

<https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/jpep/issue/view/2301>

## The evaluation of lecturer's improvement programs through academic culture and services

Connie Chairunnisa\*; Istaryatiningtyas

Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. HAMKA

\*Corresponding Author. E-mail: [zusconnie@uhamka.ac.id](mailto:zusconnie@uhamka.ac.id)

### ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the program to improve postgraduate lecturers' performance at Muhammadiyah University Prof. Dr. Hamka (UHAMKA). This study used a mixed-method sequential explanatory design. The primary data were collected using questionnaires for lecturers, study programs coordinators, and students. The primary data were presented by conducting observations and interviews with the Director of UHAMKA Postgraduate. The data analysis was carried out using differential statistics to support the interview and documentation result. The most prominent result was the Institute's concern for the lecturer problem, with the respondents' answers showed strong concern (13%), concern (45.7%), and immediate concern (41.3%). The Institute's concern for lecturer problems was not high, therefore, it needs to be increased. This study implied the need to conduct a follow-up program by motivating lecturers without any functional positions to immediately concerned and collect the required documents.

**Keywords:** *academic culture, academic services, lecturer performance*

**How to cite:** ---

### INTRODUCTION

As a part of higher education institutions in Indonesia, a lecturer is supposed to follow the basic motto of "Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi". The motto means that a lecturer should bring knowledge to the class (theoretically), do research, and conducting community service engagement (practical knowledge). The vision and mission of a tertiary institution are reflected in its "Tri Dharma" per the philosophy mandated by the government. It is similar to assessing a high school's performance by measuring its success in realizing the goals in these three activities (Suheri, 2017).

Lecturers have a major role in the progress of a university, so their performance must be managed properly (Sunoto, 2018). The quality of higher education is also determined by human resources, a well-operated organization, and effective management, which is reflected in the teaching and learning process, the quality of graduates, and the quality of the Tri Dharma services (Brawijaya University, 2007). The roles, credits, and responsibilities of faculties are very important in realizing the goals of educating the nation, improving the quality of the Indonesian people (including the quality of faith/piety in terms of religion, character, and the mastery of science, technology, and art), and promoting an advanced, just, prosperous, and civilized Indonesia (Polnaya et al., 2018). The concerns about academic excellence have become the center of discussion in higher education globally. However, the term itself remains ambiguous because most participants see it as an abstract aspirational target, an experiential rather than a measurable result. In many jurisdictions, the discourse has



been politicized to follow the priorities of the local elite. The more democratic a society is, the more diverse the interpretation of excellence (Oleksiyenko & Ros, 2019).

The detailed analyses of the highest and lowest achievements in lecturer performance appraisals aim to identify the strengths and weaknesses of these groups. A study has shown that a superior lecturer must master the cognitive-transfer techniques and establish good relationships with students (Samian & Noor, 2012). On the contrary, when a bad teaching method becomes the main factor in the lecturer's poor performance, then this assessment is not a valid measure to justify the lecturers' teaching quality. Lecturer performance will affect the quality, carrying capacity, and the sustainability of a university. Many models have been developed to measure the performance of lecturers, but those models do not discuss the effect of the Study Program's performance on the sustainability of an organization (Suryaman, 2018).

The professionalism of lecturers is an important aspect to obtain better-quality teaching and it requires a focus on human resource management. Measuring a lecturer's performance also relates to quality that can occur within a certain period (Polnaya et al., 2018). Lecturer's performance measurement includes their workload in learning process planning, carrying out the learning process, learning evaluation, guiding and training, conducting research, doing community service, and qualifying for additional credits (Boimau, 2014). Teaching evaluation in tertiary institutions addresses at least three main concerns, assessment of lecturers' performance, research on learning methods, and the evaluation of education systems (Weinberg et al., 2009).

This study aims to evaluate the program to improve UHAMKA postgraduate lecturers' performance. Before the study, the researchers conduct preliminary research to ensure the lecturers' performance and quality of teaching at UHAMKA. According to Law No. 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, there are four competencies that a lecturer must have in carrying out the duties of "Tri Dharma", which are pedagogy, professional, personality, and social. These competencies are the lecturers' performance indicators as educators and teachers. The performance also one of the determining factors in the success of the teaching-learning process in universities.

