

A phenomenological management model for design basic education at universities in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province

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ABSTRACT

This study developed a phenomenological management model for Design Basic Education in universities in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province. Using a mixed-methods design, the researcher reviewed relevant literature, interviewed 15 administrators and teachers from three universities, surveyed 389 teachers and administrators from a population of 3,390, and validated the proposed model through a focus group with 11 experts. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, while qualitative data were analyzed through content analysis. Findings revealed challenges including insufficient teacher competencies, low student motivation, limited administrative effectiveness, inflexible curriculum objectives, inadequate evaluation systems, and insufficient teaching resources. Six essential management components were identified: teacher management, student management, administrator management, curriculum management, teaching evaluation management, and teaching resource management. The phenomenological management model emphasizes teacher professional development, student-centered learning, collaborative administration, meaningful curriculum design, diversified evaluation, and adequate resource provision. The model offers practical guidance for improving the quality and effectiveness of Design Basic Education management and may support educational policy and institutional development.

KEYWORDS: Management Model, Design Basic Education, Phenomenology, Universities in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province.

Introduction

Design Basic Education serves as the foundation for cultivating students' creativity, aesthetic perception, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, which are essential competencies for future designers in a rapidly changing global society. As higher education institutions increasingly face challenges arising from technological innovation, globalization, interdisciplinary collaboration, and changing industry expectations, the

management of Design Basic Education has become a critical issue for educational quality and sustainable institutional development. Effective educational management is not only concerned with curriculum delivery but also with the development of teachers, students, learning resources, assessment systems, and organizational leadership that collectively influence educational outcomes.

The development of art and design education has undergone significant

transformation over time. According to Li and Lu (2021), art and design education has evolved from traditional apprenticeship and mentoring models toward more comprehensive and diversified educational systems influenced by social change, technological advancement, and economic development. As design disciplines continue to expand their scope and complexity, universities are required to provide learning environments that support creativity, innovation, interdisciplinary thinking, and authentic learning experiences.

However, previous studies have identified several challenges affecting the quality of Design Basic Education. Zhu (2008) argued that the rapid expansion of higher education has resulted in various educational management problems, including inadequate teaching resources, imbalanced teacher-student ratios, insufficient professional development opportunities for teachers, declining teaching quality, and increasing difficulties in graduate employability. Similarly, Shilin et al. (2018) pointed out that Design Basic Education in universities often remains confined within disciplinary boundaries, emphasizing technical skills and knowledge transmission while neglecting interdisciplinary learning, real-world problem-solving, and broader social engagement. Furthermore, the integration of information technology into design education remains limited due to insufficient understanding and application by educators.

These challenges are particularly relevant to universities in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province. As one of the important innovation-driven cities within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Zhuhai is experiencing rapid economic, technological, and cultural development. Universities in Zhuhai are expected to cultivate graduates who possess

not only professional design competencies but also creativity, innovation capabilities, cross-cultural understanding, and adaptability to emerging industries. Consequently, improving the management of Design Basic Education has become increasingly important for enhancing educational quality and preparing students to meet contemporary social and industrial demands.

From an educational management perspective, previous studies have emphasized that educational quality is influenced by multiple interconnected factors. Teacher development plays a central role in educational effectiveness because teachers' professional competence, subject knowledge, reflective practice, creativity, ethical values, and continuous professional development directly affect student learning outcomes (Hu, 2005; Schön, 1987; Dall'Alba & Sandberg, 2006). In addition, student-related factors, including learning motivation, learning attitudes, learning interests, and learning strategies, significantly influence academic achievement and engagement in educational activities (Biesta, 2010).

Administrative leadership is another critical component affecting educational quality. Educational administrators are responsible for creating supportive learning environments, coordinating educational resources, promoting collaboration among stakeholders, and facilitating curriculum implementation. Effective leadership contributes to organizational development and educational improvement through communication, decision-making, and resource management.

