



## Adaptive Management Strategy of Gorontalo Polytechnic Managers in Responding to Higher Education Dynamics

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### Article Info

#### *Article history:*

Received 12 Feb, 2026

Revised 29 Mar, 2026

Accepted 20 Apr, 2026

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#### *Keywords:*

Adaptive Management,  
Higher Education Institution  
Management,  
Administration, Academic  
Community

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the adaptive management strategies of administrators in responding to the dynamics of higher education institutions, using a case study of Gorontalo Polytechnic. Higher education institutions are required to adapt to policy changes, quality demands, and internal foundation dynamics to maintain academic stability. This research uses a qualitative case study approach. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation with university leaders, educational staff, and students. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, and its validity was tested through triangulation. The results indicate that Gorontalo Polytechnic administrators implement adaptive management strategies through adjustments to academic and administrative policies that refer to standard operating procedures, strengthening internal coordination, and utilizing digital-based administrative systems. Furthermore, the academic community plays an active role in maintaining academic stability by adapting to policy changes and institutional dynamics. This adaptive management strategy contributes to management stability, improved performance, and the sustainability of the university.

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### INTRODUCTION

Private universities have the same important role as public universities although they have their own advantages and disadvantages. Although they have their own advantages and disadvantages, private universities have an equally important role as public universities. The ownership status of universities, both government and private, is not the main measure of the quality of universities (Serfiyani 2020).

As a formal educational institution, universities must improve the quality of their education. If all aspects of education meet the standards, then education can be said to be of quality and quality. Human resources are the main component of management, which can be used as a tool or method to achieve such quality improvement. (Ramayanti, et al. 2023).

Good and adaptive educational leadership not only handles college administration and management they can also move the entire college toward its vision and mission. A qualified educational leader can understand the needs and abilities of each student and motivate them to achieve their best achievements. In addition, they must have the ability to adapt to the changes and challenges that occur today, such as changes in curriculum, technological advancements, and socio-economic dynamics (Babullah et al. 2024)

According to Nihira, the concept of adaptive leadership includes several important elements, including the ability of each person to deal with situations faced in society and the ability to adapt, as well as the ability to express their personal freedom. (Setiyowati 2025). The ability of a person or group within an institution to adapt to changes in the workplace is known as adaptivity. Flexible managers can face these challenges optimistically, learn from

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new situations and develop new abilities to meet the needs of the institution. They can also master new technologies and adapt to changing policies. The ability to remain productive and efficient in the midst of change is also part of this adaptivity, which allows organizations to operate smoothly (Iriyadi, Fauzi, and Sarta 2024).

Universities play an important role in the development of the country's human resources. However, universities in Indonesia face a number of problems, both inside and outside, such as management and administration, as well as educational academics against industry. Good educational leadership does not only handle school administration and management; they can also move the entire school towards its vision and mission. A qualified educational leader can understand the needs and abilities of each student and motivate them to achieve their best achievements.

In addition, they must have the ability to adapt to current changes and challenges, such as changes in curriculum, technological advancements, and socio-economic dynamics (Babullah et al. 2024). The number of students and school-age population far exceeds the government's financial ability to pursue and provide education at a low cost but of the highest quality. The private sector then feels called to provide educational services on a non-profit basis due to the limited capabilities of the government. This is included in Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution which allows social institutions or other foundations to work with the government to ensure that all citizens have access to the best education (Susmayanti 2008). Universities provide higher education and research to society. Education and research focus on science. Therefore, the higher education industry is a science. Colleges have consumers, i.e. students and communities that use their graduates. Colleges face competition, i.e. other universities, both at home and abroad (Syukron 2016).

The university management system has prioritized cooperation between universities in one area and quality improvement. A new management paradigm or frame of mind must be used to address college management. Continuous quality improvement is the goal of this new management format, which includes autonomy as a driving force to make the system more dynamic, accountability or responsibility to exercise autonomy responsibly, accredited to ensure the quality of graduates, and self-evaluation to ensure the decision-making process of planning based on empirical data and information (Mulyono et al. 2018).

College managers must be able to adapt to change. Higher education institutions rely not only on existing plans and resources, but also on Managers who are able to bring about change and empower the entire academic community. This research will focus on leadership policies, staff development, and resource management strategies to see how college leaders contribute to and manage change in this context (Zakiah et al. 2024).

Gorontalo Polytechnic or better known by the abbreviation POLIGON is a vocational university established on the initiative of the Gorontalo Provincial Government supported by the Directorate General of Higher Education of the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia. Then further action was taken in the form of development under the command of the Gorontalo Human Resources Development Foundation. Through Regional Regulation Number 9 of 2008 concerning Gorontalo Polytechnic, which contains the transfer of the person in charge of Gorontalo Polytechnic which was initially under the auspices of the Gorontalo Human Resources Development Foundation, it was transferred directly to the Gorontalo Provincial Government. After being taken over by the Gorontalo Provincial Government, the status of the vocational higher education institution that focuses on the field of information technology and agricultural technology, was officially changed to UPT (Technical Implementing Element) of the Gorontalo Provincial Education, Youth, and Sports Office.

