

# Developing Professional Lecturers in Higher Education: Case Study in Private Colleges

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Resulting from the competition between private colleges in attracting student interest, many attempts have been made to improve the quality of universities by building professional competencies of lecturers. Highly competent lecturers will be able to produce reliable and capable student graduates. The purpose of this study is to determine a strategy for the professional development of lecturers, including policies and methods for implementing the professional conduct of lecturers' duties following the tri dharma of higher education. This case study was conducted at private colleges. Research findings indicate that planning of the lecturer's professional development programs is in accordance with the college's strategic plan and with government policies. Pedagogical, professional, personal and social skills can be improved by implementing the program with further study at a higher level in the country or abroad, as well as through participating in activities, conducting research and engaging in community service. Collaboration with other agencies and organisations will also encourage lecturers to be more innovative and creative in developing competencies individually and organically through advancing shelter institutions.

**Key words:** *Development, lecturer, professional, competencies, private colleges.*

## Introduction

As outlined in article 46, paragraph 2 of the Teacher and Lecturer Law No. 14 (2005), higher education teaching staff, or lecturers, are required to hold minimum S2 and academic qualifications. These qualifications include a graduate master or undergraduate program

diploma and a graduate doctoral certification from a postgraduate program. For this reason, many private universities require lecturers to continue their education within the existing departments either independently or on scholarships.

The profile of 2016 lecturers from a public university and private university qualifications as many as 22.99% of lecturers still do not meet the minimum educational qualifications (S1/D4). This data suggests that many lecturers still need to continue their education into master or doctoral programs, and governmental efforts must be made to improve human resources and scholarship strategies in various schemes (Gufron, 2016). Increasing lecturer resources in private universities is not easily done and can present many obstacles. Such challenges include the limited opportunities for lecturers to actively participate in their professional development programs, the limited financial support available and the large workload (Syaodih, 2011). Lecturer competency can, however, effectively improve the quality of learning that leads to high student academic achievement (Muzenda, 2013).

Based on the description above, this study aims to investigate the professional development of lecturers in private colleges (Universitas Pesantren Tinggi Darul Ulum dan STKIP PGRI Jombang). The focus of the research will be on the development activities and policies that have been carried out by institutions and organisations in the professional development of lecturers. The purpose of this paper is to therefore determine a strategy for developing professional competencies of lecturers in these universities.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Lecturer Human Resource Development***

Development is a process of movement into a situation that is better for individuals and involves a progression towards the physical and mental potential that all have (Wilson, 1999). Harrish & Desimone (1992) define HR development as a set of systematic and planned activities designed to provide employees with the skills needed to meet the demands of work, both now and in the future. Mc Legan and Suhaldonik state that “HRD is the integrated use of training and development, career development, and organisation development to improve individual and organisational effectiveness” (Wilson, 1999). Additionally, Mantja (2010) outlines potential techniques and activities that can improve the quality of human resources in staff development, including: (1) guidance in assignments; (2) training; (3) courses; (4) formal education or advanced study; (5) promotion; (6) position training; (7) position rotation; (8) conference; (9) upgrading; (10) workshops; (11) seminars, and (12) professional coaching of teachers (teaching supervision).

According to Bafadal (2004), the quality of education is declining condition and has failed to meet expectations. Various efforts should be made to improve the education quality, though such efforts are not possible without the high performance of an institution's teachers and lecturers. Teaching staff function as human resources that largely determine the success of education programs. It can therefore be concluded that HR development is a planned and sustainable business conducted by an organisation in improving employee competency and organisational performance through training, education and development programs.

### ***Professional lecturer competence in Higher Education***

Lecturers are professional educators and scientists tasked with developing and disseminating science, technology and art through education, research and community service. Lecturers must hold academic qualifications and educational certifications and must have sufficient physical and mental health for their profession. Additionally, lecturers are required to fulfill other qualifications required by the higher education unit in which they work and should have the ability to realise national education goals (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, Article 1 and Article 45).

