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Towards the Qualified Human Resource:

Internship Program at Leading Ex-LPTK Universities in Indonesia

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Abstract—**Internship becomes a way to grow human resource capabilities in terms of competencies on knowledge or practical and soft skills. Higher education institutions like universities as the organizers of an internship program certainly have some roles to produce capable, intelligent and professional workforce. Therefore, it is undeniable that a good internship program in university is an important stage in the development of quality human resources. Our research aims to uncover the description of the system of organizing internships at university level, in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of the program's objectives in preparation for students to enter the workforce life. In this research, we also specifically portrayed the management of internships at the best ex-LPTK (*Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan*) universities in Indonesia, as the institutions whose mission is to produce graduates as teaching staff/academics along with practitioners. We use mixed-method to earn our data from lecturers, superintendents and staffs of internship programs as well as the students at ex-LPTK universities. Overall, the internship programs at these universities have been managed with the orientation on the interests of students, have adopted the use of technology, and are evaluated routinely based on feedback from internal and external parties of the university. The lack of internship and the organization of the mentoring system conducted by the lecturers become the major deficiencies in organizing internships at the universities. These can be used as a basis to put on efforts to improve the internship system at the university level, especially in Indonesia.**

Keywords—*educational system, human resource, internship program, workforce*

I. INTRODUCTION

As a way to train the capabilities of human resources, internship programs especially at higher levels of education such as universities need to be implemented effectively. This is because the qualified human resources will lead organizations to a good governance, better performance and competitiveness on reaching their goals [1-3]. Our previous researchers have identified the problem mapping of the program itself: lack of knowledge and practical skills, lack of soft skills, and the university's internship system [4]. We also offer several valid solutions related to existing problems in detail [5], so that they can be applied to overcome these problems.

In this paper, we continue our research by providing the figures or examples of a good internship system, so it will be easier to be studied and/or applied to the other higher education institutions who want to improve their internship programs. In order to fulfill our main objective, we describe and uncover the internships organizing systems/management specifically at the best ex-LPTK (*Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan*) universities in Indonesia. We chose LPTK universities as the institutions' main mission/specialty is to produce graduates to be the professional teaching staff/academics along with practitioners.

We use a number of methods to explore the data in this paper; (1) through interviews with lecturers, superintendents and staffs of internship programs at ex-LPTK universities, (2) distributing questionnaires and conducting focus group discussions to the ex-LPTK students. The results and discussions on descriptive research is then aligned with the findings of our previous research.

More specifically, this paper is divided into four parts. The first part is an introduction, the second part explains some of the supporting research literatures, the third part is a brief description of the research method, the fourth part is a description of the internship system at the best ex-LPTK universities as well as discussion about the well the discussion related to the development on excellent internship programs, and the last one is the conclusion of the research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Qualified Human Resource Necessity

In an organizational context, human resources have a role to build good governance, and the key to that role lies in their abilities or competencies [2]. In a study by Hecklau et. al., [1], there is a finding that how the mechanism for managing human resources will also be very influential for the performance and competitiveness of an organization. The better the utilization, the better the performance results to achieve the goals designed by the organization will be achieved [3]. Therefore, the need for qualified human resources is needed.

To guarantee the existence of qualified human resources, a strategic approach and the development of workforce commitment are required according to the goals to be achieved by the organization. This approach and development is known as human resource management [6,7]. Human resource management has many functions that include various steps in determining and managing the workforce or employees of the organization, especially companies. Some of them include guidance on recruiting, selection, staffing, retention and release of employees, and managing human resource development [7-12]. Specifically for the function of human resource development, existing arrangements can be concentrated on

learning and training of individuals and teams, as well as providing formal education [1].

In order to develop human resource, the training activities carried out can be implemented as an internship process at a particular organization or company. This is because the embodiment of an excellent internship program can be an effective medium for installing initial insights about excellent human resources [5]. In this case, internship activities can be carried out when the individual has entered the workforce or earlier—such as during the education period at college. The internship process at the higher education level is also becomes an important time to prepare and develop the work capabilities of an individual in order to become a qualified human resource.

B. Internship Program for Building Human Resource

Several recent studies have described internship as a good way to prepare quality human resources, including internship programs attached at higher education levels. When they are taking the internship program, students will get to know some knowledge about implementing their skills outside the class. As stated in Jawabri, internship programs are generally intended to provide work experience to students [13]. Internship makes a major contribution in the learning process of students, simulating scenarios that occur in the work environment, case analysis, discussion, and interaction between colleagues, which said to be effective in helping students on preparing themselves. The overall benefits are also specifically found in the context of the industrial world [14-16].