Guaranteeing the role of higher education is a systematic activity to improve the quality of higher education in a planned and sustainable manner. The strategy built by health colleges in building their institutional quality culture emphasizes four main components: How adaptive management strategies are applied in the management of Gorontalo Polytechnic, forms of application of adaptive management in the aspect of higher education administration, How the academic community plays a role and adapts in maintaining academic stability in the midst of foundation dynamics. In order to produce a good educational role, Gorontalo Polytechnic to implement adaptive management of education in improving the quality of education. Improving adaptive management strategies in education should be carried out systematically and gradually so that in the end it can produce strategies that are able to support the achievement of school goals. Educational management in improving the quality of education has three processes, namely plan, organize, coordinate, and control (iv 2019).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Approaches and Types of Research**

The type of research that will be used in the research on "Adaptive Management Strategy of Gorontalo Polytechnic Management in Responding to Higher Education Dynamics" is a type of descriptive research with a qualitative approach. According to Usman, qualitative descriptive research is described in words according to the respondent, as it is according to the research question, then it is also analyzed with words what is the background of the respondent's behavior (thinking, feeling, and acting) unlike others, reduced, triangulated, concluded (given meaning by the researcher), and verified (Mayasari, 2017).

According to Sugiyono, the qualitative research method is a research method based on the philosophy of positivism, used to research on the condition of natural objects, (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument, sampling of data sources is carried out purposively and snowball, collection techniques by

triangulation, data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and qualitative research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization. (Wijaya et al., 2018).

The approach in this study is used to describe and explain how Adaptive Management Strategy takes place in the field based on the perspective of the parties directly involved in the service process, both from the side of the hospital as a service provider and from the side of the patient as a service user. Through this approach, the research seeks to comprehensively see how the Adaptive Management Strategy is applied, how the quality of service, and the involvement of the academic community by using the 5P strategy theory by Mintzberg

### **Place and Time of Research**

This research was carried out at the Gorontalo Polytechnic, which is located in Panggulo Village, Jl, Muchlis Rahim, Botupingge, Bone Bolango Regency, Gorontalo Province. The research is planned for 2 months, starting from December to January 2025.

### **Data source**

In research activities, there are many important things that come with it, in addition to research topics and methodologies, there is also research data. Without data collected in a research, the research will be stagnant because nothing can be decided or concluded, aka the research does not yield results. In research, data has a crucial nature because it will prove the theoretical foundation and provide answers to the formulation of the problem. At the same time, it determines whether the hypothesis prepared is appropriate or vice versa. For this reason, the data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

In this study, the data collection technique was carried out with a qualitative approach, Purposive sampling is a sampling technique that is carried out deliberately by the researcher by selecting individuals who are considered to be the most knowledgeable or experienced in the research topic. This method produces in-depth data, but it is not representative of the entire population because the selection is not random. Snowball sampling is a sampling technique that starts with some initial respondents, then the respondents help the researcher find other participants who have similar characteristics.

The snowball sampling technique allows researchers to obtain informants based on recommendations from previous informants who are considered to understand the management process, decision-making, and adaptive strategies applied by managers. Through this technique, researchers can reach relevant informants, such as leaders, structural officials, lecturers, and education personnel who have a strategic role in dealing with changes and internal dynamics of the institution.

This technique is also supported by observation, interview, and documentation methods to obtain in-depth and comprehensive data. Observation is used to directly observe adaptive management practices in the campus environment, interviews to explore the experiences and views of informants related to management strategies, as well as documentation as supporting data that strengthens research results.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

After all the data obtained in the author's research is collected, the data is grouped to be used as input material that will be used in the implementation of this writing. The data obtained from the results of the research is analyzed using a qualitative descriptive method, which is a way to draw conclusions by providing an overview or describing the collected data in the form of sentence descriptions. The data analysis process is carried out since the data is obtained by examining all available data from various sources, be it from the results of interviews, field notes, documents, and so on. Next, the author discusses by analyzing the data, then draws conclusions and provides suggestions.

The data analysis technique in this study follows the qualitative data analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014). This model consists of three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Plan***

Strategy as a *plan* is interpreted as a series of plans that are prepared consciously and systematically to achieve organizational goals. In the context of this research, the management of Gorontalo Polytechnic prepares strategic planning as a form of anticipation for changes in higher education policies, accreditation demands, and the development of the needs of the world of work. The planning is manifested in the determination of visions, missions, work programs, and internal policies that are flexible so that they can be adjusted to the conditions and dynamics of the universities faced

Based on the results of interviews with the Director, Deputy Director I, and Deputy Director II of the Gorontalo Polytechnic, it can be concluded that the adaptive management strategy implemented by this institution,

when viewed from *Mintzberg's* perspective as a *Plan*, shows the existence of an *intended strategy* and is systematically prepared.

Based on the results of an interview with the Director of Gorontalo Polytechnic, Mr. (IM) on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 15.40 (IM) with the first question question "How do you as the Director prepare and determine the strategic plan of the Gorontalo Polytechnic in facing the dynamics of vocational colleges?. The informant said:

"If the Polytechnic works according to the SOP, service standards and minimum standards because there are already provisions. So, in the process of change/dynamics, it refers to the standards that have been standardized, so you don't have to wait for directions from the leadership because there are already procedures that are in accordance with the targets from the director, deputy director, lecturer to the bottom. So that decision-making is structured, for further development, we do it is the digitization of everything related to services, one of which is in the academic field, we make our own application that is integrated with PDDIKTI reporting which is one corridor/control. All decisions are through deliberation, so all decisions are not entirely taken by TOP MANAGEMENT, but agreements in meetings to give birth to fair decisions in study programs and units."

Based on the results of my interviews and observations as a researcher, I see that the way the Director of Gorontalo Polytechnic prepares a strategic plan is quite systematic and does not depend on sudden decisions. This campus works by referring to existing SOPs and standards, so that when there is a change or dynamics in the world of vocational education, each unit actually knows what to do without always having to wait for direct instructions from the leadership. This pattern makes the workflow and decision-making neater and more directed.

