

Collective governance models within advanced academic settings across Southeast Asian context: empirical exploration grounded on HCM philosophy

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ABSTRACT

The transformation of governance structures in higher education institutions across Southeast Asia has increasingly emphasized participatory, inclusive, and collective decision-making frameworks. This study examines collective governance models within advanced academic settings, with a specific analytical focus on Vietnam and the philosophical foundations derived from Ho Chi Minh (HCM) thought. The research investigates how governance practices integrate democratic participation, institutional leadership, and knowledge management systems to enhance academic quality and institutional effectiveness. Drawing on a qualitative-analytical methodology, the study synthesizes empirical insights from existing literature and theoretical constructs to evaluate the alignment between governance models and socio-political ideologies.

The findings indicate that collective governance in Southeast Asian higher education is characterized by hybrid structures combining centralized authority with participatory mechanisms. HCM philosophy contributes significantly to shaping leadership paradigms, emphasizing moral responsibility, collective accountability, and people-centered governance. The integration of internationalization strategies, knowledge management systems, and innovative pedagogical practices further strengthens participatory institutional frameworks. However, structural limitations, including administrative capacity constraints, uneven stakeholder engagement, and policy inconsistencies, hinder the full realization of democratic governance.

The study contributes to academic discourse by proposing a conceptual governance framework that integrates ideological, institutional, and operational dimensions. It highlights the importance of aligning governance practices with cultural and philosophical contexts while adapting to global educational trends. The research offers practical implications for policymakers and institutional leaders aiming to enhance governance effectiveness in higher education systems. Additionally, it identifies critical gaps in empirical validation and comparative regional studies, suggesting avenues for future research.

KEYWORDS

Collective governance, higher education, Southeast Asia, Ho Chi Minh philosophy, participatory leadership, institutional management, academic systems, democratic practices.

INTRODUCTION

The governance of higher education institutions has undergone significant transformation in response to globalization, technological advancement, and socio-political change. In Southeast Asia, these transformations are particularly complex due to the intersection of traditional governance structures, state influence, and

emerging demands for institutional autonomy and democratic participation. Vietnam represents a distinctive case where ideological foundations, particularly those rooted in Ho Chi Minh (HCM) philosophy, continue to shape governance practices within academic institutions.

Collective governance models have emerged as a critical paradigm in higher education, emphasizing shared decision-making, stakeholder engagement, and institutional accountability. These models challenge traditional hierarchical structures by incorporating participatory mechanisms that involve faculty, students, and administrative stakeholders. The relevance of such governance frameworks is increasingly recognized in enhancing institutional effectiveness, promoting academic quality, and fostering democratic values within educational systems.

The problem addressed in this study lies in the gap between theoretical governance ideals and practical implementation within Southeast Asian higher education contexts. While democratic and participatory governance models are widely advocated, their operationalization remains inconsistent and often constrained by structural, cultural, and administrative factors. In Vietnam, this challenge is further compounded by the need to reconcile global academic standards with socialist-oriented ideological frameworks derived from HCM thought.

This research aims to explore how collective governance models are conceptualized and implemented within advanced academic settings in Southeast Asia, with a particular focus on Vietnam. It seeks to analyze the extent to which HCM philosophy influences governance structures and practices, and how these influences interact with contemporary educational reforms. The study also examines the role of internationalization, knowledge management, and leadership development in shaping governance dynamics.

The scope of the research encompasses theoretical analysis and empirical synthesis based on existing literature. It focuses on higher education institutions in Vietnam while situating the discussion within the broader Southeast Asian context. The significance of the study lies in its contribution to understanding how ideological frameworks can inform modern governance practices in higher education. It also provides insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing collective governance models in transitional educational systems.

2. Literature Review

The literature on higher education governance highlights a growing emphasis on democratic participation and institutional accountability. Angyagre (2025) explores the role of democratic education in fostering critical engagement among students, emphasizing the importance of participatory learning environments. Similarly, Zehadi and Jahan (2025) demonstrate how teaching practices can promote democratic values, suggesting that governance structures must align with pedagogical approaches to achieve meaningful outcomes.

Chankseliani et al. (2025) examine the relationship between international study and democratic consciousness, indicating that exposure to global academic environments enhances students' engagement with participatory governance. This perspective is particularly relevant in Southeast Asia, where internationalization is a key driver of educational reform (Ryu & Nguyen, 2021). Hoai et al. (2023) further argue that internationalization strategies contribute to improving institutional quality by fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange.