Regarding this point, there is a close relationship between individual performance and the company's performance. The results of Pramudyo (2010) showed that competency has a significant influence on the performance of state lecturers employed in "Koordinasi Perguruan Tinggi Swasta (Kopertis)" private-owned higher education institution coordination of Region V in Yogyakarta. The results of the 2016 Yusran study proved that the lecturer's performance has a positive and significant contribution to the quality of education. The improvement of the lecturer's performance will be followed by the improved quality of education. Thus, the performance of lecturers becomes a high predictor of the quality of higher education.

In the context of this study, the lecturer's assessment at UHAMKA was previously done by giving students a questionnaire to score and observe the lecturer's performance from their perspectives. The results of the student assessment are more on the subjective and the university leaders' showed disappointment on the result. The results of interviews with the management of the UHAMKA postgraduate program showed that some lecturers still do not give attention to their performance. Some lecturers' soft skills (education and research development standard) do not require UHAMKA to improve their education services (UHAMKA, 2016). The literature on the academic profession in Asian societies under discussed the tension between service responsibilities and research capacity building (Oleksiyenko & Ros, 2019) However that differs from this study, the institution's concern for lecturers' problems, lecturer rights, and ranks, and lecturer concerns must support lecturers' performance.

Based on Law No. 44, 2015 by the Ministry of Research and Higher Education of Indonesia concerning the National Standards for Higher Education, the institutions must

fulfill 24 standards. As one of the higher education universities founded by the Charity Foundation of Muhammadiyah Foundation, UHAMKA must accommodate, realize, and develop the noble ideals of Muhammadiyah by adding five standards to the 24 standards, mainly to ensure achievements and to improve the quality of education (UHAMKA, 2016). This study was expected to be a standard of evaluation, particularly for UHAMKA and generally for universities, to intensively concern about human resource development of the institute.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study was conducted from February 2019 to July 2019 at UHAMKA Postgraduate School with 51 lecturers, classified as 34 permanents and 17 temporaries, from nine Study Programs. The correspondents were chosen purposively using snowball sampling that started with the Postgraduate School Director, the study programs, and nine permanent lecturers in each study program. The involved study programs were the Education Research and Evaluation (PEP), Master of Management (MM), Education Administration (AP), Public Health Science (IKM), Indonesian Language, English Language, Basic Education (Pendas), Mathematics, and Social Sciences (IPS).

This study used a mixed-method (qualitative and quantitative) to obtain a comprehensive analysis (Sinaga, 2017). The model used in this study is a sequential explanatory design, a combination of two methods sequentially at different times. The primary data were collected using questionnaires to lecturers, study programs, and students to evaluate the lecturer and academic program performance. Then, the preliminary data were presented by observations and interviews with the Director of UHAMKA Postgraduate to validate data. The questionnaire, comment, and interview were focused on the lecturer ranks, academic culture, and academic services; these three points were also the limitation of the study. Thus, the analysis was conducted using differential statistics to support the interview and documentation data.

From the interview results with UHAMKA postgraduate managers, there are still lecturers who are not paying attention to their performance, especially in lecturers' ranking. There are still those with soft skills that not adequate according to UHAMKA standards. Soft skills are skills that can form strong personalities to strengthen professional competencies in hard skills (Polnaya et al., 2018).

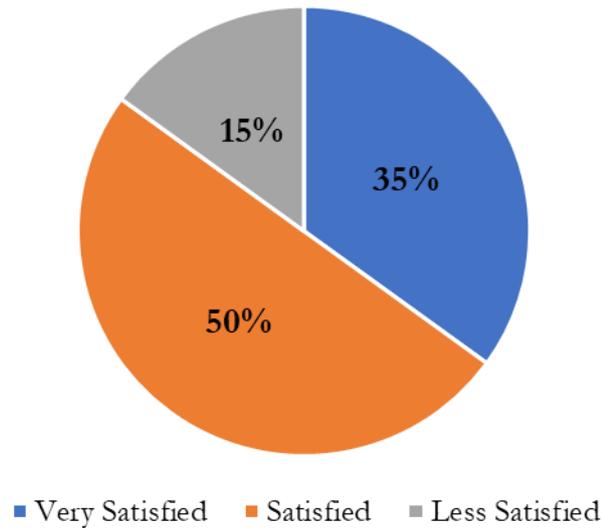
## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

#### *Lecturers' Ranking*

*Competencies and teaching subjects, as well as the adequacy of lecturers and teaching load*

Most of the respondents (71.4%) stated that the lecturers taught courses consistent with their competencies, while the remaining 21.6% of respondents stated that their lecturers taught following their competencies. Thus, the suitability between the subjects taught and the lecturer's competence is an indication of a high level of satisfaction with the teaching at UHAMKA. Judging from the number of lecturers compared to the students, which affect the lecturers' teaching load, the responses revealed that lecturers were not burdened with their teaching assignments (71%), and only about 29% stated that the burden of teaching at UHAMKA is perfectly natural. More than half of the respondents stated that the lecturers could have a minimum teaching load of 12 credits or 36 hours per week, Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Lecturers' satisfaction on competence and teaching load.