Next, my second question to the head of the Director of the Gorontalo Polytechnic "What is the direction of the long-term policy of the Gorontalo Polytechnic in maintaining the sustainability of the institution?" The informant replied:

"We make the organizational structure in the polygon more streamlined, which means that it is poor in structure but rich in functions so that what we do does not refer to tupoxi but synergize with each other, so all the work can be done by everyone and is related so, related to data updates, it is synchronized"

Based on the informant's answers and the results of my observations as a researcher, I consider that the long-term policy direction of Gorontalo Polytechnic emphasizes more on efficiency and internal collaboration. The organizational structure that is made more streamlined shows the institution's efforts to avoid bureaucracy that is too long, so that the work process can run faster and more flexibly. With the concept of "function-rich", every element in the organization is not only fixated on the main task and function alone, but is able to support each other according to the needs of the institution.

Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Director I of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 14.17 (M) with the question "How is the planning of student programs prepared to answer the dynamics of student needs?" The informant said:

"Regarding the implementation of education, the lectures must be in accordance with internal academic regulations related to reporting to PDDIKTI so that the request from PDDIKTI is fulfilled and the reporting is timely".

Based on the results of the interview, I as a researcher assessed that the preparation of the student program at Gorontalo Polytechnic was greatly influenced by the academic rules that had been set. Deputy Director I emphasized that the entire lecture process must run in accordance with internal regulations, especially those related to the obligation to report to PDDIKTI. This shows that in responding to the needs of students, the campus still prioritizes the regularity of the academic system in accordance with applicable regulations.

Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Director II of the Gorontalo Polytechnic on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 13:31 together (SH) with the question "How is financial planning prepared to support the institution's adaptive strategy?" The informant said:

"The finances are arranged so that the activities and strategies carried out by the institution can continue to run even though conditions often change. It usually starts from first looking at the most important needs, what are the goals to be achieved, and the challenges that may arise in the future. From there, the existing funds are arranged so that they are used according to priorities."

From the informant's explanation, it can be seen that the initial step is to see the most urgent needs, the targets to be achieved, and possible obstacles in the future. After that, the available funds are arranged based on a priority scale. In my opinion, this method makes the use of the budget more on target and helps the campus remain adaptive in dealing with various changes.

Furthermore, an interview with (DN) as the head of the General Administration/Administration and Assets section on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 13:47 with the question "How is administrative and service planning carried out to support the institution's strategy?" the informant said:

"Administrative and service planning is carried out by creating a service application. This application will be made by involving students and lecturers, so that the service process can be easier, faster, and more efficient. With this application, it is hoped that services in institutions can support the institution's strategy in improving service quality".

Based on the results of the interview, I as a researcher understood that administrative and service planning at Gorontalo Polytechnic was directed at the use of technology. The Head of the Administration Section explained that the campus is preparing a service application involving lecturers and students, so that the service process is no longer complicated and can run faster and practically.

From the informant's explanation, it can be seen that the use of this application is expected to make administrative services more efficient and accessible to the entire academic community. In my opinion, this step is in line with the institution's strategy to improve the quality of services, because in addition to simplifying the process, it also encourages the direct involvement of students and lecturers in the campus service system.

Furthermore, an interview with Moh. (AA) as a student of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16 at 13:41 with the question "Do students know the direction and policy of the development of Gorontalo Polytechnic?" The informant said:

"Students can actually know the direction and policy of the development of Gorontalo Polytechnic. Especially if students are involved in all existing programs, it is easier to understand where the campus development is going. That way, students also feel involved and concerned about the development of Gorontalo Polytechnic".

Based on the results of the interview with (AA), I as a researcher see that students actually quite understand the direction and development policies of Gorontalo Polytechnic, especially when they are directly involved in various campus programs. This involvement makes it easier for students to grasp where the institution's development is going, as well as foster a sense of belonging and care for the progress of the campus.

Furthermore, an interview with (AK) as a student of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16 at 14:00 with the question "How is student involvement in planning campus activities? The informant answered:

"Students are involved in planning campus activities by participating in various programs and activities arranged by the campus. Usually, students are invited to discuss, convey ideas, and be directly involved in the implementation of activities. That way, students can participate in providing input and feel that they have a role in every campus activity."

Meanwhile, from the interview with (AK), it can be seen that students are indeed given space to be involved in planning campus activities. Students are not only participants, but also invited to discuss, convey ideas, and participate directly in the implementation of activities. In my opinion, this kind of pattern makes students feel that they have a real role and voice in every activity carried out at Gorontalo Polytechnic.

### ***Ploy (Tactics)***

The ploy in question is the way. How can a higher university become a superior university. Identify ways to be able to outsmart competitors with a plan to deter, prevent, or influence competitors in a sportive way. Ploy is a short-term tactic.

Based on the results of an interview with the Director of the Gorontalo Polytechnic (IM) on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 15.40 (IM) with the question "What are the tactical steps of the leadership in responding to changes in government policies in the field of higher education?" The informant conveyed:

"The leaders' tactical steps in responding to changes in government policies in the field of higher education begin with first understanding the direction of the policy comprehensively. Leaders need to quickly grasp what the government's main goals are, then adjust them to campus conditions and needs. After that, leaders can invite lecturers and education staff to discuss together so that all parties understand and do not feel that this policy comes suddenly."

