international competitiveness.

The concept of Glocal Leadership positions education leaders as actors who can bridge global dynamics with local conditions. An education leader must not only understand international education policies but also adapt best practices from different countries to the culture, regulations, and characteristics of the institution they lead. (Stuart and Stuart 2022) argues that effective

educational leadership requires global literacy, namely the ability to understand the political, economic, social, cultural, moral, pedagogical, informational, organizational, spiritual, and temporal dimensions in the decision-making process. Through these competencies, education leaders can develop policies that are responsive to global changes while maintaining national identity and local culture.

The changing global environment also encourages universities to expand internationalization through increased academic collaboration, student and lecturer exchanges, joint research, international publications, and the development of a global standard curriculum. In this condition, educational leadership plays a key role in building strategic partnerships with various educational institutions at the international level. (Bass, B. M and Avolio, B. J., 1994) explains that research on educational leadership today increasingly emphasizes the importance of leaders' ability to build global networks, strengthen institutional governance, and create learning organizations (*Learning Organization*) that are able to adapt to changes in the external environment. Thus, the success of internationalizing higher education is greatly influenced by the quality of leadership within the institution.

In addition to strengthening international cooperation, globalization also presents new challenges for education leaders. The development of artificial intelligence, digital transformation, geopolitical changes, and increasing global competition demand that leaders think strategically, manage change, and make data-driven decisions. In the study (Chotib et al. 2025) It was explained that future education leadership must anticipate social, economic, and technological changes through policy innovation, flexible governance, and strengthened cross-sector collaboration. Therefore, educational leaders not only act as administrators but also as agents of change (Change agents) who can move all organizational resources toward sustainable transformation.

On the other hand, the internationalization of higher education also demands the development of global leadership competencies (*Global Leadership Competence*). These competencies include cross-cultural communication skills, collaborative leadership, international negotiation, and global academic network management. (Etomes et al. 2024) emphasized that universities need to prepare leaders who have international insight in order to be able to improve the reputation of the institution, expand research collaboration, and produce graduates who have global competitiveness. Developing these competencies is increasingly important because

universities today compete not only nationally but also within the global higher education ecosystem, which demands quality, innovation, and sustainable collaboration.

The internationalization of academic leadership is not only related to international mobility, but also concerns a paradigm shift in curriculum development and organizational governance (Ihsani, Inderawati, and Vianty 2020). Studies on the internationalization of academic leadership show that educational institutions need to build organizational cultures that support diversity, cross-border collaboration, and lifelong learning in order to be able to effectively cope with global change (Hikmatul Magfiroh et al. 2023). Thus, educational leadership must focus on creating an academic environment that is open to innovation, adaptable to scientific development, and able to build strategic partnerships with educational institutions worldwide.

Educational leadership in the era of globalization is a strategic factor in increasing university competitiveness. Education leaders are required to have a global vision, the ability to build international collaboration, and the ability to integrate global innovation with local needs (Ahmad et al. 2023). Adaptive, collaborative, and internationalization-oriented leadership will be an important foundation in strengthening the quality of higher education while supporting the realization of educational cooperation between countries, including strategic collaboration between Indonesia and Russia in facing educational challenges in the global era.

Indonesia-Russia Education Cooperation

Educational cooperation between Indonesia and Russia is a form of bilateral relations that continues to grow as both countries increase their need to strengthen human resources, master science, and expand international academic networks. Education is a strategic instrument that not only improves academic quality but also serves as a medium of diplomacy that strengthens relations between communities (*people-to-people diplomacy*) and the long-term interests of both countries. From the perspective of educational diplomacy, universities play the role of actors who are able to build trust, cultural exchange, and sustainable research collaboration (Arslan and Sezgin 2026).

Indonesia-Russia educational cooperation is implemented through various programs, such as student and lecturer exchanges, collaborative research, international seminars, and curriculum development that supports the internationalization of higher education. The science learning system in Indonesia and Russia shows that the two countries have great potential to complement

each other in the development of learning methods, educational technology innovations, and the improvement of academic competence (Arslan and Sezgin 2026). The difference in the characteristics of the education system is actually an opportunity to build knowledge transfer and best practices (*Best practices*) that can improve the quality of education in both countries.