The relevance of competence and lecturer performance is strong and accurate, indicating the need to improve lecturers' performance-competencies alignment with their work assignments. Lecturers are expected to improve their competence to follow the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 37 of 2009 about Lecturers. To motivate the lecturers, UHAMKA allowed continuing their studies to a higher level (Doctoral Degree) and receive a scholarship for lectures. Lecturers who have a Doctoral and a Professor degree are given a professional bonus every month.

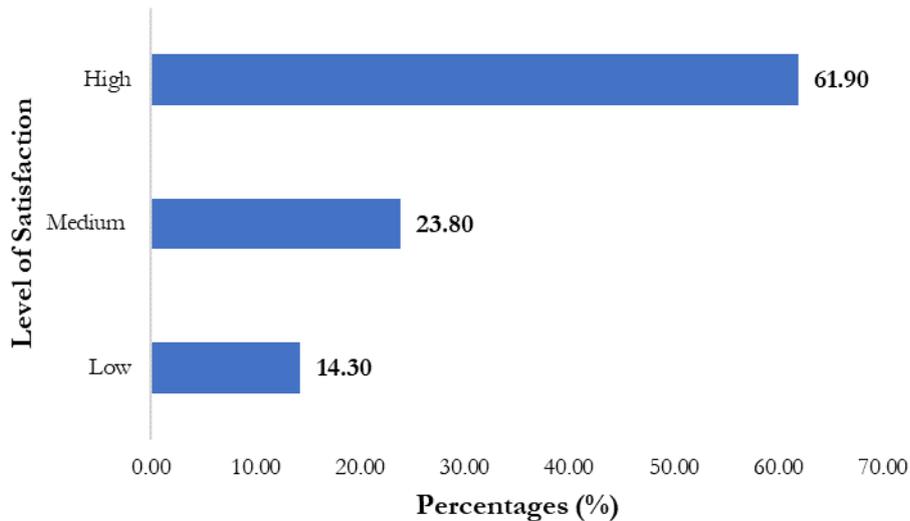
In addition to competence, the underdeveloped academic culture is the suspected reason for lecturers' performance stagnation. The application of the organizational culture concept in tertiary institutions is not much different from other organizations (Hartnell et al., 2011).

### ***Academic Services***

#### *Research and community service*

Besides giving a formal lecture, the lecturer's tasks are conducting research and performing community service. These tasks are increasingly prominent, with the growing demands on the lecturers to actively preparing journals or writing scientific papers. Related to this problem, UHAMKA Postgraduate School has made many efforts to facilitate lecturers' ability by providing both research and community service funding, as well as other opportunities to increase lecturers' interest in fulfilling their duties in research and community service activities.

More than half of respondents (57.1%) answered that lecturers had a broad opportunity to research with UHAMKA Research Institute, while the rest (42.9%) stated that lecturers had ample opportunities to be involved in the research. The opportunity to conduct research begins with the provision of information to the lecturers regarding the research opportunity. The respondents' answers regarding the lecturer's research opportunity showed 61.9% to be "very satisfying," 23.8% to be "satisfying", and the remaining 14.3% to be "neutral" (Figure 2).



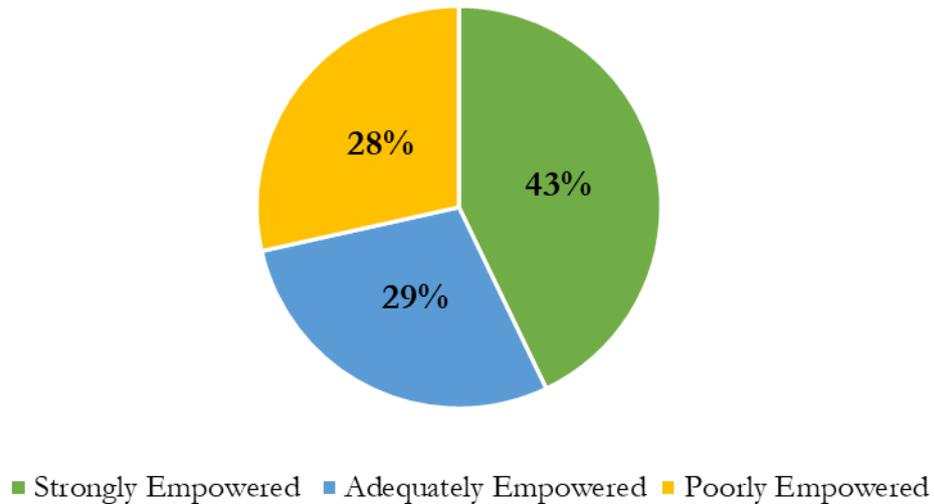
**Figure 2.** The satisfaction on research opportunity and community dedication of lecturers in UHAMKA.