As a researcher, I see that the statement of the Director of the Gorontalo Polytechnic shows that there is a leadership attitude that is quite responsive and open to changes in government policies. From the results of the interview, it appears that the leadership does not immediately make unilateral decisions, but first tries to understand the direction and objectives of the policies set by the government. This step is important so that the policies implemented at the institutional level do not contradict the real conditions of the campus, both in terms of resources and internal needs.

Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Director I of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 14.17 (M) with the question "What strategies are used to increase student participation and achievement?" The informant said:

"The strategy used to increase student participation and achievement is to build collaboration in the creation of media tools in the form of **SAKTI** service applications. This application is designed as a forum that makes it easier for students to access various academic and non-academic services, so that they feel closer and involved with the campus system."

As a researcher, I see that the strategy described by the Deputy Director I of Gorontalo Polytechnic reflects reform efforts that are in line with the needs of current students. From the results of the interview, the development of the SAKTI service application is not only aimed at simplifying administrative affairs, but also as a medium that brings students closer to the campus system. Access to more practical academic and non-academic services makes students feel more connected and take part in campus activities.

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Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Director II of the Gorontalo Polytechnic on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 13:31 together (SH) with the question "Are there any special steps in optimizing institutional income sources?" The informant conveyed

"Yes, there are special steps taken to optimize the institution's source of income. One of them is by no longer relying entirely on grants from the provincial government. During receiving grants from the provincial government, almost all campus needs such as facilities and infrastructure, employee salaries, and other operational needs are still highly dependent on these funds. This condition is considered less safe for the long-term sustainability of the institution. Therefore, a decision was made that all students are required to pay tuition fees. This policy is carried out as an effort to make the campus have a more stable and independent source of income. With the existence of tuition fees, institutions can be more flexible in managing finances to meet operational needs without having to wait or depend on grants that are not always certain."

As a researcher, I see that the policy explained by the Deputy Director II of the Gorontalo Polytechnic reflects efforts to strengthen the financial independence of the institution. From the results of the interview, the decision to no longer rely entirely on provincial government grants is seen as an anticipatory step against future funding uncertainty. So far, most of the campus's needs, both facilities, operations, and employee financing, are still heavily reliant on these grants so that they are considered less secure for long-term sustainability.

Furthermore, an interview with (DN) as the head of the General Administration/Administration and Assets section on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 13:47 with the question "How is the use of technology in supporting adaptive services?" the informant said:

"The use of technology in supporting adaptive services has actually not been implemented optimally. Currently, most services are still carried out manually and have not been greatly assisted by digital systems or technology. This is due to limited resources and institutional readiness in developing technology-based services."

The informant explained that the use of technology to support adaptive services in the campus environment is still not running optimally. Currently, the service process is mostly still carried out manually and has not been fully supported by the digital system. This condition is influenced by the limited resources owned and the readiness of institutions that still need to be improved in developing technology-based services.

Furthermore, an interview with (AA) as a student of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16 at 13:41 with the question "Is there a special policy that is directly benefited by students?" The informant said:

"There is no special policy that is directly benefited by students. Precisely after the institution was released from the grant, new students began to feel the obligation to pay tuition fees. Previously, when they were still receiving grants, most of the campus's needs were covered from these funds so that students were not burdened with fees as they are now."

The informant said that until now there has been no specific policy that has really benefited directly by students. According to him, the most noticeable change actually emerged after the institution no longer received grants, where students began to be charged with tuition payment obligations. At the time when grants were still received, most of the campus's needs were supported by these funds so that students did not feel the burden of costs as is happening now

Furthermore, an interview with (AA) as a student of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16 at 14:00 with the question "Are there special policies that are directly felt by students?" The informant said:

"This change is quite felt for students because it is directly related to the cost of education. This tuition fee payment policy is more directed to maintain the sustainability of the institution's operations after no longer relying on grants, although from the student side this policy has not been fully felt as a direct benefit."

The informant explained that the tuition fee payment policy is indeed quite impactful for students because it is directly related to the cost of education that must be borne. This policy is understood as an institutional step to maintain the continuity of campus operations after no longer depending on grants. However, from the perspective of students, the policy cannot be fully felt as a direct benefit.

### ***Pettern***

Patterns are about strategies that have been implemented before. Some strategies have achieved the desired results, but some still need to be worked on. It has to do with how you have been executing the work you have been doing.

Based on the results of an interview with the Director of the Gorontalo Polytechnic, Mr. Ismail Mohidin on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 15.40 (IM) with the question "What leadership and decision-making patterns do you apply in managing the institution?" The informant said:

"We have set aside something for internal quality assurance that controls everything in the polygon related to academic and non-academic, so there will be findings by the Quality Auditor Team who report the findings that have been submitted and will be followed up and then evaluated."

Based on the results of the interview, I see that the leadership and decision-making pattern at Gorontalo Polytechnic has been carried out quite consistently through an internal quality assurance mechanism. From the

Director's explanation, it appears that the institution not only sets policies, but also builds repetitive work habits, especially in terms of supervision and evaluation of academic and non-academic activities. This pattern shows that every program that is carried out always goes through a process of monitoring, recording findings, and reporting by the quality auditor team, so that the implementation of activities does not run without control.

Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Director I of the Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 14.17 (M) with the question "How is the evaluation of student programs carried out in an ongoing manner?" The informant said:

"Through coordination to the study program, it is evaluated how lectures, guidance, final projects, internships are carried out, and external activities must remain coordinated with the study program and conveyed to their respective lecturers. The biggest challenge is the understanding of every university policy, whether or not students, lecturers or units in the university must understand. So it means that when they have understood, it automatically goes well, if it is coordinated, it goes well. So it is important when we socialize that we understand it to the lecturers and students."