Beyond the academic aspect, cooperation is also driven by Russia's public diplomacy strategy in Indonesia. Through educational programs, scholarships, cultural promotion, and cooperation between higher education institutions, Russia seeks to build a positive image while expanding its influence in Southeast Asia (Ossai et al., 2025). Education diplomacy is part of the soft power approach, which emphasizes cooperation, cultural exchange, and long-term relationships rather than purely political or economic approaches. Russian cultural diplomacy shows that education is one of the most effective media in building sustainable bilateral relations between Russia and Indonesia (Sari, Ramdhan, and Syahputra 2023).

The development of digital technology has also expanded the space for educational collaboration between the two countries. Online learning platforms, virtual conferences, digital joint research, and the exchange of academic data allow cooperation to continue without being limited by geographical distance. Digital support strengthens the effectiveness of joint education projects while opening opportunities for learning and research innovations across countries. This approach shows that digital transformation is an important factor in strengthening the sustainability of Indonesia-Russia education cooperation in the future.

Nevertheless, implementing Indonesia-Russia education cooperation still faces various challenges, such as language differences, academic systems, credit recognition mechanisms, education regulations, and international geopolitical dynamics. Therefore, educational leadership is needed to build collaborative governance, strengthen inter-institutional networks, and create policies that support academic mobility. The internationalization of higher education depends not only on agreements between countries, but also on the capacity of educational institutions to manage partnerships in a professional and sustainable manner (Shenderova et al. 2026). Then, Indonesia-Russia education cooperation has the strategic potential to improve the quality of higher education, expand research collaboration, and strengthen education diplomacy between the two countries. Synergy among government policies, university leadership, and digital technology will be an key foundation for creating adaptive, innovative, and sustainable academic partnerships amid global dynamics.

Education Diplomacy as a Strategy to Strengthen Bilateral Relations

Educational diplomacy is one instrument of soft power that states increasingly use to strengthen bilateral relations through human resource development, cultural exchange, and academic collaboration. In contrast to conventional diplomacy, which is more oriented towards political and economic interests, educational diplomacy builds relations between countries through a long-term process of learning, research, academic mobility, and knowledge exchange. In this context, universities function as non-state actors (*Non-State Actor*) that contribute to the creation of trust (*Trust Building*) and improved relations between communities (*people-to-people relations*) through various forms of academic cooperation (Chotib et al. 2025).

Higher education is also an effective medium for strengthening a country's image internationally. International students who study in the destination country not only gain academic experience, but also build an understanding of the country's culture, social values, and education system. After returning to their home countries, they can become liaisons for academic, economic, and diplomatic cooperation. Therefore, international students are seen as agents of *soft power that can strengthen bilateral relations sustainably*. (Arslan and Sezgin 2026) Explained that higher education policies that encourage the mobility of international students have a positive impact on increasing a country's influence in international relations through the establishment of cross-border professional and academic networks.

From the perspective of the Russian Federation, educational diplomacy is part of the internationalization strategy of higher education and an instrument of foreign policy. Russia seeks to increase the attractiveness of its universities by providing scholarships, developing international programs, and expanding academic cooperation with various countries, including those in Southeast Asia. Cahyanto, Natsir, and Hidayat (2025) explains that the policy positions education as a strategic instrument to strengthen Russia's standing as one of the world's educational powers (*Educational Great Power*). The approach not only aims to increase the number of foreign students, but also to build long-term influence through the dissemination of science, culture, and international academic networks (Kapfudzaruwa 2025). Russia's educational cooperation with ASEAN countries shows that educational diplomacy can bridge bilateral relations beyond political and economic interests. Student exchange programs, joint research, scientific conferences, and collaboration between universities create a space for dialogue that strengthens relationships

between institutions and individuals. Research on the use of education as an instrument of *soft power* in Russia shows that academic cooperation results in more sustainable relations because it is based on shared interests in the development of science and the improvement of the quality of human resources (Atem 2023).