The application of the internship program provides an opportunity for students to mature their way of thinking, develop their mindset with analysis activities, besides formulate and solve problems in education. In addition, they will gain knowledge, attitudes, and skills that can support the achievement of professional educational competencies and are able to create various kinds of innovation [17]. Those can also be clarified in the following context: the success of street vendors can be seen from the increase in student competency, one of which is personal competence (personal competence), which is an important factor in the formation of a professional person. Through this activity student are expected to gain additional competence beyond the competencies received on campus, among others, knowledge, skills, and attitudes too [18].

C. Internship Program Problems and Solvents

Although it has proven to reap many benefits, internship activities are still faced with several problems that threaten it. Our previous studies have succeeded in mapping some of these problems from a variety of current literature. Some issues were proposed by employers' organizations [16-21], and others proposed by the students themselves [15-18,20-22]. Figure 1 contains the reference mapping.

In the future, it is also expected for educational institutions such as universities to teach the basics of communicating professionally to all of their students, in addition to presenting a real picture of basic business etiquette [23]. Thus, issues regarding the inability to adapt to their work as expressed by Cord et al. can be overcome more easily [15].

From various problems regarding internship, it is evident that the method of mentoring in the internship program should be carried out more systematically and intensively, so that it is more similar to some teaching and learning activities in another courses. Adapted from Purnamasari, et. al. [4], several methods that can be used to implement these solutions include:

- Consultation/mentoring regarding the internship process can be facilitated by a mentor/lecturer per internship group and carried out online/offline through any platform

- Consultation/mentoring on the internship process can be done regularly every week, or adjusting the schedules of mentors/lecturers and internship students. With the calculation criteria: one-time consultation equals one lecture meeting

- The requirement for each consultancy or mentoring activity is to have a log book filled by students as an internship journal/diary every day

- Mentors/lecturers are required to serve consultancy/sharing/provide soft skills materials while monitoring the ability of students' soft skills during the internship process
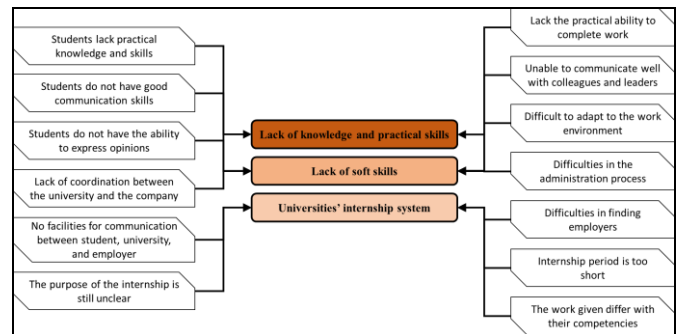

Fig. 1. Internship problem mapping [4].

III. RESEARCH METHODS

To provide the figures or examples of a good internship system while gathering the whole picture of internships organizing systems/management at the best ex-LPTK universities in Indonesia, we use mixed research methods, including qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Firstly, we conducted some interviews with institution's lecturers, superintendents and staffs of internship programs. The data obtained then processed using content analysis. Secondly, to enrich our data, we also distributed open questionnaires to the students as the snowball step on our focus group discussions with them. We tend to consider the second one as the validation step—verifying that students as the stakeholders/users are aware of internship system/management, as well as the program's risks and benefits for them. Besides, we were able to collect their concerns and suggestions about the system/management of the program itself. Figure 2 represents the whole research method we use for this paper.

We picked three best Ex-LPTK universities as our research object, as it have unique identity among the other higher education institutions: they hold the main mission/specialty to produce graduates to be capable as teaching staff/academics along with practitioners. The chosen universities are the located in Bandung, Yogyakarta and Malang cities. All of the data collection steps were taken for about approximately eight months in 2019, along with the analysis period.
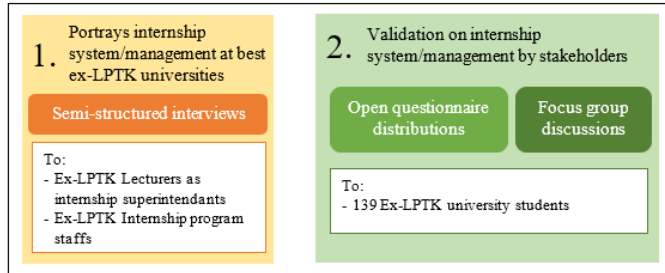

Fig. 2.   Research data collection and validation method.