Curriculum management is equally important in Design Basic Education. Contemporary curriculum development emphasizes meaningful learning experiences, authentic learning contexts, and learner-centered approaches rather than

merely transmitting disciplinary knowledge. Curriculum objectives, content organization, course sequencing, and learning experiences should be designed to support students' intellectual and professional growth. Furthermore, effective teaching evaluation systems are necessary for assessing both learning processes and learning outcomes while providing meaningful feedback for continuous improvement. The availability and management of teaching resources, including physical facilities, learning materials, digital technologies, and online resource systems, also contribute significantly to the effectiveness of educational management.

To better understand these educational issues, this study adopts a phenomenological perspective. Phenomenology seeks to return “to the things themselves” and explore the essence of lived experiences through the perceptions, meanings, and interpretations of individuals (Husserl, 1913; Husserl, 1950; Moran, 2000; Zahavi, 2003). In educational research, phenomenology provides a valuable approach for understanding how participants experience educational phenomena and how meaning is constructed within educational contexts (Smith, 2009; Lai, 2017). Rather than focusing solely on observable educational structures, phenomenology enables researchers to explore the experiences of teachers, students, and administrators who directly participate in Design Basic Education.

Although previous studies have discussed specific issues related to design education, teacher development, curriculum innovation, and educational management, limited research has systematically investigated the current situation and management components of Design Basic Education from a phenomenological perspective within the context of universities in Zhuhai,

Guangdong Province. Furthermore, few studies have integrated the perspectives of teachers, administrators, and educational experts to develop a comprehensive management model that addresses contemporary educational challenges in design education.

Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the current situation of Design Basic Education, identify the essential components influencing its management, and develop a phenomenological management model for Design Basic Education in universities in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically by providing a comprehensive framework for improving educational management, enhancing teaching quality, promoting student development, and supporting the sustainable advancement of design education in higher education institutions.

Purpose

To propose an effective management model of design basic education using phenomenology in the universities of Zhuhai under Guangdong province.

Literature Review

1. Phenomenological Theory and Educational Management

Phenomenology is a philosophical and research approach that seeks to understand the essence of human experience by returning “to the things themselves” and exploring how individuals perceive, interpret, and construct meaning from their lived experiences (Husserl, 1913; Husserl, 1950). Rather than focusing solely on external behaviors or observable phenomena, phenomenology emphasizes subjective experience, reflection, and consciousness. In educational research, phenomenology provides an important perspective for understanding teaching, learning, curriculum experiences, and

educational management through the viewpoints of participants directly involved in educational processes (Moran, 2000; Smith, 2009; Lai, 2017). Therefore, phenomenology provides an appropriate theoretical foundation for exploring the management of Design Basic Education and developing a management model based on the experiences of teachers, students, and administrators.

2. Teacher Management in Design Basic Education

Teacher management is a critical factor influencing educational quality and student development. Effective teacher management emphasizes professional competence, subject knowledge, teaching skills, creativity, ethical responsibility, and continuous professional development. Hu (2005) suggested that teachers' self-development abilities are essential for enhancing educational effectiveness, while Schön (1987) highlighted the importance of reflective practice in improving professional performance. Furthermore, Dall'Alba and Sandberg (2006) emphasized that professional development should be viewed as a continuous process of expanding professional understanding and capability. Therefore, teacher management should support both professional growth and reflective learning to enhance teaching quality and educational outcomes.

3. Student Management in Design Basic Education

Student management focuses on creating conditions that support students' learning interests, motivation, attitudes, and learning experiences. According to Biesta (2010), education should promote not only academic achievement but also personal growth and meaningful participation in society. From a phenomenological perspective, students construct meaning through their experiences and interactions within educational environments (Smith, 2009). In Design Basic Education, students'

motivation, creativity, autonomy, and engagement play important roles in learning success. Consequently, educational management should provide supportive learning environments that encourage active participation, reflection, and meaningful learning experiences.

4. Management Administrator in Design Basic Education

Educational administrators play a significant role in creating conditions that support effective teaching and learning. Their responsibilities include leadership, communication, collaboration, decision-making, and resource coordination. Effective educational management requires administrators to understand the needs of teachers and students while fostering a positive organizational culture that promotes educational quality. From a phenomenological perspective, administrators should consider the experiences and perspectives of stakeholders in order to create responsive and supportive educational environments (Lai, 2017). Therefore, leadership and collaborative management are essential components of Design Basic Education management.