In my opinion, as a researcher, the emphasis on understanding policy is an important point in this evaluation pattern. The informant emphasized that the main challenge is not only in the implementation of the program, but in the extent to which students, lecturers, and work units understand the direction and rules of the university. When the policy is well understood, the coordination process will run more smoothly and the evaluation can be carried out effectively. This shows that the success of the evaluation of student programs is highly dependent on a consistent socialization and communication process up to the level of lecturers and students

Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Director II of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 13:31 together (SH) with the question "What is the role of financial policy in strengthening the competitiveness of Gorontalo Polytechnic?" The informant said:

"Financial policy also helps to ensure that the programs run are truly in accordance with the needs of students and the world of work. The budget is directed to support activities that have a direct impact, such as strengthening vocational education, cooperation with industry, and developing student competencies. On the other hand, flexible and sustainable financial management makes Gorontalo Polytechnic more independent and not only dependent on one source of funding. This certainly affects the trust of partners and the community, so that it can indirectly increase the position and competitiveness of Gorontalo Polytechnic compared to other universities."

Based on the results of the interview, I see that financial policy has a fairly strategic role in shaping the pattern of strengthening the competitiveness of Gorontalo Polytechnic. From the explanation of the Deputy Director II, it can be seen that budget management is not just administrative, but is consciously directed to support programs that are really needed by students and relevant to the demands of the world of work. The focus on strengthening vocational education, collaboration with industry, and improving student competence shows that there is a consistent policy pattern between planning and implementation.

Furthermore, an interview with (DN) as the head of the General Administration/Administration and Assets section on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 13:47 with the question "How does the administration respond to changes in regulations and work systems?" The informant said:

"The administration has not been able to respond to changes in regulations and existing work systems. This is because most of the service processes are still carried out manually, so adjustments to new rules or systems have not been implemented optimally."

In my opinion, as a researcher, these findings illustrate the existence of implementation patterns that need serious attention for future improvements. Dependence on manual systems is an obstacle to implementing new regulations effectively. Therefore, changes in work patterns are needed, especially through the use of digital systems and increasing the capacity of human resources, so that the administration can be more adaptive and in harmony with the policy dynamics and demands of increasingly developing institutional management.

Furthermore, an interview with (AA) as a student of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16 at 13:41 with the question "What is the communication pattern between students and campus managers?" The informant conveyed

"The communication pattern between students and campus managers is quite close and runs well. This is because the number of managers on campus is not too many, so it is easier for students to interact directly without having to go through many intermediaries. In their daily lives, communication takes place in a relaxed, open, and non-rigid manner, both when taking care of academic needs and other things. This condition makes students feel more comfortable to convey their needs or complaints, while managers are also faster in responding."

In my opinion, as a researcher, this relaxed and non-rigid communication pattern has become a positive habit in campus life. Students feel more comfortable conveying their needs, inputs, and complaints, while the management can respond more quickly. This type of communication pattern shows a fairly harmonious relationship and supports the creation of a conducive campus environment, especially in supporting the smooth running of daily academic services and activities.

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**Position**

Strategy as a position views strategy as a way for organizations to position themselves in the external environment, especially in the market, in order to gain a competitive advantage. In this case, strategy is related to how the organization chooses market segments, determines products or services, and differentiates itself from competitors.

Based on the results of an interview with the Director of Gorontalo Polytechnic, Mr. Ismail Mohidin on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 15.40 (IM) with the question "How do you position Gorontalo Polytechnic in the national and regional vocational higher education system?" the informant said:

"We position Gorontalo Polytechnic as a vocational university that focuses on preparing graduates who are ready to work and in accordance with the needs of the industrial world, especially in the Gorontalo region and the Eastern Indonesia region. Nationally, Gorontalo Polytechnic plays a role in supporting the strengthening of vocational education by emphasizing practice, applied skills, and cooperation with the business world and the industrial world. Meanwhile, at the regional level, Gorontalo Polytechnic is one of the drivers of improving the quality of local human resources so that they can compete and contribute directly to regional development."

As a researcher, I see that Gorontalo Polytechnic is positioned as a vocational campus that emphasizes on the work readiness of graduates and suitability with industrial needs. Nationally, this campus supports the strengthening of vocational education through more practical learning and cooperation with the business world.

Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Director I of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 14.17 (M) with the question "What is the superior student affairs program that differentiates Gorontalo Polytechnic?" The informant said:

"The flagship student affairs program at Gorontalo Polytechnic emphasizes more on developing practical skills and student character. Some of the programs that make a difference include industrial internship programs that are integrated with lectures, student entrepreneurship activities based on local potential, and soft skills development such as leadership, teamwork, and work ethic. In addition, students are also encouraged to be active in vocational competitions, community service activities, and applied projects so that they have real experience before graduating."

Based on the results of the interviews, the student affairs program at Gorontalo Polytechnic is more focused on strengthening practical skills and forming student attitudes. Differentiating programs include industrial internships that are directly connected to lectures, student entrepreneurship activities based on local potential, and soft skills development such as leadership, teamwork, and work ethic.

Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Director II of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 13:31 together (SH) with the question "What is the role of financial policy in strengthening the competitiveness of Gorontalo Polytechnic?" the informant said:

"Financial policy has a big role in increasing the competitiveness of Gorontalo Polytechnic. Budget management is sought as efficiently as possible and is really directed to the main needs, such as student practice facilities, improving lecturer capabilities, as well as student activities and cooperation with industry. With good and open financial management, Gorontalo Polytechnic can continue to improve the quality of vocational learning and be better prepared to compete, both at the regional and national levels."