Respondents' answers regarding the opportunity to do community service showed that most respondents (71.4%) stated the opportunity was “very satisfying”.

### *Empowerment of lecturers*

The empowerment of lecturers is an aspect of satisfaction associated with developing the lecturers' ability and self-esteem. The greater the lecturer's empowerment, the greater the possibility to increase lecturers' ability. Each lecturer must know the elements of lecture planning to produce a good lecture plan and organize an ideal learning process. These elements include: (1) identifying the student's needs, (2) setting objectives, (3) designing various strategies and scenarios relevant to the objectives, and (4) identifying the evaluation criteria for learning outcomes.

Based on the description above, the important elements in planning a lecture are what will be taught, how to teach it, and how to evaluate the results of learning (Hadiono, 2014) As much as 42.9% of the respondents' answer that the lecturers were empowered as the students' academic advisors; 28.6 % stated that the lecturers were quite empowering; and the remaining 28.5% expressed doubts about their involvement in empowerment (Figure 3). The similar answer rates also occur for the empowerment of lecturers as supervisors of students' final assignments.

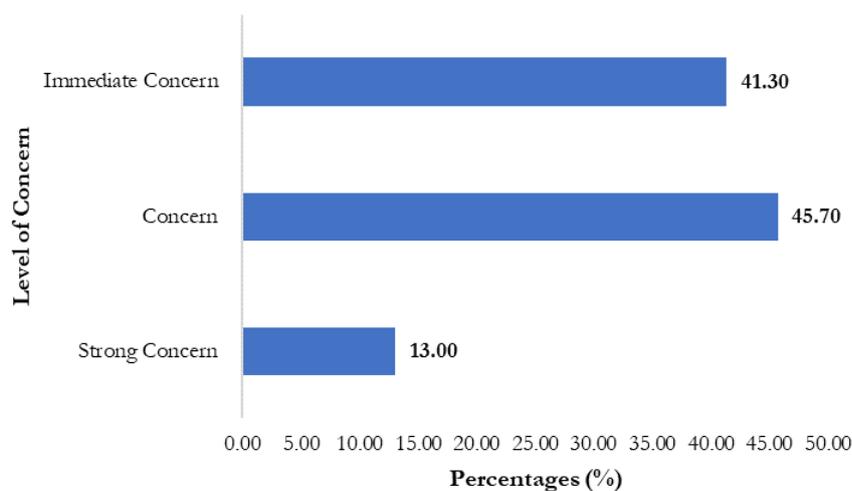


**Figure 3.** Lecturer's response to the empowerment.

### *Academic Culture*

#### *Institutional awareness to the lecturers' problems*

As a dynamic resource, the lecturers are inseparable from problems, both from internal and external campus. This will certainly affect their performance in carrying out academic credits. Solving these problems is one source of lecturer satisfaction in the institutional context. Problem-solving requires the help and the concern from the institution for solving the problem at hand. This satisfaction survey included the institution's concern for the lecturer's psychological pressure at work, both in the form of conflicts at work or the problem that arise when carrying out their duties and apart from assignments. The survey results revealed that the institution had concerns about these problems to varying degrees, about 13% answered "strong concern", 45.7% "concern", and 41.3% "immediate concern," (Figure 4). These results indicate that the institutional concern for lecturers' problems is not very high, so it needs to be maximized, as it would in other organizational cultures (Hartnell et al., 2011).



