

## **Identifying Strategic Issues for Lecturer Development at the Ar-Raniry State Islamic University Banda Aceh, Indonesia**

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### **Abstract**

Rapid external changes demanded that the Ar-Raniry State Islamic University in Banda Aceh, Indonesia reformulate a strategic plan for its lecturer development that is appropriate and relevant to the current time and situation. This study aims to explore the steps taken by the university in identifying strategic issues as guidelines for the formulation of its lecturer development strategy. Using the qualitative case study approach, the data for the current study were collected via semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Six informants from the university's top management were purposively selected for the interviews. The interview data were then compared and analyzed with relevant document reviews to finally draw conclusions on the steps taken. The findings revealed that several strategic issues were considered to inform the steps taken in formulating a strategic plan to develop lecturer competency at the Ar-Raniry State Islamic University. The steps included revitalizing university management, improving university policy development, utilizing the paradigm of scientific development, and promoting local wisdom of Acehnese people.

**Keywords:** *Strategic planning, lecturer competency development, revitalization of university management, Indonesian higher education, Ar-Raniry Islamic State University*

## INTRODUCTION

In Indonesian higher education, Islamic religious state universities (*Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri or PTKIN*) face common problems related to three important issues, namely accountability (Mahmud, 2019), maintaining a curriculum that stays relevant to the development of science, technology and innovation (STI), and the quality of their graduates (Kuncoro, 2011). Some PTKINs have great difficulties in achieving the agreed upon quality standards. Hence to address these issues of quality and development, it is crucial to develop relevant scientific paradigms and standards of professionalism in educational management, and improve the quality of lecturers so that they are able to face increasingly competitive global challenges (Hakim, 2014).

In this case, university lecturers should have well-developed strategic plans to achieve the standards for the success of educational processes. They should be professional, competent and qualified to develop students' creativity, innovation, and productivity in learning, research, and community services, without which the quality and improvement of educational institutions may be affected (Fenyo, 2019).

As one of Indonesia's PTKINs, the Ar-Raniry State Islamic University also faces external environmental changes that affect the internal problems of the university, one of which concerns the quality and professionalism of its lecturers. Changes such as social interaction, organizational change, and technological development demand the university to reformulate the development strategy and future plan for its lecturers. The strategy and plan should consider strategic issues, such as competency, culture, behavior, and resources in the development of lecturers. These strategic issues are in line with the national policy of PTKIN, which is to improve access, relevancy, and quality of higher education in producing qualified human resources. More specifically, the main objective of the policy is to make higher education affordable and proactive in helping disadvantaged students to gain access to higher education (World Bank, 2014).

In lieu of how important it is to have high quality lecturers, the lecturer development strategy at the Ar-Raniry University has made it part of its aims to improve faculty competence and professionalism in the fields of education, research, and community service that may bring impact and contribute to the excellence of the institution in the future. The strategy should be closely related to the university policies and various methods in dealing with the problems (Dunn, 2000). Hence, emerging issues and various professional development opportunities should be carefully identified and analyzed to gain a competitive edge, including the issues related to individual lecturers (Asmawi & Jaladin, 2018).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **The Importance of Strategic Plans for Higher Education**

Talking about strategy as a plan, Mintzberg and Quinn (1996) specified two fundamental characteristics of strategy: “It is made in advance to the actions to which it applies, and it is developed consciously and purposefully” (p. 10). These characteristics implicitly show the notion of intentionality in strategic planning. According to Dooris, Kelley and Trainer (2004), intentionality is the soul of strategic planning. They referred to human capacity for intentionality as “the ability to formulate goals and proceed towards them with direct intent” (p. 5).

Even though the idea of a strategic plan is as old as mankind itself, the emergence of strategic planning as a discipline and formal practice occurred in the 1950s and the 1970s. According to Steiner (1979), formal strategic planning was first introduced as a “long-term planning” by large companies and conglomerates in the 1950s. Mintzberg (1994), on the other hand, argued that formal strategic planning arrived on the scene in the 1960s when corporate leaders decided to implement strategies that would improve their businesses. Others attributed the emergence of formal strategic planning to unanticipated events, such as energy crisis, that occurred in the 1970s which demanded pertinent planning systems (Rosenberg & Schewe, 1985).

