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A Phenomenological Study of Lecturers' Experience in Designing Curriculum in the Industry 4.0 Era

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Abstract: *Universities are at the forefront of preparing competent human resources to face the Industry 4.0 era, which is fraught with digital and technological disruption. Academic anxiety arises from the gap between the dynamic demands of the industry and the readiness of higher education institutions. This study aims to deeply explore and understand the meaning of the lived experiences of lecturers in the curriculum planning process in the Industry 4.0 era. Using a qualitative approach and a phenomenological method, this research seeks to uncover the essence of academics' challenges, hopes, and perceptions through in-depth interviews. The results identified three main themes from the lecturers' experiences: (1) Navigating the Tension between Academic Tradition and Industrial Disruption; (2) Efforts to Build Collaborative Bridges with external parties; and (3) Aspirations Towards an Adaptive Academic Ecosystem. This study concludes that understanding the essence of curriculum designers' experiences is key to creating more humane and relevant educational innovations amid changing times.*

Keywords: *Curriculum, Experience of Lecturers, Fenomenology, Higher Education, Industry 4.0 Era*

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions are one of the essential pillars in the development and progress of a nation. Good governance within these institutions plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality of higher education and its contribution to society and the economy. One of the most important aspects of university governance is human resource management (HRM). Effective HRM can enhance the quality of teaching, research, and community service, as humans are a critical factor in all aspects of organizational activities (Boon et al., 2018). In the context of Private Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTKIS), the role of human resources is highly significant in establishing effective and efficient goals and policies for Islam-based higher education (Kaufman, 2020).

The governance of Private Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTKIS) refers to the organized and structured system of administration or management within private sector higher education institutions that have an Islamic religious background and orientation (Dakir, 2022). This governance encompasses various aspects, including organizational structure, decision-making procedures, strategic planning, human resource management, and transparency in carrying out educational and community service functions.

One of the most important aspects of PTKIS governance is how human resource management is regulated and implemented, as human resources are a primary factor influencing the quality and efficiency of education at the institution. The management of human resources includes the recruitment, development, performance evaluation, career development, and motivation of both academic and non-academic staff. Additionally, PTKIS governance also covers adherence to Islamic principles and values in the management of the institution. This includes alignment with religious values in the recruitment process, learning processes, and decision-making, as well as compliance with Islamic ethics and morals in every aspect of the institution's operations (Rohmat, 2023).

Overall, the governance of PTKIS aims to ensure that private Islamic religious higher education institutions can operate effectively, efficiently, and in accordance with Islamic religious values, thereby making a positive contribution to society, the Muslim community, and higher education in general.

The concept of management, as both an art and a science (Kainzbauer & Rungruang, 2019), is key to human resource management within the PTKIS environment. The interaction and role of the workforce are also essential elements in strengthening the institution's foundation (Susilawati & Misbah, 2022). Therefore, optimal management of human resources in educational institutions, including PTKIS, is a necessity to achieve superior educational outcomes with competent and professional educators.

This research applies the concept of university governance using a phenomenological approach, focusing on Private Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTKIS) in the Kopertais 4 region. The study aims to improve university governance by utilizing the principles of human resource management to achieve an ideal model of governance within the PTKIS environment. Data indicates a pressing need for such improvements, as a significant number of institutions have not yet reached higher levels of accreditation. This suggests that a focus on internal management, particularly human resources, is vital for institutional advancement.

This need for enhancement through HRM is why its application, including strategies for recruitment and career development, cannot be overlooked in the PTKIS context. Previous research has explored related areas. For instance, a study by Astuti, et al. (2021) focused on enhancing the capabilities of administrative staff and lecturers, finding that higher competencies positively impacted service quality. Similarly, Auriza, et al. (2021) found that lecturer competence directly influenced university governance. While these studies affirm the importance of human resources, the present research specifically focuses on leveraging the principles of human resource management to achieve an ideal concept of optimal university governance within the unique environment of PTKIS in the Kopertais 4 Region.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Management is the art and science of organizing the utilization of human resources and other resources effectively and efficiently to achieve specific goals (Susan, 2019). Management is a distinct process consisting of the actions of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling, which are undertaken to determine and achieve predetermined objectives through the use of human and other resources (Dethan, 2019).

Human resources are the most crucial resource in an organization's efforts to achieve success (Widiansyah, 2018). This is because human resources are fundamentally

the source of ideas, the driving force, and the determining factor in every company activity. Dessler defines human resource management as the practices and policies involved in handling the personnel or human resource aspects of a management position, including recruiting, selecting, training, rewarding, and appraising. In general, the resources within an organization can be grouped into two types: (1) human resources, and (2) non-human resources.