Competency is a skill that expresses effective behaviour in a wide variety of critical professional situations. This competency consists of a combination of two or more of the following components: knowledge, skills, attitudes and personal characteristics. The five core competencies of the competency profile for beginner lecturers at the university of applied sciences are: 1) flexibility in educating; 2) social flexibility; 3) developing teaching; 4) cooperation, and 5) being aware of college (VU-Amsterdam).

Professionalism can be demonstrated through behaviour that reflects the level of higher education and performance, and is displayed through a strong work ethic and a commitment to self-assessment and continuing education in line with certain visions and long-term goals. Such behaviours can be enacted through active participation in professional development opportunities to improve research-based skills and knowledge and through demonstrating a mastery of core competencies. These competencies include subject expertise, effective and innovative teaching strategies, program development processes and the integration of new and developing technologies (Faculty University of Missouri - Columbia).

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the competence of professional lecturers in carrying out their duties includes: 1) competency in teaching ability for optimal student learning; 2) professional competence in science; 3) social competence through cooperation, and 4) personality competence through behaviour. Further, research conducted by Muzenda (2013) indicates that lecturer competencies include knowledge, teaching skills and the presence and attitudes of lecturers, all of which have a significant influence on student academic results.

### **Research Methods**

This study employed a qualitative research method using a case study approach. The researchers conducted in-depth interviews and observations in naturalistic settings without holding specific treatments in order to investigate the professional development of lecturers (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). The research focused on private colleges in the Universitas Pesantren Tinggi Darul Ulum and STKIP PGRI Jombang. The research procedures were as follows: 1) obtaining research permission; 2) determining respondents; 3) collecting data; 4) processing and analysing the data, and 5) drawing conclusions and verifying findings. Data sources were obtained from leaders, officeholders, lecturers, students and documents. The main data collection instrument was the researcher himself, while supporting instruments included interviews, observations and documentation. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis for this study involved a process of systematically searching for and arranging the transcriptive university interviews, field notes and other obtained materials. Analysis consisted of three lines of coinciding activities, namely data reduction, data presentation, verification and conclusion (Miles and Huberman (2014). Finally, the data was validated using source triangulation, member checks and expert opinions.

### **Results and Discussion**

Data obtained from interviews with the head of the staffing and academic bureau and documentation obtained regarding the development of lecturer competencies is represented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1:** Respondent profile in Universitas Pesantren Tinggi Darul Ulum

No	Competency component indicator		Total	
			Item	%
1.	Education	Bachelor	19	14.8
		Magister	102	79.7
		Doctoral	7	5.5
2.	Research		24	18.8
3.	Community service		7	5.5
4.	Development professional	Pekerti	76	59.4
		AA	60	46.9
5.	Cooperation	Domestic	6	4.7
		Foreign	1	0.8
6.	Certification		54	42.2

Of the 128 total lecturers, there were 79.7% S2 master qualifications and 5.5% doctoral qualifications, while 14.8% did not meet the minimum educational qualifications. This means that as many as 85.2% of the lecturers met educational qualifications and professional competencies in science and education components. This data was reinforced by the interview statement that lecturers currently employed as undergraduate educators were all in the process of engaging in further study through master's or doctoral programs. These findings suggest that a professional development program for lecturers in the field of education exists in this institution.

Research also indicates that as many as 59.4% and 46.9% of lecturers had engaged in professional development, mainly through training in teaching and learning by taking technical Improved Basic Instructional Techniques (PEKERTI) and Applied Approach (AA). These methods were used to support the educational component according to expertise in the scientific field. This indicates that the institution also supports lecturers in developing in the field of teaching and learning, otherwise known as pedagogy. Further, a total of 4.7% and 0.8% of institutions worked with other institutions through the activities of study programs. Individually, as 5.5% of institutions also engaged in community service, which is a form of cooperation in empowering and assisting the community environment. Other data suggests that as many as 18.8% of lecturers conducted professional development by researching to improve their skills and science-based research abilities. Certified lecturers made up 42.2% of the total, meaning that academic merit is recognised scientifically and professional.