As part of world community organizations, higher education institutions share the same developmental concept of strategic planning. Originally, strategic planning in higher education focused on academic facilities and space planning. Twenty-five campuses attended the first formal meeting of higher education planners in 1959 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In the subsequent years, the meetings were formally organized with more participating campuses. Eventually, the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) was founded in 1966 with more than 300 members who shared a primary interest in physical planning of campuses (Holmes, 1985).

The later development of demographic, economic, and technological turbulences in the 1970s forced higher education institutions to review the concept of strategic planning. Guided by clear vision and mission, the conception of strategic planning in higher education in the 1980s emphasized more on systematic steps and rational tools to actualize the institutional vision. Since then, the conception of strategic planning has continued to flourish, covering a broader scope of strategic issues such as goal setting, situational analyses, and strategy formulation. Among the notably rational models for organizational effectiveness include the Baldrige Educational Criteria for Performance Excellence (Baldrige National Quality Program, 2003) and the Balanced Scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). By the beginning of the new millennium, SCUP has had 42,000 members and grown its topical strategic considerations to include “governance, budgeting, learning assessment, faculty workload, student engagement, market segmentation, endowment management, and so on” (Dooris, Kelley & Trainer, 2004, p. 7).

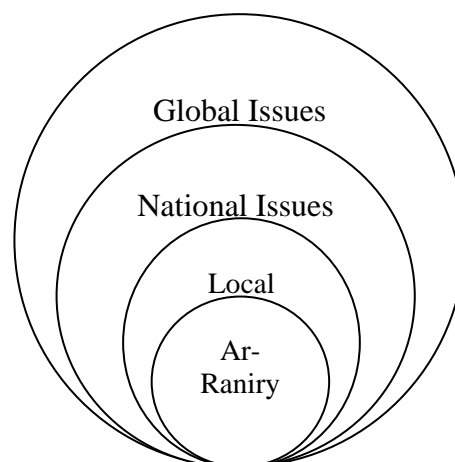
Herein, strategic planning is an essence of higher education. Most of higher education institutions share the same objectives of hiring high quality and competent faculty members, improving academic facilities, recruiting potential students, and strengthening academic programs and student services. On the other hand, an essential part of strategic planning also involves ensuring the accomplishment of institutional vision and mission by promoting and maintaining a market to acquire necessary resources for the betterment of the institution.

An organization should have strategic plans that include at least two important elements, i.e., vision and mission. The availability of vision and mission is vital in determining the existence of an organization and the setting of its goals (Ahman, 2020). Like other organizations, higher education institutions should define their strategic plans in the form of a mission statement to proclaim their objectives and strategies (Bayrak, 2020). As such, the vision of Ar-Raniry University is to become a university that excels in the development and integration of Islamic sciences, science, technology, and the arts (UIN Ar-Raniry, 2019).

### **Ar-Raniry University's Strategic Plan for Lecturer Development**

Studies looking specifically at students' IALL knowledge are rare. There is an acute lack of research in this area despite the ubiquity and usefulness of such tools in language learning. Research in IALL has mainly focused on uncovering solutions and practices for the IT industry and businesses, and has largely neglected the importance of examining what end users, especially students in universities and colleges, know about IALL and whether they use it in their language learning. This study is an attempt to address this gap.

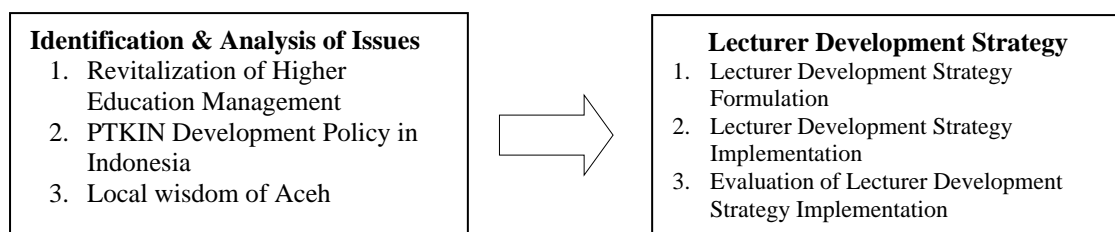
In the strategic plans of the Ar-Raniry State Islamic University 2020-2024 (*Rencana Strategi Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry 2020-2024*), several strategic issues at the institutional, local, national and global levels were laid as the foundation of its lecturers' professional development. The hierarchical importance and connection among these issues are presented in Figure 1 below:



*Figure 1: Foundations of the Lecturer Development Strategic Plan at the Ar-Raniry University, Indonesia*

The first step in the process of formulating a lecturer development strategy is determining the issues, and then arranging the development activities or programs around the issues identified. In determining the issues confronting Ar-Raniry university lecturers, there are several stages that can be performed: (a) assessing changes in the internal and external environment; (b) determining relevant issues such as gaps and problems; (c) selecting issues that are considered important; (d) addressing the issues with a variety of strategies; (e) carrying out an analysis of incremental changes; and (f) presenting an analysis of possible future conditions (Rivai, 2004).

Prior to developing a lecturer development strategy, the identification and analysis of issues at the global, national, and local levels need to be done first. Figure 2 shows the primary issues identified in developing lecturer development strategies at the Ar-Raniry Islamic State University.



*Figure 2: Identification of Issues in Lecturer Development Strategy*

Based on Figure 2, the selected strategic issues of lecturer development strategy at Ar-Raniry University focus on the things that are most important and relevant to the vision and goals of the institution. In the process of selecting the issues, the institution conducted a screening to limit the issues that occurred and can greatly influence the institution (Gaol, 2014). Some issues are sometimes considered as opportunities that need to be addressed immediately and need a quick policy from the leadership management (Hunger & Wheelen, 1996). Although these issues can be important as a whole, organizations usually focus on a few issues that are considered most important to the effectiveness of the institution.

### **Research Objectives and Questions**

The main objective of the current study is to determine the steps taken by the Ar-Raniry Islamic State University in identifying strategic issues as guidelines in the formulation of lecturer development strategies. The identification of issues aims to provide a clear direction as the focus and priority of lecturer development at the Ar-Raniry Islamic State University. More specifically, the identification of issues is made to compare the current conditions that are happening with the situations expected in the future.

Once the issues are clearly identified, they can be formulated into concrete strategies, which can become the references and guidelines for lecturer development programs at the university and elsewhere. By formulating and implementing effective professional development programs, lecturers will be able to contribute more substantively and productively to the university, specifically, and higher education in Indonesia, generally. The research question specifically addressed in this study is: *“What are the steps taken by the Ar-Raniry University in the development of its lecturer competency?”*

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This research is a case study in the context of strategy development for lecturers at the Ar-Raniry Islamic State University, Banda Aceh. The use of the qualitative approach, rather than quantitative, is to have an in-depth exploration of the steps taken by Ar-Raniry University in identifying strategic issues that have real meanings and values in lecturer development (Creswell, 2005). Hence, the qualitative case study method was used in line with the nature of the topic under study concerning the development of university management and its human resources that can give an impact on the professional development of lecturers at the Ar-Raniry University.

### Participants

Six top management staff at the Ar-Raniry Islamic State University were purposively chosen on the account that they are the right people who can provide answers to address the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2018). Most of the informants were and are presently involved in the formulation of the previous and current strategic plans of the university (*Rencana Strategi Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry 2020-2024*), hence they understand the specific issues of the current study. Table 1 provides a brief background of the informants and codes.

Table 1  
Informants' Background

No.	Code	Gender	Age	Management Position
1	IF-1	Male	62	Rector
2	IF-2	Male	52	Deputy Rector
3	IF-3	Male	52	Internal Audit and Quality Assurance Agency
4	IF-4	Male	51	Internal Monitoring Unit
5	IF-5	Male	45	Administration, Planning and Finance Bureau
6	IF-6	Female	44	Educational Technology Information Department

Five of the informants were male; only one was female. All of them hold top management positions at the Ar-Raniry Islamic State University from Offices of the Rector, Quality Assurance Agency, Internal Monitoring Unit, Administration Bureau, and Educational Technology Information Department. The informants' ages range from 44 to 62 years with 5 to 8 years of university management experiences.

### Data Collection and Interview Protocol

The data were acquired through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were best suited to the nature of the current study as they provide opportunities for the informants to explain their experiences in formulating university policies and to clarify the events related to the steps taken to improve lecturer competency spontaneously (Creswell, 2007). For the document analysis, the data related to the formulation.

of the lecturer development strategy were gathered from the Ar-Raniry University's 2020-2024 strategic plan, the Rector's Policy of Ar-Raniry Islamic State University, and the policies of the Directorate of Islamic Religious Higher Education of the Republic of Indonesia.