Education diplomacy for Indonesia is also a strategy to expand international networks through various academic mobility programs, such as the Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards (IISMA), research collaborations, and program development. *Joint research* and *Student Exchange*. These programs not only improve the quality of Indonesia's higher education but also strengthen Indonesia's image as an academic partner open to global collaboration. Research on the implementation of IISMA shows that the mobility of international students is able to increase cross-cultural understanding, expand professional networks, and strengthen Indonesia's position in international education diplomacy (Ramadhan et al., 2026).

Education diplomacy is an effective strategy for strengthening bilateral relations through academic cooperation, cultural exchange, and human resource capacity building. In the context of Indonesia-Russia relations, education diplomacy is an important foundation for strengthening higher education collaboration because it can create mutually beneficial relationships, expand research networks, and increase trust between educational institutions. The success of education diplomacy is highly dependent on the commitment of the government, universities, and other stakeholders in building sustainable and interest-oriented cooperation (Arslan and Sezgin 2026).

Education Leadership Strategy in Strengthening Indonesia-Russia Cooperation

The success of educational cooperation between Indonesia and Russia is greatly influenced by university leadership's ability to design an internationalization strategy that is adaptive, collaborative, and oriented toward improving the quality of education. In the global era, university leaders no longer only carry out administrative functions but also drive international partnerships through the development of academic networks, research collaborations, student and lecturer mobility, and stronger institutional governance. This strategy is an important foundation in building a sustainable educational relationship between the two countries (Shenderova et al. 2026).

One of the main strategies that needs to be developed is the preparation of an international vision (*Global Vision*) integrated into the university's strategic plan. Internationalization is not enough to be understood as increasing the number of foreign cooperation, but must be part of an

organizational culture that is supported by policies, leadership, and sustainable allocation of resources (Sukjairungwattana et al. 2025). The internationalization strategy of universities in Indonesia shows that the success of international cooperation is strongly influenced by leaders' commitment to formulating policies, strengthening institutional capacity, and building mutually beneficial partnerships with universities abroad.

The next strategy is to strengthen *collaborative governance* by forming broader academic partnerships. Educational leadership needs to encourage joint research, international publications, lecturer and student exchanges, joint degree programs, and curriculum development that accommodates the academic standards of both countries. Managing this kind of partnership not only improves academic quality but also strengthens knowledge transfer and innovation. Research on global partnership management confirms that leadership that builds communication, coordination, and trust between institutions is a key factor in the success of international collaboration.

Digital transformation is an increasingly important strategy in strengthening Indonesia-Russia education cooperation. The use of information technology allows the implementation of joint lectures (*Collaborative Online Learning*), international seminars, virtual conferences, research supervision, and the development of digital laboratories without being limited by geographical distance (Bass, B. M and Avolio, B. J. 1994). This technology-based cooperation model expands access to academic resources while increasing the efficiency of international program implementation. Therefore, education leaders need to encourage stronger digital infrastructure and improve the academic community's digital competence so cross-border collaboration can run optimally.

Higher education leaders must also anticipate various challenges in Indonesia-Russia cooperation, such as differences in the education system, academic regulations, language, organizational culture, and geopolitical dynamics that affect the internationalization of higher education. (Shenderova et al. 2026) explained that the implementation of internationalization policies often faces gaps between policy vision and practices at the institutional level due to inflexible governance and limited coordination. Therefore, adaptive, participatory, and collaboration-based leadership is an important factor in overcoming these obstacles.

The education leadership strategy to strengthen Indonesia-Russia cooperation should focus on developing an international vision, strengthening collaborative governance, optimizing digital

transformation, and building institutional capacity. Through this strategy, universities cannot only expand international academic networks but also generate innovations, improve research quality, and strengthen educational diplomacy as part of developing sustainable bilateral relations between Indonesia and Russia.

Global Collaboration-Based Education Leadership Model and Its Implications for the Development of Indonesian Higher Education

Globalization has shifted the paradigm of educational leadership from one originally oriented toward internal management to one that builds cross-border collaboration. Universities today are required not only to produce competitive graduates, but also to become centers of innovation, research, and international academic networks. Therefore, the global collaboration-based education leadership model is a relevant approach in strengthening the competitiveness of Indonesian universities at the international level. This model positions university leaders as drivers of organizational transformation by developing global partnerships, strengthening governance, and fostering an academic culture open to innovation and collaboration (Kapfudzaruwa, 2025).