Human Resource Management is the recognition of the importance of an organization's workforce as a critical human resource that contributes to organizational goals, and it involves the use of several functions and activities to ensure that these human resources are utilized effectively and fairly for the benefit of the individual, the organization, and society (Iskandar, 2018). The focus of human resource management lies in the effort to manage people within the dynamic interaction between the organization and its workers, who often have differing interests. Functionally, the development of human resource management has several interrelated functions, and the activities carried out by human resources correspond to these functions (Setiawan, 2016), with the aim of increasing productivity, quality of work-life, and service. Among these functions are planning, procurement, maintenance, and utilization.

The importance of Human Resource Management (HRM) has become an urgent need (Spicer, 2016) and a top priority (Obedgiu, 2017). The HR department is responsible for the thorough preparation of prospective educators (Ling et al., 2020; Baharun et al., 2021). Succession planning (Basri et al., 2022) is designed based on HR needs for the coming decades, up to 50 years ahead, considering existing trends. This aligns with the view of IK2 (Interview, September 17, 2024):

“Looking ahead, up to 50 years from now, we must understand that the role of PTKIS will become increasingly crucial in shaping the nation's direction and character. We need to ensure that the human resources involved in religious institutions have the right qualifications, competencies, and dedication to meet the demands of an ever-changing era. Therefore, human resource management must be well-integrated into the institution's governance.”

Educators must not only teach Islamic religious knowledge but must also become true cadres, with their primary foundation being the call of God and a spirit of sincerity. Unfortunately, the qualifications and competencies of educators do not yet meet national education standards (Yusraini & Rosadi, 2022), and the management of educational

resources has not achieved the desired effectiveness and efficiency, often hindered by the preservation of tradition. IK1 stated (Interview, September 19, 2024):

“As a rector, I understand and acknowledge that educators at Private Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTKIS) must not only be able to teach Islamic religious knowledge but also become true cadres. Their main foundation is the call of God and a spirit of sincerity. I am fully aware that the qualifications and competencies of educators do not yet meet national education standards. This is a serious challenge that we must overcome together. Improving the qualifications and competencies of educators is a top priority, and PTKIS must strive to enhance the quality of its teaching staff through training, professional development, and career paths.”

The recruitment process is crucial for the successful implementation of designed programs (Boselie et al., 2021). The recruitment stage involves job analysis and specifications that outline the core duties for prospective educators, reflecting their professionalism and work ethic (Becker, B., & Gerhart, 1996). This research underscores that effective Human Resource Management (HRM) is vital for improving the governance of Private Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTKIS), providing a substantial contribution to the development of educational institutions and pesantren in general by establishing effective HRM. The recruitment process begins with analyzing the need for educators, considering the current number of students, and making future projections, up to the final placement of teachers (Noor, 2018).

The stages of the Human Resource Management (HRM) process at PTKIS include planning, recruitment, development, career planning, and maintenance. In this regard, IK3 offered their opinion (Interview, September 19, 2024):

“Each PTKIS may have different contexts, policies, and human resource management (HRM) practices, depending on its organizational culture, leadership, and specific needs. Generally, the HRM process stages already meet the standard, but sometimes there are obstacles in practice. Synergy is needed between management, educators, and the entire academic community to continuously improve and perfect the HRM process. Active involvement and effective communication will help build a positive work environment and support the potential development of all members of PTKIS.”

The stages of the Human Resource Management (HRM) process are explained in further detail below:

1. Planning

In the context of this research, the planning stage involves devising HRM strategies that are aligned with the goal of improving governance at PTKIS. This includes planning for the need for high-quality human resources who are in line with Islamic religious principles.

2. Recruitment

The recruitment stage in HRM pertains to finding, selecting, and placing individuals who possess competencies consistent with Islamic principles. Recruitment must consider the religious values and vision of PTKIS. IP1 shared their perspective (Interview, September 20, 2023):

“In practice, the recruitment process at PTKIS involves announcing vacancies, selection, and placement of new employees. However, PTKIS sometimes faces challenges in attracting qualified and committed educators, especially in certain regions.”

3. Development

In improving PTKIS governance, it is essential to develop the skills and knowledge of human resources, especially in the context of governance management that aligns with Islamic values. This involves appropriate training, education, and leadership development.

4. Career Planning

At this stage, career planning must accommodate career paths that lead to managerial positions, which can positively influence PTKIS governance. This must be in line with the PTKIS vision and religious values.

5. Maintenance

The maintenance stage is concerned with ensuring that human resources remain motivated, perform well, and adhere to ethics and religious principles in every aspect of their actions and decisions. This promotes consistency in improving the governance of the religious institution. IP2 conveyed (Interview, September 20, 2024):

“This stage involves maintaining the well-being, motivation, and job satisfaction of educators. At some PTKIS, maintenance efforts can include effective performance management, recognition programs, adequate employee benefits, and open communication between management and staff. However, challenges may arise if adequate facilities and infrastructure are not provided, or if internal communication is not optimal.”