The role of knowledge management systems in higher education governance is highlighted by Khoa and Huynh (2023), who demonstrate their impact on motivation and satisfaction among academic stakeholders. These systems facilitate information sharing and collaborative decision-making, which are essential components of collective governance models. Mesny et al. (2026) extend this discussion by analyzing innovative assessment practices, emphasizing the need for governance structures that support pedagogical innovation.

Vietnam-specific studies provide critical insights into governance challenges and opportunities. Nguyen et al. (2016) and Tran et al. (2020) highlight the limitations of administrative capacity and the need for institutional reforms to enhance governance effectiveness. Pham and Starkey (2016) emphasize perceptions of quality in higher education, linking governance practices to institutional performance. Pham and Le (2023) explore entrepreneurial education, suggesting that governance models must support innovation and student engagement.

The influence of HCM philosophy on governance is extensively discussed in foundational works (Ho Chi Minh, 2011, Vols. 4, 5, 10). These works emphasize principles such as collective leadership, moral integrity, and public accountability. Quy et al. (2025) analyze the application of HCM ideology in leadership development, highlighting its relevance in contemporary institutional contexts.

Ramos et al. (2025) provide a broader perspective on democratic participation, examining youth engagement in governance processes. Their findings underscore the importance of institutional frameworks that facilitate meaningful participation. Thanh and Anh (2025) further explore the role of individual characteristics in collaborative platforms, indicating that governance effectiveness depends on both structural and behavioral factors.

Despite extensive research, significant gaps remain. There is limited integration of ideological perspectives with empirical governance models, particularly in Southeast Asia. Additionally, comparative analyses across institutions and regions are scarce, limiting the generalizability of findings. This study addresses these

gaps by synthesizing theoretical and empirical insights to develop a comprehensive understanding of collective governance models.

3. Conceptual Framework of Collective Governance

Collective governance in higher education refers to systems where decision-making authority is distributed among multiple stakeholders, including faculty, administrators, and students. This model contrasts with centralized governance structures by emphasizing collaboration and shared responsibility.

The theoretical foundation of collective governance is rooted in democratic theory, organizational behavior, and institutional management. It incorporates principles of participation, transparency, and accountability. In the Southeast Asian context, these principles are adapted to align with socio-political and cultural frameworks, resulting in hybrid governance models.

HCM philosophy provides a unique ideological foundation for collective governance. It emphasizes the role of leadership as a service to the people, advocating for inclusive decision-making and moral responsibility. This philosophical framework aligns with modern governance theories, reinforcing the importance of ethical leadership and stakeholder engagement.

4. Governance Structures in Southeast Asian Higher Education

Higher education governance in Southeast Asia is characterized by diversity and complexity. Institutions operate within varying regulatory frameworks, ranging from centralized state control to autonomous governance structures. In Vietnam, governance is influenced by state policies and ideological frameworks, resulting in a hybrid model that combines centralized oversight with participatory mechanisms.

Administrative capacity plays a critical role in determining governance effectiveness (Tran et al., 2020). Limited resources and bureaucratic constraints often hinder the implementation of collective governance models. However, ongoing reforms aimed at decentralization and institutional autonomy are gradually transforming governance structures.

5. Role of HCM Philosophy in Institutional Governance

HCM philosophy emphasizes collective leadership, ethical conduct, and public accountability. These principles are particularly relevant in higher education governance, where leadership decisions impact academic quality and institutional performance.

The application of HCM ideology in leadership

development is evident in Vietnam's higher education system (Quy et al., 2025). Leaders are expected to prioritize collective interests and foster inclusive decision-making processes. This approach enhances stakeholder trust and promotes institutional cohesion.

6. Integration of Internationalization and Governance

Internationalization is a key driver of governance transformation in higher education. It introduces global standards and practices, encouraging institutions to adopt participatory governance models. Ryu and Nguyen (2021) highlight the role of policy frameworks in facilitating internationalization, while Hoai et al. (2023) emphasize its impact on institutional quality.

However, the integration of international practices with local governance structures presents challenges. Institutions must balance global expectations with cultural and ideological considerations, ensuring that governance models remain contextually relevant.

7. Knowledge Management and Participatory Systems

Knowledge management systems are essential for effective collective governance. They facilitate information sharing, collaboration, and decision-making processes (Khoa & Huynh, 2023). These systems enhance transparency and enable stakeholders to participate actively in governance.

The use of digital platforms further supports participatory governance by enabling communication and collaboration among stakeholders (Thanh & Anh, 2025). However, technological adoption requires adequate infrastructure and training to ensure effectiveness.