One of the main characteristics of the global collaboration-based leadership model is the ability to build an international vision integrated with the institution's strategic goals. Leadership is not only oriented toward achieving national academic indicators, but also develops policies that encourage student mobility, lecturer exchanges, collaborative research, international publications, and the development of a globally oriented curriculum. This strategy is the foundation in the process of internationalization of higher education so that universities are able to improve their reputation and competitiveness at the international level. The internationalization strategy of higher education in Indonesia shows that transformational leadership, the use of digital technology, and the implementation of *Good University Governance* are important factors in the success of higher education internationalization.

In addition to building a global vision, educational leadership must also develop collaborative governance that involves various stakeholders, including the government, industry, research institutions, and international partners. This collaboration allows universities to access resources, technology, research funding, and a wider academic network. This approach aligns with the concept of Relational Global Leadership, which emphasizes trusting relationships, cross-cultural communication, and participatory leadership as the foundation of successful international

cooperation. The leadership model encourages synergy between organizations so the internationalization process does not depend only on individual leaders but becomes a sustainable organizational culture.

The implications of implementing a global collaboration-based leadership model for the development of Indonesian higher education are very significant. Universities will have greater opportunities to improve learning quality, expand research collaboration, increase international publications, and increase the academic mobility of students and lecturers. In addition, strengthening global collaboration also contributes to improving the institution's reputation, graduate competitiveness, and innovation capacity that supports national development. Thus, global collaboration-based educational leadership is not only a strategy for the internationalization of higher education, but also an important foundation in building an Indonesian higher education system that is adaptive, innovative, and able to compete sustainably at the global level.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature review method to analyze educational leadership in strengthening Indonesia-Russia cooperation in higher education development strategies in the global era. This approach was chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concepts, policies, strategies, and practices of educational leadership through the synthesis of a variety of relevant scientific sources. Literature studies serve not only as a process of information gathering, but also as a research method that results in a critical interpretation of previously published knowledge. This research was carried out by identifying research topics, tracing literature sources, selecting literature, conducting content analysis, synthesizing findings, and drawing conclusions. This step is carried out systematically so that the research results have a strong, transparent, and accountable scientific basis. Data sources include articles from reputable national and international journals, scientific books, proceedings, policy documents from the Indonesian and Russian governments, publications from international organizations, and institutional reports related to educational leadership, educational diplomacy, university internationalization, and bilateral cooperation between the two countries. Literature searches were conducted through various sources, including Publish or Perish, to find articles from Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, Google Scholar, and national journal portals. The selected literature includes publications directly relevant to the research focus, published in academically

credible scientific journals, and discussing educational leadership, internationalization strategies, or higher education cooperation. Irrelevant literature, repetitive information, or sources that do not support the research objectives were excluded from the analysis. Data analysis was carried out using content analysis, including data reduction, classification, interpretation, and synthesis of previous research results. Various findings were compared to identify patterns, similarities, differences, opportunities, and challenges of education leadership in strengthening Indonesia-Russia cooperation.

DISCUSSION

Educational leadership plays a strategic role in strengthening international cooperation, especially between Indonesia and Russia in higher education. In the era of globalization, universities no longer function only as educational institutions but also as actors in academic diplomacy that contribute to the development of science, innovation, and stronger relations between countries. Therefore, educational leadership must build an international vision, develop global networks, and create an academic ecosystem that adapts to changes in the strategic environment. These findings align with the view that modern educational leadership should integrate institutional governance, innovation, and international collaboration into the development strategy of higher education institutions.

Higher education cooperation between Indonesia and Russia has developed significantly in recent years. Forms of cooperation include student and lecturer exchanges, scholarship programs, joint research, international seminars, and dual-degree programs. This relationship shows that education is an important instrument for strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries. Higher education leadership plays a key role in identifying opportunities for cooperation, building inter-institutional communication, drafting academic agreements, and ensuring programs are implemented sustainably.