Based on the results of the interviews, financial policy has a fairly important role in supporting the competitiveness of Gorontalo Polytechnic. Budget management is carried out as effectively as possible and focused on the main needs, such as the provision of student practice facilities, the improvement of lecturer competence, as well as support for student activities and cooperation with the industrial world.

Furthermore, an interview with (DN) as the head of the General Administration/Administration and Assets section on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 13:47 with the question "What is the role of administration in supporting the quality of institutional services?" The informant said:

"Administration plays an important role in supporting the quality of institutional services, especially in ensuring that administrative services run smoothly and responsively. We always try to adapt to every change that exists, especially those related to technological developments. When there is a new system or digital-based service update, the administration is ready to adapt so that services to lecturers, students, and related parties remain fast, easy, and efficient."

Based on the results of the interview, administration has an important role in supporting the quality of campus services, especially so that administrative affairs can run smoothly. The informant explained that the administration always tries to keep up with every change, especially related to technology.

Furthermore, an interview with (AA) as a student of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16 at 13:41 with the question "Does the campus program support students' readiness to face the world of work?" the informant said:

"In my opinion, the campus program is enough to support students' readiness to enter the world of work. There are many activities that provide hands-on experience, such as internships, practice in the field, and project work. In addition, the campus also equips students with soft skills, such as teamwork,

communication, and responsibility, which are needed in the world of work. So, before graduating, students already have an idea and provisions to face the real world of work."

What I found from the results of the interviews and observations of the informant considers that the campus program is enough to help students prepare to enter the world of work. Activities such as internships, field practices, and projects provide useful hands-on experience.

### *Perspective*

Strategy as perspective means strategy is understood as a way of view, values, and culture that is shared by members of the organization. This perspective shapes how the organization thinks and acts in dealing with various situations. Strong values and culture will influence strategic decisions and become the identity of the organization in the long run.

Based on the results of an interview with the Director of Gorontalo Polytechnic, Mr. Ismail Mohidin on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 15.40 (IM) with the question "How do you build an adaptive culture in the academic community?": the informant said:

"Related to decisions and evaluations, we always discuss them in the academic meeting forum that we hold every Monday. So, there we can see what academic activities are like and what the obstacles are every time making strategic decisions that have consequences for policies, for example on finance, dismissal of students or lecturers, it is a big obstacle that must be taken by the leadership by discovering facts that will be a reference in making decisions according to data so as not to harm other parties."

Based on the results of the interviews, an adaptive culture is built through regular academic meetings every Monday. In this forum, leaders and academics discuss important activities, obstacles, and decisions that have a wide impact. Every decision is made based on data and facts so that it remains fair and does not harm other parties.

Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Director I of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 14.17 (M) with the question "How to build adaptive and competitive student character?" the informant said:

"Through coordination to the study program, it is evaluated how lectures, guidance, final projects, internships, and external activities must remain coordinated with the study program and conveyed to their respective lecturers. The biggest challenge is in understanding every university policy whether or not students, lecturers or units in the university must understand. So it means that they already understand automation if it is coordinated, it runs well. So it is important when it is socialized that we understand it to the lecturers and students."

Based on the results of the interview, the formation of adaptive student character is carried out through good coordination with the study program. Activities such as lectures, guidance, final projects, internships, and off-campus activities are always evaluated and communicated to the relevant lecturers.

The informant also said that the main challenge is in understanding campus policies. If lecturers and students already understand through clear socialization, then coordination will run more smoothly and the goals of student development can be achieved.

Furthermore, based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Director II of the Gorontalo Polytechnic on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 13:31 together (SH) with the question "How to build a culture of financial transparency and accountability?" The informant conveyed:

"The informant said that the development of a culture of transparency and financial accountability at the Gorontalo Polytechnic is carried out through strengthening an orderly, open, and in accordance with applicable regulations. Transparency is realized by the disclosure of budget information to related units, while accountability is carried out through a structured financial planning, implementation, reporting, and evaluation mechanism. In addition, the leadership encourages internal supervision and improvement of the competence of human resources in the financial sector so that every use of the budget can be accounted for administratively and substantively."

Based on the results of the interviews, a culture of financial transparency and accountability is built through neat, open, and rule-compliant financial management. Budget information is shared with relevant units so that their use can be understood together.

In addition, financial management is carried out through clear stages, starting from planning to evaluation. The leadership also encourages internal supervision and improvement of the ability of financial human resources so that every use of the budget can be properly accounted for.

Furthermore, an interview with (DN) as the head of the General Administration/Administration and Assets section on Monday, December 15, 2025 at 13:47 with the question "How to build an adaptive work culture in the education personnel environment? The informant said:

"The development of an adaptive work culture in the education workforce environment is carried out through increasing the readiness of human resources in facing changes, both in terms of policies, technology, and service demands".

Based on the results of observational interviews and findings, an adaptive work culture is built by preparing education personnel to be ready to face changes, both related to policies, technology, and increasingly growing service demands.

Furthermore, an interview with (AA) as a student of Gorontalo Polytechnic on Tuesday, December 16 at 13:41 with the question "How does the campus form an adaptive and professional attitude in students? The informant said:

"Students are accustomed to being disciplined, responsible, and ready to face the demands of the world of work, through practical activities, fieldwork, and student organizations, students learn to adapt to various situations and conditions"

Based on the results of interviews and research, students' adaptive and professional attitudes are formed through the habituation of discipline and responsibility. Practical activities, fieldwork, and student organizations help them learn to adapt to various conditions and demands of the world of work.