5. Curriculum Management in Design Basic Education

Curriculum management is fundamental to ensuring that educational objectives, learning experiences, and instructional activities are aligned with students' developmental needs. Shilin et al. (2018) argued that Design Basic Education should move beyond traditional knowledge transmission and promote interdisciplinary learning, creativity, and real-world applications. Similarly, Wang (2001) emphasized that design education should continuously adapt to social and technological changes. Effective curriculum management therefore involves establishing appropriate learning objectives, organizing meaningful learning

experiences, and developing curriculum content that supports creativity, innovation, and practical problem-solving.

6. Teaching Evaluation Management

Teaching evaluation is an essential mechanism for monitoring and improving educational quality. Effective evaluation should consider both learning processes and learning outcomes while incorporating multiple perspectives and assessment methods. Biesta (2010) emphasized that educational evaluation should extend beyond measurable outcomes and consider broader educational purposes and learning experiences. Consequently, teaching evaluation should include formative and summative approaches, provide constructive feedback, and support continuous improvement in teaching and learning practices.

7. Teaching Resource Management

Teaching resources are important factors that support the effectiveness of educational management and learning activities. These resources include physical facilities, instructional materials, technological infrastructure, digital learning platforms, and online educational resources. Zhu (2008) identified inadequate educational resources as a significant challenge affecting educational quality, while Li and Lu (2021) and Shilin et al. (2018) highlighted the growing importance of technology and diversified learning resources in contemporary design education. Therefore, effective resource management should ensure the availability, accessibility, and appropriate utilization of both physical and digital learning resources to support high-quality educational experiences.

Research Process

This study employed a mixed-methods research design based on phenomenological principles and was

conducted in three phases included population, sample, key informants, and experts.

Phase 1: Relevant literature was reviewed, and semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 15 administrators and teachers from three universities in Zhuhai to explore the current situation and identify key components of Design Basic Education management. The qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis, and the findings were used to develop the questionnaire.

Phase 2: A questionnaire was developed based on the findings from Phase 1 and administered to 389 teachers and administrators selected from a population of 3,390 individuals. The questionnaire examined six dimensions of Design Basic Education management. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

Phase 3: A preliminary management model was developed from the qualitative and quantitative findings and subsequently reviewed through a focus group discussion with 11 experts in design education and educational administration. The discussion data were analyzed using content analysis and used to refine and validate the final management model.

Three research instruments were employed in this study. First, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with administrators and teachers to explore the current situation and identify key components of Design Basic Education management. Second, a questionnaire survey was developed based on the interview findings and literature review to examine the importance of the identified components among teachers and administrators. Third, a focus group discussion was conducted with experts in design education and educational administration to review, validate, and refine the proposed phenomenological management model.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data obtained from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed using content analysis to identify key themes, components, and recommendations for the development of the management model. Quantitative data collected through the questionnaire survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, to determine the importance of each component of Design Basic Education management.

Conclusion and Discussion

Conclusion

The literature review and analysis of 104 related studies indicated that six dimensions are essential for the effective management of Design Basic Education: teacher management, student management, administrator management, curriculum management, teaching evaluation management, and teaching resource management. These dimensions are interrelated and collectively contribute to educational quality, student development, and institutional effectiveness.

The findings from the in-depth interviews with 15 teachers and administrators revealed that effective Design Basic Education management requires: (1) professionally competent teachers with strong subject knowledge, ethical values, and continuous professional development; (2) students with positive learning attitudes, strong motivation, and effective learning strategies; (3) administrators who demonstrate effective leadership and management philosophy; (4) curricula with clear objectives, relevant content, and appropriate course structures; (5) diversified, objective, and timely teaching evaluation; and (6) sufficient teaching resources to support learning and teaching activities.

Based on the findings from the literature review, in-depth interviews, questionnaire survey, and focus group discussions, a phenomenological management model for Design Basic Education was developed.