**Figure 4.** Institution concern to work-related problem of lecturers.



### ***Work Atmosphere***

A conducive work atmosphere will contribute to improving the performance of lecturers. This factor is also an important element of their job satisfaction. In this study, the researchers focus on the dominant elements that create a conducive work atmosphere. The first is the communication among the lecturers and between lecturers and their leaders, such as the Chair of the Study Program, Directors, and the Secretaries of the Graduate School, and finally the communication with students. The second is giving support in carrying out the work of lecturers in implementing the “Tri Dharma”. The third is extending the appreciation to lecturers in both financial and non-financial terms. As many as 50% of the respondents' stated that the work atmosphere was quite conducive, 43.8% stated that the work atmosphere was very conducive, and the remaining 6.2% stated that the work atmosphere was lacking.

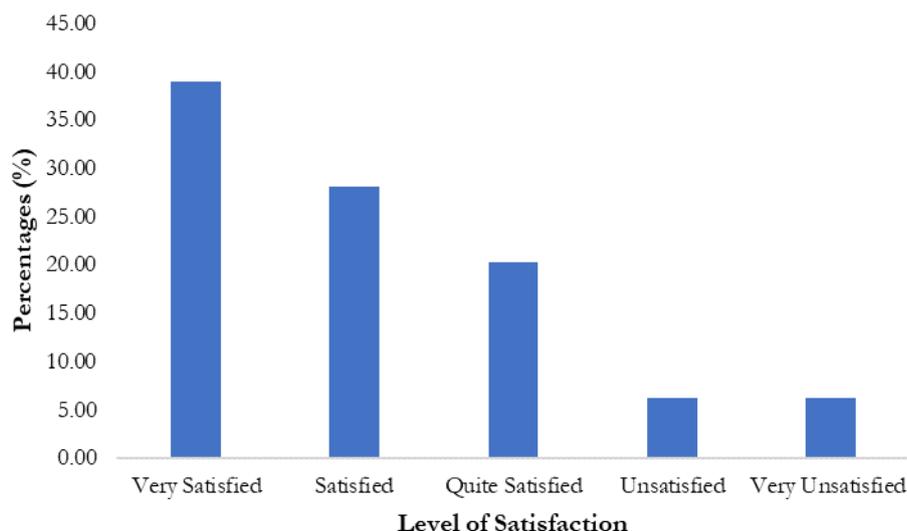
The respondents' answers regarding support for carrying out the work are as shown in Table 1. Half of the respondents' answers stated that the Institute was sufficiently providing support, while each of the remaining 25% stated that the Institute lacked or insufficiently provided support in the implementation of lecturers' work.

**Table 1.** Percentage of awards.

Institute's appreciation	%
Very high	25
Quite high	33
Less high	42

As many as 25% of respondents stated that the institution gave both financial and nonfinancial awards at a very high level, 33% graded them “quite high,” and 42% answered “less high” regarding giving awards to lecturers. This result shows that the Institute's awards to lecturers, both financially and nonfinancial, is still lacking.

The learning tools were rated as satisfactory. In detail, the respondents' answers were 39.0% “very satisfying”; 28.1% “satisfying”; 20.3% “quite satisfying”; 6.3% unsatisfying (Figure 5). Regarding the availability of health facilities, the respondents' answers were 25% “very satisfying”, 37.5% “satisfying,” 12.5% “good enough” and 25% “unsatisfying”. As much as 38.1% stated unsatisfied regarding the worship facilities, while 52.4% of them said “satisfied” and 9.5% “very satisfied”, Regarding the parking facilities, the respondents' answers showed that 31.2% were “unsatisfied”, 37.6% were “satisfied”, and 31.2% were “very satisfied”.



**Figure 5.** Respondents' response to educational facilities.

## Discussion

The empowerment of lecturers is an aspect of satisfaction associated with lecturers' ability and self-esteem development. The results of this study are consistent with the previous research that the quality of higher education is also determined by human resources as well as by a healthy organization and effective management (Brawijaya University, 2007). The greater the lecturer's empowerment, the greater is the possibility of lecturers' ability to increase. Lecturers are expected to have the ability to make social relationships with students, colleagues, employees, and the community to support education. Every lecturer must know the elements of planning (Ningrum, 2012) to produce a good lecture plan and organize an ideal learning process. These elements include identifying students' needs, setting learning objectives, designing various strategies and scenarios relevant to achieve the objectives, and identifying the evaluation criteria for learning outcomes. Based on the description above, the important elements in planning a lecture are what will be taught, how to teach it, and how to evaluate the results of learning (Hadiono, 2014).