## DISCUSSION

### *Plan*

One of the findings in this study shows that the strategic planning of the Gorontalo Polytechnic is prepared consciously, systematically, and based on SOPs and service standards that have been standardized. This finding is in accordance with Mintzberg's view that strategy as a *Plan* is intended to achieve organizational goals. In this context, strategic planning is positioned as the institution's initial response in facing the dynamics of vocational universities that continue to develop.

However, the researcher sees that there are still supporting theories besides the view of Mintzberg, namely the perspective of *Neo and Chen 2007 dynamic governance* in the aspect of *Thinking Ahead*, namely thinking ahead, the ability of leaders and organizations to anticipate changes, opportunities, and threats in the future so that they are not just reactive, as well as those found in the explanation of Eddy Yunus (2016:3), he explained that Strategy is a one that has been arranged by organizational leaders to achieve results that are in line with the desired organizational goals and those that have been stated (Priyono, 2020) Strategy is a systematic planning activity of policymakers (main leaders) who are oriented towards organizational goals with a long range of time in the future, where in planning to achieve the goals that have been set.

From some of the views above, it is in line with the researcher's view that Gorontalo Polytechnic universities when facing external and internal dynamics of polytechnics have prepared a responsive and anticipatory strategy in facing the dynamics of universities that continue to develop

This condition shows that the organization moves in a directional manner in the midst of change. This is in line with Zulkarnain's view that dynamics are a force that always moves, develops, and adjusts to certain circumstances. With SOPs and standards, Gorontalo Polytechnic is able to manage these dynamics in a controlled and non-reactive manner. The researcher sees that the strategy carried out by Gorontalo Polytechnic in dealing with the dynamics of higher education is quite responsive, able to think ahead because it has been designed by the organization in accordance with its targets.

One of the important findings in this study is the long-term policy of the Gorontalo Polytechnic which emphasizes a lean but function-rich organizational structure. This policy is in accordance with the concept of *Dynamic Governance*, especially the *thinking ahead* capability, which emphasizes the importance of anticipating change. In addition, this flexible structure reflects Zulkarnain's view that dynamics require organizations to be able to adapt to changing conditions in a sustainable manner.

### *Ploy*

The results of this study show that the self-financing policy through tuition payment obligations is the most prominent form of *ploy* or tactic. The change from dependence on grant funds to a self-financing system or students starting to finance their own education through tuition payments is a tactical step to overcome the uncertainty of short-term funding. This strategy is in line with Griffin's (2004) view on the importance of resource management flexibility in maintaining organizational sustainability. However, when contrasted with the views of Mykola Kovalenko and Oksana Lomonosov who say that the adaptation process support system in higher education institutions should provide for the development of an action program for the adaptation of the institution to the challenges of the external environment, which includes adequate organizational and economic adaptation measures, providing for the entire complex of actions – from the mobilization of all available competitive factors, finance, labor and other resources to the retraining of staff, etc., taking into account the principles of adaptive processes.

As for what was stated by Leonard D. White and The Liang Gie, it is emphasized that administration is not just about decision-making, but also the process of maintaining a balance of interests of various parties. In this context, the *ploy* or tactic of the researcher sees that it is necessary to strengthen the communication mechanism so that this policy is not seen as a one-sided burden.

From the perspective of *Dynamic Governance*, the *ploy* strategy or tactics are in accordance with the ability of *Dynamic Governance*, namely *thinking again* because the Gorontalo polytechnic is able to adjust policies quickly after facing environmental changes, however, the researcher sees or balances with *thinking across*, especially

uniting the views of students and educators as policy users. Because this condition strengthens the view that an effective tactical strategy is not only determined by the speed of response, but also by the extent to which the organization is able to build understanding across actors.

### **Pattern**

The results of this study reveal that in the administrative aspect, there are still patterns or habits strategies put forward by *Minzberg* that are not fully adaptive, especially due to dependence on manual systems. From the view of *Rojas & Chiappe (2024)* found that the digital ecosystem has radically changed higher education, changing the way students learn, teachers teach, and the function of institutions. Technology allows for teaching and teaching learning, and the function of institutions is more efficient, accessible, and adjustable.

Researchers see that this pattern or habit strategy shows a limitation in the ability of *Dynamic Governance*, namely in the aspect of *thinking across*, because the integration of systems and resources has not been optimal. This finding is in line with the perspective of *Wedlin (2006)*, the global ranking list has developed into an important tool for assessing the quality of education. Not only at the local and national levels, but also at the global level, there is competition among universities. Thus, *the pattern* at Gorontalo Polytechnic still shows a gap that should follow technological developments but has not been fully implemented

### **Position**

The results of the study show that Gorontalo Polytechnic consistently positions itself as a vocational university that emphasizes the work readiness of graduates and the mastery of applied skills. This position can be justified through the perspective of *Tilaar (2012)*, who states that global changes, quality demands, and job market needs require universities to adjust their orientation and management models. Likewise, the view (*Nizam, 2024*) Universities are encouraged to increase synergy with industry and the government, build an entrepreneurial spirit, and improve the efficiency of the research budget. The researcher sees the position By choosing a vocational focus, Gorontalo Polytechnic is leading to respond to these dynamics contextually, especially in answering the needs of skilled workers in the Gorontalo region and the Eastern Indonesia region.