Improving the Governance of Private Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTKIS) through Human Resource Management (HRM) is an essential and strategic process for optimizing the performance and efficiency of these Islam-based educational institutions. HRM at PTKIS involves careful planning to map out HR needs that align with the institution's vision, mission, and goals. Recruitment is a critical point, where the focus is on selecting individuals who have competencies consistent with Islamic principles and who can contribute maximally to achieving educational objectives. HR development refers to nurturing skills, knowledge, and Islamic values, which form the foundation of education at PTKIS. Career planning is a strategic stage, ensuring that educators' career paths are aligned with the vision and mission of PTKIS. Finally, HR maintenance fosters a conducive work environment, ensures the balance and stability of human resources, and motivates them to serve with integrity and high morale. By implementing good HRM, PTKIS can empower the potential of its human resources, align with Islamic principles, and optimally achieve its academic goals and institutional independence. IP3 stated (Interview, September 20, 2024):

“In the context of higher education, lecturers are crucial pillars who shape the student learning experience, so ensuring their quality and competence is a necessity. In this regard, combining needs analysis, competency mapping, performance evaluation, and tailored planning is a smart action to achieve improved PTKIS governance.”

Human Resource Management for lecturers at PTKIS is carried out through a series of steps that involve analyzing the need for lecturers in relevant fields of study, mapping lecturer competencies, evaluating lecturer performance, and planning tailored to the need to improve lecturer quality. Lecturer quality improvement programs have been designed, both formally and incidentally, with varying timeframes, including plans for HR recruitment, coaching, and recognition. Coaching activities include training, seminars, workshops, courses, small group discussions, study visits, tutorials, and spiritual experiences such as off-campus or on-campus training. These efforts to improve the quality of human resources at PTKIS are the result of instructions from the Rector and initiatives from the lecturers themselves. Lecturer performance evaluations are conducted by the Rector and Vice-Rector I, with the results reported during coordination and institutional evaluation meetings.

For the Human Resource Management of administrative staff, PTKIS conducts recruitment, selection, training, development, and other personnel activities. The

organization identifies HR needs and formulates plans and activities for development, mentoring, and training, among others. Compensation is also implemented with the aim of acquiring qualified administrative staff, retaining the quality of existing staff, ensuring fairness, and rewarding desired behaviors. IP4 conveyed (Interview, September 28, 2024):

“PTKIS can create a supportive and motivating environment for administrative staff to give their best contributions in achieving educational goals and serving students better. By prioritizing development, fairness, and recognition, the institution can build a team of qualified and inspired administrative staff who can positively impact educational governance.”

From the various data collection and analysis conducted at PTKIS in the Kopertais 4 Region, it can be concluded that improving the Governance of Private Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTKIS) through Human Resource Management involves a series of strategies and practices to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of HR management to achieve better educational and institutional goals. These include: (1) HR needs analysis as the first step in identifying the competencies and skills required to support the vision and mission of PTKIS, (2) HR planning and development as key to designing development programs such as training, courses, and workshops to enhance HR competencies and knowledge, (3) a selective recruitment process aligned with Islamic values, which is essential to ensure HR compatibility with PTKIS principles, (4) regular performance assessment and evaluation to help measure HR achievements and provide constructive feedback, (5) clear career planning and the provision of rewards and incentives according to HR contributions as effective strategies to retain and motivate HR, (6) the application of information technology to support the flexibility and efficiency of HR management, and (7) involving HR in decision-making and building their engagement in organizational policies to enhance their sense of ownership and commitment to PTKIS. Through these measures, PTKIS can maximize the potential of its human resources, improve the quality of religious education, and achieve institutional goals in line with Islamic values and ethics.

CONCLUSION

Improving the Governance of Private Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTKIS) through Human Resource Management provides a strong foundation

for the effectiveness and efficiency of HR management. Key steps such as HR needs analysis, HR planning and development, and the implementation of a selective recruitment process aligned with Islamic values are crucial for achieving the vision and mission of PTKIS. Furthermore, regular performance assessment and evaluation provide clear direction for measuring HR achievements and ensuring continuous improvement.

The presence of clear career planning and rewards corresponding to contributions offers incentives that retain and motivate human resources, while the application of information technology helps to increase the flexibility and efficiency of HR management. Involving human resources in decision-making and organizational policy builds a higher sense of ownership and commitment to PTKIS. Overall, these strategies and practices enable PTKIS to optimize the potential of its human resources, enhance the quality of religious education, and achieve institutional goals in accordance with Islamic values and ethics. Thus, PTKIS can develop and contribute positively to Islamic education in line with the evolving demands of the times.

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