Development of the Phenomenological Management Model

The phenomenological management model for Design Basic Education was developed through the integration of findings from the literature review, in-depth interviews, questionnaire survey, and focus group discussions. The model consists of six interrelated dimensions that collectively support the effective management of Design Basic Education in universities in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province.

The first dimension, Teacher Management, emphasizes professional competence, pedagogical skills, reflective practice, ethical values, creativity, and continuous professional development.

The second dimension, Student Management, focuses on students' learning interests, motivation, attitudes, learning strategies, and meaningful learning experiences.

The third dimension, Administrator Management, highlights instructional leadership, communication, collaboration, decision-making, and support for curriculum development and educational quality improvement.

The fourth dimension, Curriculum Management, addresses curriculum objectives, content design, course structure, and learning experiences that promote creativity, innovation, and practical application.

The fifth dimension, Teaching Evaluation Management, emphasizes diversified assessment methods, continuous feedback, process evaluation, and the comprehensive evaluation of learning outcomes.

Finally, the sixth. Teaching Resource Management focuses on the provision and effective utilization of physical and digital learning resources to support teaching and learning activities.

These six dimensions are interconnected and collectively contribute to improving educational quality, enhancing student learning experiences, strengthening institutional effectiveness, and supporting the sustainable development of Design Basic Education in universities.

The questionnaire survey further confirmed the importance of these six dimensions. In teacher management, respondents emphasized cross-cultural knowledge, reflective practice, effective teaching strategies, and professional ethics. In student management, learning attitudes, intrinsic motivation, and meaningful learning experiences were identified as the most important factors. For administrator management, instructional leadership, collaboration, communication, and curriculum leadership were highly valued. Curriculum management highlighted the importance of meaningful learning experiences, practical activities, and curriculum relevance. Teaching evaluation emphasized comprehensive and diversified assessment approaches, while teaching resource management focused on the provision of high-quality physical and digital learning resources.

Based on the integration of the qualitative and quantitative findings, six interrelated dimensions were synthesized to develop a phenomenological management model for Design Basic Education in universities in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, comprising Teacher Management, Student Management, Administrator Management, Curriculum Management, Teaching Evaluation Management, and Teaching Resource Management. These dimensions collectively provide a comprehensive framework for improving educational

quality and management effectiveness. The resulting model is presented in Figure 1

A key finding of this study is that the effective management of Design Basic Education cannot be achieved through a single factor but requires the integration of six interrelated dimensions: teacher management, student management, administrator management, curriculum management, teaching evaluation management, and teaching resource management. The findings indicate that teachers play a central role in promoting meaningful learning experiences through professional competence, reflective practice, and ethical responsibility. At the same time, student motivation, learning attitudes, and active engagement are essential for successful learning outcomes.

The study revealed that effective educational management depends on supportive leadership, relevant and experience-based curricula, diversified assessment practices, and adequate learning resources. These dimensions do not function independently; rather, they interact and complement one another to enhance educational quality and institutional effectiveness. Based on the integration of qualitative and quantitative findings, these six dimensions were synthesized into a phenomenological management model for Design Basic Education in universities in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, as illustrated in Figure 1

Furthermore, the proposed phenomenological management model provides practical guidance for improving the quality of Design Basic Education in universities. The six dimensions can be applied as an integrated management framework to support educational planning, implementation, monitoring, and continuous improvement. Teacher management promotes professional growth and reflective practice, while student management enhances learning motivation and meaningful learning experiences.

Administrator management strengthens leadership and collaboration, curriculum management supports relevant and experience-based learning, teaching evaluation facilitates continuous feedback and quality assurance, and teaching resource management ensures the availability of appropriate learning environments and educational resources. Together, these dimensions enable universities to develop a more student-

centered, experience-oriented, and sustainable approach to Design Basic Education. Together, these dimensions support a student-centered, experience-oriented approach to Design Basic Education, enhancing students' creativity, critical thinking, and professional competencies while improving educational quality.