The emphasis on practice-based learning, strengthening cooperation with the business world and the industrial world, and adjusting the curriculum to the needs of the job market reflect the institution's ability to adapt to the external environment. These findings are in line with the theory of *Dynamic Governance* by *Neo and Chen (2007)*, especially on the pillar of *thinking ahead*, which is the organization's ability to anticipate changes and future needs. In this context, Gorontalo Polytechnic is not reactive, but proactively prepares graduates who are relevant to the development of the world of work.

Student programs such as integrated industrial internships, local potential-based entrepreneurship, and *soft skills development* can be understood as strategic instruments to strengthen the position of Gorontalo Polytechnic as a vocational university because according to (*Ruslan, 2014*) students consider the quality and facilities of the campus when choosing a university. These factors include job opportunities and academic programs From the perspective of organizational management theory according to *Griffin (2004)*, this step shows efforts to optimize organizational functions and resources to achieve institutional goals. In addition, this approach also reflects the pillar of *thinking across* in *Dynamic Governance*, namely the ability of organizations to learn from cross-sectoral practices, especially the industrial world.

### **Perspective**

The results of the study also show that the habit of regular discussion and evaluation is part of the work culture of Gorontalo Polytechnic. This finding can be understood based on the theory of organizational dynamics of *Robbins (2003)* and *Daft (2010)*, which affirms that organizations in dynamic environments require internal reflection mechanisms to maintain sustainability of performance. At the same time, the evaluation practice reflects the principle of rationality in decision-making as stated by *Herbert A. Simon*, where strategic decisions are made carefully by considering information and policy impacts.

From the perspective of the researcher, adaptive management strategies at Gorontalo Polytechnic are supported by a shared perspective that emphasizes discipline, responsibility, and readiness to face change The description of the research results confirms that institutional policies are understood not just as written rules, but as common guidelines that must be carried out consistently by all elements of the campus. This finding is in line with the view of *The Liang Gie (1979)* who stated that administration is a series of cooperative activities that require a common understanding of work objectives and rules. In addition, the consistency of cross-field policy implementation also shows the integration of organizational functions as emphasized in the theory of organizational management by *Griffin (2004)*, especially in maintaining harmony between planning and implementation.

Overall, this discussion shows that the strategy as *a perspective* at Gorontalo Polytechnic is reflected in the culture of discussion, evaluation, coordination, and discipline that develops in the campus environment. This perspective is an important foundation in the implementation of adaptive management and supports the sustainability of higher education management in the midst of the dynamics of the evolving higher education environment.

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## CONCLUSION

Judging from the aspect of the Plan, Gorontalo Polytechnic has a strategic plan that is prepared systematically and directed. The planning is based on SOPs, service standards, and applicable academic regulations, so that each work unit has clear guidelines in carrying out its duties. This planning is flexible and allows the institution to adapt to changes without having to rely on sudden decisions of the leadership.

From the aspect of Ploy, Gorontalo Polytechnic implements short-term tactical measures in responding to changes in government policies and institutional sustainability challenges. These steps include through deliberation in decision-making, strengthening internal collaboration, utilizing academic service technology, and financial independence policies through the implementation of tuition fee payments. This strategy shows the institution's efforts to survive and develop independently, although on the student side the policy has not been fully felt as a direct benefit.

Based on the Pattern aspect, it can be seen. Work patterns that need to be improved, especially in the administrative field that still depends on manual systems so that they are less responsive to changes in regulations and work systems.

In terms of position, Gorontalo Polytechnic positions itself as a vocational university that is oriented towards the creation of job-ready graduates and in accordance with the needs of the industrial world, especially in the Gorontalo region and the Eastern Indonesia region. Superior programs such as integrated industrial internships, entrepreneurship development based on local potential, and strengthening soft skills are the differentiators of Gorontalo Polytechnic compared to other universities. This position is strengthened by financial policies focused on improving the quality of vocational learning, practice facilities, and lecturer competence.

Meanwhile, viewed from the perspective aspect, Gorontalo Polytechnic has built an adaptive culture characterized by data-based decision-making, transparency, accountability, and evaluation habits through regular academic meeting forums. The values of discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and readiness to face the world of work are also instilled in students through practical activities, fieldwork, and student organizations. This culture forms a shared perspective of the academic community in facing institutional changes and challenges

## SUGGESTIONS

Gorontalo Polytechnic is advised to continue to strengthen existing strategic planning by increasing the involvement of all work units in the process of formulating and evaluating plans. In addition, it is necessary to conduct periodic reviews of SOPs, service standards, and academic regulations to remain relevant to the dynamics of higher education policies and the needs of stakeholders, especially students and the industrial world.

The short-term tactical strategy that has been implemented needs to be optimized by paying attention to the impact of policies on students. Therefore, Gorontalo Polytechnic is advised to increase policy socialization and transparency, especially related to financial independence and the use of academic service technology, so that students can feel the benefits more clearly and sustainably

Given the still dependence on the manual administration system, Gorontalo Polytechnic is advised to accelerate the digitization of academic and non-academic administration. Strengthening the integrated information system is expected to be able to create a work pattern that is more effective, responsive, and adaptive to changes in regulations and the demands of modern university governance

To strengthen its position as a leading vocational university, Gorontalo Polytechnic is advised to continue to expand its cooperation network with the industrial world, both at the regional and national levels. In addition, the development of superior programs based on industrial needs and local potential needs to be carried out on a sustainable basis so that the competitiveness of graduates increases.

The adaptive culture that has been formed needs to be maintained and developed consistently through strengthening participatory leadership, data-driven decision-making, and continuous performance evaluation. Gorontalo Polytechnic is also advised to continue to instill the values of discipline, responsibility, and work readiness in students to be in line with the vision of an adaptive and future-oriented vocational university.

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