The interviews were done in six sessions with six individual informants. The sessions took place at the Ar-Raniry University campus between January and February 2020. The interview sessions ranged between 30 minutes to an hour. The informants were asked the following questions in the interviews:

1. What do you know about the development of lecturer competency at the Ar-Raniry University?
2. Are you involved directly in the formulation of lecturer development competency at Ar-Raniry University? If yes, how were you involved?
3. What are the steps taken by the Ar-Raniry University to develop its lecturers' competency?

At the start of the interview, the informants were first introduced to the general topic of the current research and its objectives. In compliance with research ethics, they were informed of their rights and assured of the confidentiality of the results. The informants were also required to sign a consent form to document their agreement with the methods and procedures, accuracy and truthfulness of the reported data, and openness of the research.

To ensure a free flow of useful information, the informants were duly advised that no right or wrong answers were set or expected in the interview. They were free to say what they wanted and how they felt, and could even opt not to answer any one of the questions. The sessions were tape-recorded to capture all the details. At the same time, the researcher made sure to carry on an attentive conversation with the informants. All comments remained confidential, and the final report will not make references to any particular individual.

## **Data Analysis**

Answers from the informants were digitally recorded. The analysis of the data began with the process of transcribing the interviews verbatim and avoiding the summary method (Litchman, 2006). The next processes were identifying main ideas from the transcripts, coding the data, and classifying sub-themes and themes from the topic (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Biklen & Bogdan, 2007). After the required data were collected, the next steps were to carry out data reduction, display them in a tabular form to clarify each unit, compare and analyze the data with each other, and draw the conclusions (Moleong, 2015).

Based on the analysis, the final step was to determine alternative formulation issues that are appropriate and relevant to the lecturer development strategy at the Ar-Raniry Islamic State University. The same techniques of induction theme extraction were used for the document analysis in which relevant documents from the Ar-Raniry University and the Ministry of Education were reviewed and analyzed.

## Data Credibility and Trustworthiness

The interview sessions were conducted in the native language of the informants, i.e. Bahasa Indonesia. It was crucial to conduct the interviews in their mother tongue because the informants would be able express their opinions and feelings freely and more clearly than they could in English. Once the interview transcripts were written out verbatim, they were translated into the English language accordingly. To establish the trustworthiness and credibility of the data, member checking was done where each informant was given their respective transcribed interview to check the accuracy of the transcription. The transcriptions and extracted themes were also given to a panel of experts to provide their review, constructive comments and thoughts.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the interviews and document analysis, it was found that the Ar-Raniry Islamic State University took several important steps in identifying the strategic issues towards the formulation of its lecturer development strategies. The issues included: (1) revitalizing the university management; (2) improving university policy development; (3) utilizing the paradigm of scientific development; and (4) promoting the local wisdom of the Acehnese people. These steps were designated as the study's four major themes.

These steps were generated from several main ideas extracted from the transcripts of the interviews. The main ideas from the research question include revitalization of higher education, world-class university, globalization, science and technology development, management of changes, world Islamic education, lecturer competency, university scientific works, university transformation, low quality education, Islamic higher education, the heart (*jantung hatee*) of the Acehnese people, and contribution to the local community. From the above main ideas, the current study discovered four major themes as mentioned earlier. Below is the description of each theme.

### Steps Towards Lecturer Competency Development

The development of training programs for enhancing the quality and competency of university lecturers is important. Providing lecturers with the appropriate training will help increase their competencies. Below are the main steps taken by the Ar-Raniry University to develop its lecturer competency.

#### Step 1: Revitalizing University Management

In Ar-Raniry's 2020-2024 strategic plan (*Rencana Strategi Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry 2020-2024*), revitalizing higher education management is an effort to improve the university's global competitiveness. This is based on several disciplinary approaches related to the revitalization of higher education management towards becoming world-class and globally competitive universities. Theories that are relevant to this issue include globalization, the development of science and technology, and change management.