8. Leadership, Innovation, and Institutional Performance

Leadership plays a central role in shaping governance outcomes. Effective leaders foster collaboration, support innovation, and ensure accountability. Mesny et al. (2026) highlight the importance of innovative practices in enhancing educational outcomes, suggesting that governance structures must support experimentation and adaptation.

Entrepreneurial education also contributes to institutional performance by promoting innovation and student engagement (Pham & Le, 2023). Governance models that encourage entrepreneurial initiatives are better positioned to respond to changing educational demands.

9. Results / Findings

The analysis reveals that collective governance models in Southeast Asian higher education exhibit a hybrid structure integrating centralized authority with

participatory mechanisms. Institutions in Vietnam demonstrate a gradual shift toward inclusive governance, influenced by both global educational trends and HCM philosophical principles.

First, participatory decision-making is increasingly institutionalized through committees, academic councils, and stakeholder forums. These mechanisms enable faculty and students to contribute to governance processes, enhancing transparency and accountability. However, the extent of participation varies across institutions, reflecting differences in administrative capacity and organizational culture.

Second, HCM philosophy significantly shapes leadership practices, emphasizing collective responsibility and ethical governance. Institutional leaders adopt participatory approaches that align with ideological principles, fostering a sense of shared ownership among stakeholders. This alignment enhances institutional cohesion and supports the implementation of governance reforms.

Third, internationalization initiatives contribute to governance transformation by introducing global best practices. Collaborative programs, student exchanges, and partnerships with international institutions promote knowledge exchange and enhance governance effectiveness. However, the adaptation of these practices requires careful consideration of local contexts.

Fourth, knowledge management systems play a critical role in facilitating collective governance. These systems enable information sharing and support collaborative decision-making, improving stakeholder engagement. Digital platforms further enhance participation by providing accessible communication channels.

Fifth, leadership and innovation are key determinants of governance outcomes. Institutions that prioritize innovative practices and entrepreneurial education demonstrate higher levels of stakeholder engagement and institutional performance. Leadership effectiveness is closely linked to the ability to integrate diverse perspectives and manage organizational change.

Despite these positive developments, several challenges persist. Administrative constraints, limited resources, and policy inconsistencies hinder the full implementation of collective governance models. Additionally, disparities in stakeholder participation and technological access create barriers to inclusive governance.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of integrating ideological, institutional, and technological dimensions to achieve effective collective governance in higher education.

10. Discussion

The findings underscore the complex interplay between ideological frameworks, institutional structures, and global influences in shaping governance models. The integration of HCM philosophy with contemporary governance practices provides a unique perspective on collective leadership, emphasizing ethical responsibility and stakeholder engagement.

Compared to existing literature, this study confirms the importance of participatory governance in enhancing institutional effectiveness (Angyagre, 2025; Ramos et al., 2025). However, it also highlights the limitations of theoretical models when applied in resource-constrained environments. The variability in governance implementation across institutions reflects the influence of contextual factors such as administrative capacity and organizational culture.

The role of internationalization in governance transformation is consistent with previous studies (Ryu & Nguyen, 2021; Hoai et al., 2023). However, this study extends the discussion by emphasizing the need for contextual adaptation. The integration of global practices must consider local ideological and cultural frameworks to ensure sustainability.

Knowledge management systems emerge as critical enablers of collective governance, supporting findings by Khoa and Huynh (2023). However, their effectiveness depends on technological infrastructure and user engagement. This highlights the importance of capacity building and training in implementing digital governance tools.

The study also identifies leadership as a central factor in governance outcomes. The alignment of leadership practices with HCM philosophy enhances stakeholder trust and institutional cohesion. However, the reliance on ideological frameworks may limit flexibility in adapting to rapidly changing educational environments.

Limitations of the study include its reliance on secondary data and the lack of empirical fieldwork. Future research should incorporate case studies and quantitative analysis to validate the proposed framework. Additionally, comparative studies across Southeast Asian countries would provide a broader understanding of governance dynamics.

11. Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of collective governance models in Southeast Asian higher education, with a focus on Vietnam and the influence of HCM philosophy. It demonstrates that effective governance requires the integration of participatory mechanisms, ethical leadership, and technological support systems.

The research contributes to academic discourse by developing a conceptual framework that aligns ideological principles with contemporary governance practices. It highlights the importance of contextual adaptation in implementing global educational reforms and underscores the role of leadership in fostering inclusive governance.

Future research should focus on empirical validation and comparative analysis to enhance the generalizability of findings. Policymakers and institutional leaders can use the insights from this study to design governance models that promote participation, innovation, and institutional effectiveness.

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