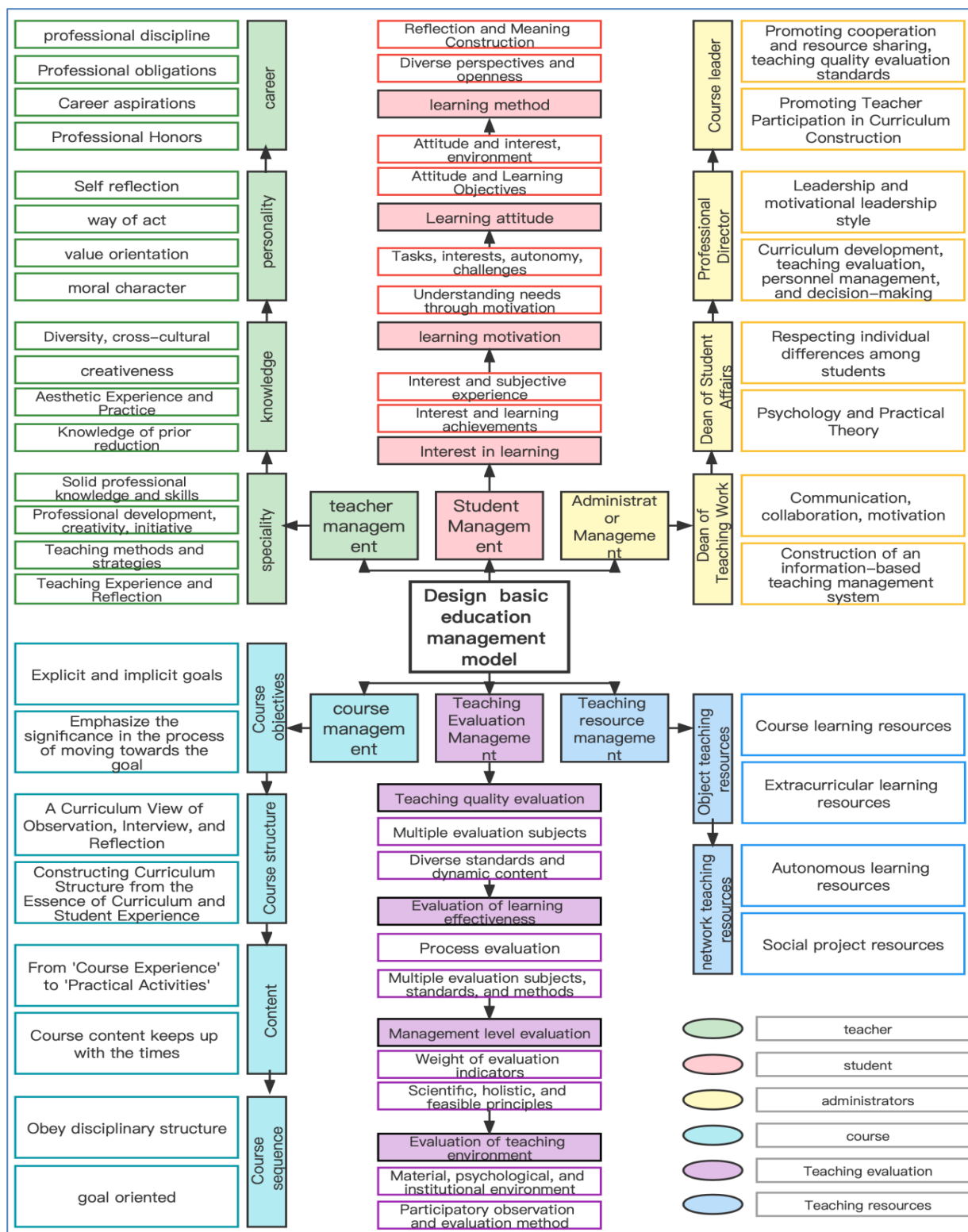


Figure 1 Design Basic Education Management Model for Universities in Zhuhai City

Discussion

The findings revealed that the management of Design Basic Education in universities in Zhuhai, Guangdong

Province is a multidimensional process involving six interrelated dimensions: teacher management, student management, administrator management, curri-

culum management, teaching evaluation management, and teaching resource management. This finding suggests that educational quality cannot be achieved through the improvement of a single component but requires the integration of all dimensions within a comprehensive management system.