The figure below is a pattern of lecturer development in the context of university revitalization:

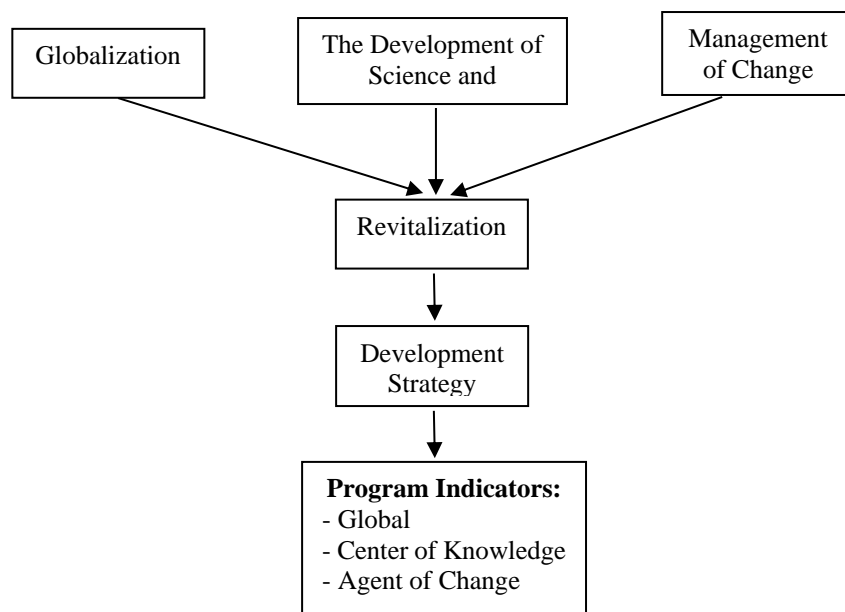


Figure 3: A Pattern of Lecturer Development and University Revitalization

Globalization has created a world without borders, connecting and bringing together the world's communities, hence resulting in a kind of unity in the face of diversity (Eko Indrajit, 2006). Globalization refers to the integration of the economy, trade, culture, education, and politics on a global scale. An example would be a country which previously operated within a national scope is now expanded to embrace a more global scope (Sisilo, 2018). In the context of higher education, globalization means a number of things, among which are: (1) cross-border student flow; (2) the development of education hubs and branch campuses; (3) program mobility involving students and staff; and (4) the massification of online programs, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) (Varghese, 2013).

For Ar-Raniry, globalization is (1) a social phenomenon that impacts various factors influencing the development of lecturer resources in tertiary institutions; (2) the development strategy of lecturers who are professional and relevant to the current times and changing trends in knowledge development; (3) the adoption of relevant strategies to integrate various scientific disciplines and cultures into the vision, mission, goals and strategic plans in the field of developing three pillars of the Indonesian higher education (i.e., the *Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi* consisting of learning, research, and community service); and (4) universities needing autonomy and independence to perform their roles as agents of change (Fattah, 2019).

The Ar-Raniry State Islamic University is now facing the challenges of meeting the needs of an increasingly global, open, and competitive world or job market. In terms of faculty and curriculum, it needs to have international quality and standardization to meet the demands of the global community (Safriadi, 2016). The university can improve its positive image through the initial steps to improve the quality of lecturers who are able to compete internationally. In this case, a lecturer development strategy policy is needed in accordance to the development of science and technology (Muhaimin, 2009). In line with this, IF-1 stated that:

*First of all, we need to pay more attention to the current issues, especially in the development of technology, modern higher education management, world-class university, and internationalization of higher education. Secondly, the national issues such as policy orientation of the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs towards the development of Islamic higher education in Indonesia. Finally, local issues as a foundation in formulating the development strategy for lecturers at Ar-Raniry university [IF-1]*

In the era of globalization, it is not enough to only master conventional resources which are often stated as 4M (Men, Materials, Money, and Machines or Methods) (Asmawi & Jaladin, 2018). The reality is that there are a number of countries that are very poor in terms of their 4M portfolios, but have succeeded in developing and building their nations. In contrast, there are some countries that are rich in 4M resources, but still fail to compete with other nations (Eko Indrajit, 2006).

The Ar-Raniry community is hoping that the university will one day become a top ranking educational institution. However, it requires fundamental changes so that it is able to compete with other universities across the border in other nations. For that reason, the Ar-Raniry university must have a strategic plan and a change management blueprint. Changes happen because the people who run the organization are humans, and humans are dynamic or constantly changing. It is often said that one thing that is sure to happen in the world is change (Wahab, 2011).