The success of international cooperation is not only determined by the existence of a *memorandum of understanding (MoU)*, but is also greatly influenced by leadership's capacity to translate cooperation documents into real programs. Many universities have international agreements, but their implementation has not been optimal due to a lack of strategy, coordination,

and institutional support. Thus, educational leadership needs to focus on implementation, not just administrative achievement. Higher education leaders must prepare clear action plans, set performance indicators, and conduct periodic evaluations of all international cooperation programs.

In addition to leadership, the internationalization of higher education is an important factor in strengthening the competitiveness of universities. Internationalization is not only interpreted as increasing the number of foreign students, but also includes developing an international-standard curriculum, improving lecturers' competence, producing reputable scientific publications, promoting academic mobility, and strengthening an academic culture that is open to diversity. In the context of Indonesia-Russia relations, internationalization can be realized through the development of joint study centers, research collaborations in strategic fields such as technology, energy, agriculture, health, and artificial intelligence, as well as increasing human resource capacity through training and further education programs.

Digital transformation is one factor accelerating the expansion of higher education cooperation. The development of information technology allows universities in Indonesia and Russia to organize online collaborative learning, virtual international conferences, cross-border research, and academic exchanges without being limited by geographical distance. This condition requires education leaders to have digital competence, adaptive managerial skills, and readiness to manage organizational changes. Leadership that is responsive to digital transformation will make it easier to build effective and sustainable international collaborations.

On the other hand, the literature review also identified several challenges in developing Indonesia-Russia cooperation. These obstacles include differences in education systems, language barriers, funding limitations, differences in academic regulations, and uneven internationalization capacity across universities. Other challenges include the low number of joint publications, limited academic mobility, and the underuse of digital technology to support cross-border collaboration. Therefore, education leadership needs to develop more innovative strategies by strengthening the governance of international cooperation, improving human resource competence, and expanding networks with various strategic partners.

Several strategies can strengthen Indonesia-Russia higher education cooperation. First, strengthen transformational leadership that can build an international vision, encourage innovation, and create a collaborative culture in the university environment. Second, increase

institutional capacity through the establishment of a professional international affairs office (*International Office*) that has a strategic function in managing foreign cooperation. Third, expanding mobility for students and lecturers through exchange schemes, *joint research*, *visiting professors*, and *dual degrees*. Fourth, increasing research collaboration in priority areas that support the national development of the two countries. Fifth, utilizing digital technology to develop international learning, virtual conferences, and more inclusive global research networks.

Educational leadership is a key factor in the successful internationalization of higher education and the strengthening of education diplomacy between Indonesia and Russia. Visionary, collaborative, innovative, and adaptive leadership can optimize international cooperation opportunities to produce broader benefits, including improved education quality, stronger research, and strengthened bilateral relations between the two countries. Thus, the strategy for developing higher education in the global era depends not only on government policies but also on the capacity of university leadership to build productive, sustainable, and quality-oriented international partnerships aimed at improving the quality of human resources.

CONCLUSION

Educational leadership plays a very important role in strengthening Indonesia-Russia cooperation in higher education. Leadership functions not only as a manager of educational institutions but also as a key driver of international collaborations aimed at improving academic quality, research development, innovation, and educational diplomacy. In the context of globalization, universities must adapt to changes in the strategic environment by strengthening professional governance, developing international networks, and increasing the competitiveness of human resources. The relationship between higher education cooperation between Indonesia and Russia has great potential to continue developing through various forms of collaboration, such as student and lecturer exchanges, joint research, international scientific publications, *dual degree* programs, the organization of academic conferences, and the development of joint study centers. These forms of cooperation not only help improve the quality of higher education, but also serve as a strategic instrument for strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries in science, technology, and human resource development. The success of international cooperation is not only determined by the existence of formal agreements between institutions, but is also greatly influenced by leadership's capacity to translate these commitments into planned, measurable, and

sustainable programs. Therefore, university leaders need a global vision, the ability to build partnerships, managerial competence, and the ability to manage organizational change so that cooperation programs can have a real impact on institutions and society.

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