IV.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The management of internship program at the best three ex-LPTK universities as a whole has a similar pattern. We divided the description into four discussions: orientation, main manager, lecturers who act superintendents/supervisors, and other facilities provided by universities to support the internship program. Figure 3 contains the visual form of the whole explanation.

A.   Internship Program's Orientation

The internship process at the higher education level holds an important role to prepare and develop the work capabilities of an individual in order to become a qualified human resource. It develops the skills that support the achievement of professional educational competencies and the ability to create various kinds of innovation [17]. In order to obtain those kind of advantages, ex-LPTK universities provide the flexible internship duration/time length, according to each of students' disciplines. The internship can be implemented as:

1) Company visits: The overall form of the internship program is similar to field studies, and is generally implemented in groups of students who choose to intern at companies outside Indonesia. The duration of the internship period can be adjusted according to the agreement/collaboration between the university and the company, for example for five working days.

2) Internship with one week duration: This internship program is usually applied to disciplines that involve strict licensing or visits to certain sites side by side with their working period. This form of internship, for example, is found in Geography Major who conduct fieldwork studies at ancient sites in Indonesia.

3) Internship with a duration of 1-12 months: It is a form of internship that is applied in the majority of majors in ex-LPTK universities. The implementation of internship policy for this duration, for example, in the faculty of engineering

(approx. 6 to 12 months), department of accounting (approx. 2-6 months), and in the department of arts (approx. 6 months). The flexible durations are being agreed with the employer, as well as goals to be achieved and needed by students. For instance, students in department of arts are required to make a new, original and philosophical choreography as the final product for their internship period.
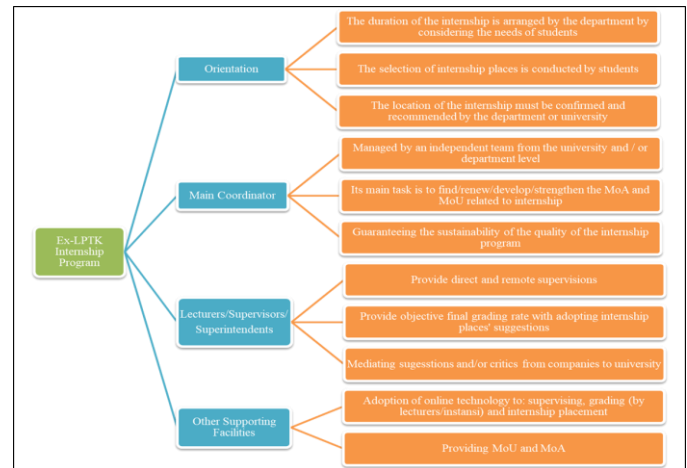

Fig. 3.   Ex-LPTK internship system/management.

One ex-LPTK university even pointed out that the duration of student internships is not always successive in a period of time. This is done according to the needs or preferences of student disciplines, such as geography majors who do internships at ancient sites in several different locations.

To provide guaranteed human resource management, a strategic approach and the development of workforce commitment are required [6,7]. Therefore, the growth of student commitment and performance during training during internship is needed if the university wants the program's main objectives to succeed. In order to maintain these things, the internship program always begins with the selection of the agency/employer according to student preferences. The lecturers/supervisors/ university/department of the internship program at the university/department does not interfere in determining the workplace of students. However, if a student requests a place for internship, the lecturers/supervisors/university/department will work in synergy to provide several alternative positions according to their interests or give out some guiding about several companies/institutions that provide selection for prospective internal students.

B.   Main Coordinator: Independent Institution

At ex-LPTK universities, the internship program is coordinated by one of the independent institution at the central level (university and/or faculty level) inside them. The institution for example is LPPM (*Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat*, known as the institute of research and community service). Then, underneath it is managed by the department specifically, to facilitate the coordination of the internship program in each discipline.

Overall, the main task of independent institution at the central level (such as LPPM) acts as a facilitator for channeling aspirations from the university level to the departments vice versa. The other main task is to become a facilitator for the department and/or university to the partner companies of the internship program. The existence of an independent institution within the university can certainly streamline the management of existing internship programs, so that policy making, implementation and monitoring of student internship activities will be more controlled. The entire ledge is always applied as a process of evaluating the internship program on a periodic basis.

The coordinator of independent institution for the internship program are also tasked to always renew and multiply the MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) and the MoA (Memorandum of Agreements) in the employer or union/professional ties in Indonesia. One ex-LPTK university even gave an example that the strengthening of the internship program cooperation network was done by sending representatives of internship management institutions to attend job fair events in the capital. Another thing that is done is that the internship program management agency always provides support in the form of centralized correspondence on behalf of the university as a guarantee of cooperation with third parties as employers.