## **Step 2: Improving University Policy Development**

Islamic state universities in Indonesia are experiencing a rapid development. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has a plan of making Indonesia the world's center of Islamic education. Presently, the *qibla* or center of Islamic education is in Middle Eastern countries that use Arabic. Due to the fact that many Muslims do not speak Arabic but yet need to learn and understand the religion, it is time for Indonesia to step in and develop as a center of Islamic education for international citizens (Mastuki, 2018). In addition to having produced scores of respectable Islamic thinkers, Indonesia is also the seat of many diverse and distinctive forms of Islamic education, such as its traditional (*kutub al-turats* or *kitab kuning*), and modern *pesantren* education which uses English as a language of instruction, as well as its *madrasah* Islamic training and *majlis ta'lim*. According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Indonesia is ready to host other foreign citizens to study Islam in the country.

The government of Indonesia is optimistic that in the future, Indonesian Islam will be a trademark for the Indonesian people and an attraction for other nations to learn Islam. To support this vision, starting in 2015, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia has provided scholarships for 1,000 doctoral candidates each year from various PTKINs throughout Indonesia, to study at various universities, both locally and internationally. The scholarship program is expected to produce 5,000 PhD graduates who will become the frontliners in scientific development at PTKINs throughout Indonesia (Safriadi, 2016).

According to IF-4, the above-mentioned programs have been covered in the university's strategic plans of higher education:

*In fact, the issues of producing global and competent graduates have been covered in the strategic plan of [the] university. The global issues include the development of science and technology, facing the industrial revolution 4.0, increasing international publication in response to preparing lecturers who are competent in facing the global changes [IF-4]*

To reach an international reputation, the competency of lecturers at Indonesia's Islamic universities must be at par with the competencies of lecturers at the level of world universities. Ar-Raniry university lecturers, in particular, must be able to produce scientific works or to be speakers in academic forums in universities in the world. It is hoped that the scientific works can be used as references for students and academics of various universities in the world.

### **Step 3: Utilizing the Paradigm of Scientific Development**

In the history of PTKINs in Indonesia, the transformation of Islamic state institutes (*Institut Agama Islam Negeri – IAIN*) into Islamic state universities (*Universitas Islam Negeri – UIN*) is a historical point of Islamic religious higher education. Amid the various problems of education in Indonesia, ranging from subsidies from the government to the issue of low education quality, this transformation gave birth to new hopes in the context of Islamic religious higher education in Indonesia (Mansur, 2006). The essence of the transformation of IAIN into UIN is a transformation into the academic-scientific dimension, not merely physical changes in buildings or managerial management. The change is not just the opening of faculties and "general" departments, but must also involve significant changes in scientific epistemology.

Regarding the transformation of Islamic higher education from institute to university, IF-2 opined that it is timely and necessary:

*The biggest change that is happening in the community today is that Ar-Raniry university is demanded to produce professional graduates who are ready to face the global market. The real demand is not only producing religious scholars, but also competent graduates who can be professional in many fields or land of works [IF-2]*

The most crucial aspect in the transformation of IAIN into UIN is to unify the religious and general sciences under one comprehensible paradigm for understanding and practice. The integrated and interconnected paradigm essentially aims to show that the various fields of science are intricately intertwined because what is aimed at by all scientific disciplines is the reality of the same universe. They differ only in their focus and dimensions (Abdullah, 2007). Therefore, classifying the science disciplines by ill-conceived superiority, exclusivity and dichotomy is misleading and will only harm the development of knowledge for the advancement of man-cognitively, psychologically and spiritually. Such classifications will only hamper Muslims' complete understanding of epistemology and the nature of knowledge. Hence, Ar-Raniry university lecturers must have access to this integrated scientific paradigm and the ability to make sense of the scientific interconnections among the disciplines.