The findings regarding teacher management highlight the importance of professional competence, reflective practice, ethical responsibility, and continuous professional development. This is consistent with Hu (2005), who emphasized the importance of teachers' self-development, and Schön (1987), who proposed that professional growth occurs through reflective practice. The findings also support the perspective of Dall'Alba and Sandberg (2006), who argued that professional development should be viewed as a continuous process of expanding professional understanding and capability. From a phenomenological perspective, teachers' experiences, reflections, and interpretations directly influence their teaching practices and students' learning experiences.

Regarding student management, the study found that learning motivation, learning attitudes, meaningful learning experiences, and active participation are essential factors contributing to effective learning. This finding is consistent with Biesta (2010), who emphasized that education should focus not only on measurable outcomes but also on students' personal development and meaningful participation in learning. The findings also support Smith (2009), who suggested that learning is closely related to the ways individuals construct meaning from their experiences. Therefore, Design Basic Education should promote learning environments

that encourage creativity, reflection, and active engagement.

The findings also revealed that administrator management plays a significant role in supporting educational quality through leadership, communication, collaboration, and curriculum development. Effective administrators create educational environments that facilitate cooperation among teachers and support continuous improvement. This finding is consistent with Lai (2017), who emphasized that educational management should consider the experiences and perspectives of stakeholders when developing educational systems and practices.

Furthermore, the results highlighted the importance of curriculum management, teaching evaluation management, and teaching resource management. The emphasis on meaningful learning experiences, practical activities, and curriculum relevance supports the argument of Shilin et al. (2018), who advocated for interdisciplinary and experience-based approaches in Design Basic Education. Likewise, diversified assessment and continuous feedback were identified as essential mechanisms for improving teaching and learning quality, while adequate physical and digital resources were recognized as necessary conditions for effective educational management. These findings are also consistent with Li and Lu (2021), who noted that contemporary design education requires more comprehensive and diversified educational systems to respond to social and technological changes.

Most importantly, the study demonstrates the value of phenomenology as a framework for educational management. Consistent with the ideas of Husserl (1913, 1950),

Moran (2000), and Zahavi (2003), the findings indicate that effective educational management should not focus solely on administrative structures or procedures but should also consider the lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings constructed by teachers, students, and administrators. The six dimensions identified in this study therefore provide a phenomenological management framework that integrates human experience with educational practice, contributing to the improvement of educational quality and the sustainable development of Design Basic Education in universities.

Recommendation

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for the management of Design Basic Education in universities.

1) Strengthen teacher development through reflective practice and professional learning. Universities should provide continuous professional development opportunities that enhance teachers' subject knowledge, pedagogical competence, creativity, and reflective practice to support meaningful learning experiences for students.

2) Promote student-centered and experience-based learning. Educational activities should encourage students' learning motivation, active participation, creativity, and critical thinking through authentic learning experiences and practical design projects.

3) Enhance educational leadership and collaborative management. Administrators should foster effective communication, collaboration, and shared decision-making among stakeholders while supporting

curriculum innovation and quality improvement initiatives.

4) Develop curricula that integrate theory, practice, and real-world experiences. Curriculum design should emphasize meaningful learning experiences, interdisciplinary perspectives, and the practical application of knowledge to meet contemporary educational and industry needs.

5) Implement diversified and continuous assessment practices. Teaching evaluation should incorporate multiple assessment methods, continuous feedback, and process-oriented evaluation to support student learning and educational quality improvement.

6) Improve the accessibility and utilization of learning resources. Universities should provide adequate physical and digital learning resources and encourage the effective use of technology to support teaching, learning, and innovation in Design Basic Education.

The proposed phenomenological management model may serve as a practical framework for universities seeking to improve educational quality, enhance student learning experiences, and support the sustainable development of Design Basic Education.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies may examine the implementation and effectiveness of the proposed phenomenological management model in different institutional contexts and explore its impact on student learning outcomes, teaching quality, and organizational development.

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