The next important task is that independent institution is required to monitor the quality of students' internship processes, while ensuring a fair proportion of the incentives for lecturers who guide them. It is strived to be maintained even though the orientation, needs and duration of the internship process are different in each discipline at the university.

C. Lecturing/Supervisions

According to our recent studies Purnamasari, et. al., the mentoring process in internship period should be carried out more systematically and intensively to maximize its benefits [4,5]. Students obviously need to be guided in the learning process of real-work environment and interaction between colleagues, which said to be effective in helping students on preparing themselves, especially in the industrial world [14-16]. In accordance with this view, the guidance process in the internship program at ex-LPTK universities emphasizes the maximization of the mentoring process by providing direct and/or remote supervisions about following materials:

- Provide some consultations over internship working problems, such as encouraging the students to be more aware about their soft skills, as well as giving out any ideas or solutions when the students facing any problems related to the cognitive knowledge's. These are already in line with the solutions suggested in some previous literatures [15-17,19-21,23]

- Provide some consultations on internship journal/report, to increase their academic and formal reading and writing capabilities.

The mentoring process at ex-LPTK universities is carried out by professional lecturers as supervisors/superintendents. However, there are some lack of the mentoring system that is caused by the limited time or incentives for direct internship visits by the lecturers. Companies that become student internships places will be difficult to be visited by lecturers if the location is too far from the university domicile. These often become major deficiencies in organizing internships at the university.

In addition, the final grade by lecturers as supervisors/superintendents is given based on the average assessment during the supervision period by the lecturer as well as the assessment of the institution where the student internship is located. Employer companies as an internship places are also given the freedom to provide suggestions and criticisms intended for students and the internship system of the university. In this case, the lecturers then have an important role to be a media to convey these aspirations to the institution managing the internship program at the university/department.

D. Other Internship Program Supporting Facilities

In order to support the conducive process of mentoring in the internship program at ex-LPTK universities, they adopted the use of technology by providing specified websites and online forms. This kind of facility supports the real-time supervisions and consultations from lecturers to their internship students. By the existence of online technology, students are enabled to pick or choose their internship places everywhere without any efforts to come into their campus. They also have more time to learn and look more internship places according to their needs and preferences. Students' grading also can be seen online too, after they have conducted a final test with their lecturers/supervisors.

Other supporting facilities are the availability of cooperation in the form of a MoU and MoA at an employer institution or professional companies/association in Indonesia. While collaboration with employer institutions is very important for universities as a facility for their students, collaboration with the companies/professional ties is very important to accommodate the needs of the latest working environment sights.

E. Validation Step: Students Awareness on Internship System and Values

Based on the results of the distribution of our open questionnaires and focus group discussions, we have managed to gather that students really know the advantages of attending internships at their universities, both knowledge of disciplines or strengthening their soft skills themselves.

Internship activities are really support career selection in accordance with our disciplines, as well as support knowledge to know the work environment there.

Besides that, the students are already aware of the other benefits of participating in the internship such as improving their relationships and social networks for their own careers in the future. They also know that internship can open many references to job opportunities according to their discipline.

The students also know some of the risks they face, such as giving job descriptions in internship places that are not appropriate with their discipline. Some of them are aware of

the importance of finding companies that have divisions according to the discipline's knowledge. The majority of all students' similar answers hold the important conclusion that our research contains some contributions about internship systems and values.

We know that some interns at internship places are often told to do 'menial work', such as making copies or copying office documents. Therefore, we want the university to continue to improve the system and management of internships to be better by building and maintaining cooperation with companies for our internship places, and ensuring that we have a job description in accordance with our discipline.

V. CONCLUSION

Internship programs especially at higher levels of education such as universities need to be implemented effectively, as it is known to be the effective way to produce the qualified human resources. In this paper, we provide the figures or examples of a good internship system at the best ex-LPTK universities in Indonesia, so it will be easier to be studied and/or applied to the other higher education institutions who want to improve their internship programs. We chose LPTK universities as the institutions' main mission/specialty is to produce graduates to be the professional teaching staff/academics along with practitioners. Overall, the internship programs at these universities have been managed with the orientation on the interests of students, have adopted the use of technology, and are evaluated routinely based on feedback from internal and external parties of the university. The lack of internship and the organization of the mentoring system conducted by the lecturers become the major deficiencies in organizing internships at the universities. These can be used as a basis to put on efforts to improve the internship system at the university level, especially in Indonesia.

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