IF-3 explained that the original vision and mission of Ar-Raniry university is to integrate both sciences accordingly:

*The development programs that we are conducting refer to the vision and mission of Ar-Raniry university, i.e. the integration of Islamic knowledge, sciences, and technology. Thus, the lecturer development programs should be directed towards the integration and interconnection of sciences in realizing the three pillars of higher education in Indonesia. Of course, there are many challenges and shortcoming in the implementation of the vision and mission. However, there are still no real policies and strategies from the university leadership. As a result, the vision and mission are merely words [IF-3]*

More importantly, the development and conversion of IAIN to UIN is a scientific project. This project develops scientific insights and changes towards a scientific mindset with a transformative religious mind. The conversion from IAIN to UIN is a move to fix and heal the Muslim intellectual injuries created by the compartmentalization and ill-conceived dichotomy of science and religion (Abdullah, 2007). This vision of knowledge integration must be well implemented in the curricula, syllabi, and courses, including the development of teaching staff with ethics and breadth of reintegration of scientific epistemology in the UIN era.

#### **Step 4: Promoting Local Wisdom of the Acehese People**

The history of the Regional Education Day (*Hari Pendidikan Daerah – HARDIKDA*) originated from two higher education institutions in Darussalam, namely the Syiah Kuala University and the UIN Ar-Raniry (formerly IAIN). These two educational institutions are housed in a single place called Darussalam, and are considered as the heart of the Acehese people (*jantong hatee*). The Darussalam campus was inaugurated by the first President of Indonesia, Soekarno on 2nd September 1959 (Rezki & Husaini, 2017).

Acehese refer to the two higher education institutions as "*Jantong Hatee*". In Acehese language, both the terms "*jantong*" and "*hatee*" mean *heart* (Lani, 2016). They both play an important role in the lives of living things, especially humans and animals. By definition, the heart is a cavity of muscular organs that pumps blood through blood vessels by repetitive rhythmic contractions. According to IF-6, the concept of *Jantong Hatee* is a local wisdom of the Acehese people:

*I believe that this is a local issue that becomes the spirit for Ar-Raniry university to prepare human resources (lecturer) who can be referred to in the Province of Aceh in term of Islamic knowledge. So far, we have had many scholars from Ar-Raniry who have contributed their skills and knowledge to the community. In the future, we need to maintain this local wisdom especially in the implementation of Shari'ah Laws [IF-6]*

The above concept is contextually meaningful that UIN Ar-Raniry as a higher education institution must be able to produce the scientists needed by all the people of Aceh so that Aceh and this country can continue to stand tall, and still be able to compete in the global arena. The hope of this community must be able to be interpreted by the academic community of UIN Ar-Raniry, so that the work of UIN, especially lecturers and students, should always contribute

back to the people of Aceh. Specifically, IF-5 explained that the Ar-Raniry Islamic university has been the source of knowledge for the people of Aceh:

*Ar-Raniry university has been the source of knowledge since a long time ago after Syiah Kuala University. In relation to its establishment and the implementation of Islamic Shari'ah Laws, many Acehnese scholars have contributed in formulating the guidance, such as Prof. Al-Yasa' Abu Bakar, Prof. Muslim Ibrahim, and many others. For that reason, Ar-Raniry university should be able to prepare graduates who can contribute in the implementation of Islamic Laws in Aceh [IF-5]*

Finally, the hope of the founders of the two campuses of the Acehnese people is that the educational institutions symbolized by the tip of the pen complement each other between general science and religious knowledge. The birth of these campuses in the area of Kopelma Darussalam is commemorated as Aceh's Regional Education Day every year.

## CONCLUSION

Several strategic issues were taken into consideration in developing a lecturer competency plan at the Ar-Raniry Islamic State University Banda Aceh. They included global, issues, and local. In general, these issues were already considered in the strategic plan for lecturer development in 2020-2024. However, there are still current issues that need to be systematically and comprehensively identified in relation to the revitalization of higher education management and internationalization of higher education. Nationally, the issue is related to the policy of developing the State Islamic Religious University (*Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri*) in Indonesia and the contextual issues that exist in the Aceh Province including the application of Islamic law. The identification of these issues served as the foundation in formulating competency strategies for the development of Ar-Raniry University lecturers in the future.

The findings of the current study revealed that four major steps were taken by the Ar-Raniry Islamic State University in identifying the strategic issues to formulate its lecturer development strategies. They are revitalizing university management, improving university policy development, utilizing the paradigm of scientific development, and promoting the local wisdom of the Acehnese people. These steps became the guidelines for developing future professional development programs for lecturers at the university.

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