**Table 2:** Respondent profile in STKIP PGRI

No	Competency component indicator		Total	
			Item	%
1.	Education	Bachelor	0	0
		Magister	99	86.1
		Doctoral	16	13.9
2.	Research		26	18.8
3.	Community service		11	22.6
4.	Development professional	Pekerti	42	36.5
		AA	70	60.9
5.	Cooperation	Domestic	14	12.2
		Foreign	1	0.9
6.	Certification		67	58.3

Based on the table above, it can be seen that all lecturers have met the minimum educational qualifications as outlined by government regulations. Based on interview results, 30 lecturers are currently completing further doctoral studies at various state and foreign universities. This suggests that lecturers are engaging in professional development to improve the quality of their knowledge and educational competencies. The data supports this claim, showing that professional development training (including PEKERTI and AA) was taken by 97.4% of lecturers. Finally, 13.1% and 58.3% were certified education lecturers who cooperated with other domestic and foreign institutions.

The above data shows that in the two private tertiary institutions observed in this study, there exist processes of improving the professional competencies of their lecturers. Such processes are therefore expected to produce quality human resources that can improve the quality of the respective colleges.

The results of the interview data analysis are concluded as follows:

### ***Planning professional lecturer development programs***

Based on the condition of the lecturers' qualifications at Universitas Pesantren Tinggi Darul Ulum dan STKIP PGRI Jombang, one strategy in developing human resources is the engagement of further higher-level studies by existing lecturers. Lecturer activities in research and community service show that they are still not optimal when viewed from the total number of lecturers. Lecturers also still hold the status of teaching staff, thus highlighting the need for a strategy to propose their functional positions which will be very influential in lecturers' career paths and welfare. The main strategy for professional development of lecturers is to therefore conduct further studies for those lecturers who are still undergraduates, thus increasing the

activities of lecturers in the field of research and community service. By sending lecturers to undertake technical guidance in writing research proposals, submissions for functional and academic positions can be maintained by all lecturers.

In order for professional development planning to be formulated for the Universitas Pesantren Tinggi Darul Ulum dan STKIP PGRI Jombang and to uphold the government's demands in universities, lecturers must qualify for masters to improve their qualifications by further study. Additionally, innovations in education must be made that require lecturers to develop strategies in the teaching-learning process. These can be obtained through research, training, seminars and workshops. Finally, lecturers must have functional positions to ensure competent and certified career paths.

### ***Implementing professional development programs***

The data shows that the Universitas Pesantren Tinggi Darul Ulum dan STKIP PGRI Jombang practices techniques that are both formal and non-formal. Formal techniques are advanced studies, which are the main programs carried out in the development of lecturer resources, while non-formal techniques include seminars, workshops, training sessions and public lectures. All these non-formal techniques are effective in improving and developing lecturers' knowledge and skills. The determination of these techniques is based on the coordination between the foundation and leadership of the university. It further depends on the needs of the lecturer and of the institution as well as the available funds, which can be sourced from universities, divisions, regional governments, stakeholders and institutions that work together to improve quality education. Implementation can be done both on and off campus by utilising existing lecturers and external personnel. This can be achieved by sending lecturers to Kopertis or inviting other universities, both local and international, into collaborative activities. Each university can also conduct activities like independent seminars, proving that the existing lecturers are creative and sensitive to the development of issues that occur if they require alternative solutions.

By implementing the techniques for the development of lecturer resources as discussed above, the professionalism of lecturers can be vastly improved. These improvements include increasing lecturers' knowledge, insights and other technical skills, which will ultimately increase the quality and achievements of universities.

### **Conclusion**

The results of this research show that the professional development of lecturers been conducted in the observed private colleges, though some were constrained by funding sources. This study



can be used as a basis for further research into the improved professionalism of educators in advancing the world of education, especially within private colleges.

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