The compatibility of the lecturers' competence and the taught courses, as well as the sufficient number of lecturers on the teaching load, are the sources to trigger the growth and development of lecturers' job satisfaction. Similarly, the minimum number of credits per week is charged to the lecturers. The actual lecturer category is the appointment of work from the actual state of the evident situation. The ideal lecturer category is the appointment of work for ideal or desired conditions in ongoing activities (Žeravíková et al., 2015).

The relevance of the relationship between competence and lecturer performance is strong and accurate, indicating the need to improve lecturers' performance-competencies alignment with their work assignments. Lecturers are expected to improve their competence to follow Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 37 of 2009, concerning Lecturers. To motivate lecturers, UHAMKA allowed lecturers to continue their studies to a higher level (Doctoral Degree) and receive a scholarship; lecturers who have a Doctoral and Professor degree are given a professional bonus every month. Such is the importance of the role of a lecturer in a university. Of course, it is necessary to maintain the quality of its performance (Retnowati et al., 2017). The performance itself is a total collection of performance behavior of an employee (Armstrong, 2000). So, it can be said that the version of the lecturer is the result of the work of the lecturer related to the three dharma of higher

education (Teaching, Research, and Community Service), this is in line with research (Sundayana et al., 2019), The National Higher Education Standard in the Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education No. 44 of 2015 is the minimum criterion in determining higher education standards. Of course, the tri dharma is a benchmark in its achievement, namely education, research, and community service.

In addition to competence, the underdeveloped academic culture is the suspected reason for lecturers' performance stagnation. The application of the organizational culture concept in tertiary institutions is not much different from its application in other organizations (Hartnell et al., 2011). Other aspects that become instruments to measure the lecturer's quality is research and community service. The lecturer's important tasks are conducting research and performing community service. These tasks are increasingly prominent, with the growing demands on the lecturers to actively preparing journals or writing scientific papers. Related to this problem, UHAMKA Postgraduate School has made many efforts to facilitate lecturers' ability to carry out this task by providing funding for both research and community service, as well as other opportunities to increase lecturers' interest in fulfilling their research and community service duties.

One of the goals of education is to create human beings with qualities needed for the future, enabling them to face the increasingly fierce competition with other nations globally. The provision of quality education produces qualified Indonesian people (Pramudyo, 2010).

This study will have a significant and positive impact on lecturer performance, academic culture, and academic services by addressing these points: (1) There is a need for a sharper commitment with the Head of Study Programs to improve the accreditation quality; (2) Likewise, the non-optimal academic culture of lecturers in research and community service must be improved through workshops, collaborating with the Research Institute (Lemlit) and the UHAMKA Community Service Institute (LPPM); (3) The improvement of academic services is needed, especially for functional lecturers, through socialization and workshops, as well as linking to the "Lembaga Layanan Pendidikan Tinggi DIKTI" (LLDIKTI) – higher education service body.

There are two main problems in this study, namely the issue of accreditation and rank-level problems. PEP and MM study-program accreditation has been established for 20 years, but still has not moved from "B" and English-language study programs and IKM study programs are 13 years old and have been twice accredited, but still "B." For the permanent lecturer, further training is still needed, bearing in mind that lecturers in the PEP study program do not have a rank yet (i.e., still have teaching status).

The questionnaire results of seven aspects (lecturer satisfaction, opportunities, lecturer empowerment, institutional concern; work atmosphere, facilities, and infrastructure; cooperation) showed the respondents who answered were strongly concerned only 13%, while 45.7% answered concerned, and the rest was quite concerned (41.3%). These results showed that the Institute's concern for the lecturers' problems is not too high and must be maximized. Likewise, the issue of lecturer rights regarding the salaries, most respondents answered unsatisfying (62.60%), while others answered quite satisfying (31.30%), and only 6% answered satisfying. Regarding whether honorariums are better than the received salary, 43% answered they were satisfying; about the holiday bonus, most (75%) answered very satisfying; and the yearly salary was found to be very satisfying (83.2%).

The performance of lecturers is not yet optimal and requires further coaching; student interest is still bound to linearity; academic culture needs improvement through collaborative workshops with the Institute for Research and Development (LEMLITBANG) and Institute's Research and Community Service (LPPM) UHAMKA; academic services are not optimal and must be increased through socialization. Therefore, the continuation of the UHAMKA Graduate School Lecturer Improvement Program is recommended, with the following notes:



- Followed up by motivating lecturers, who do not yet have functional positions, to immediately become concerned and collect the required documents.
- Study Program Accreditation can be improved through commitment among UHAMKA Postgraduate Leadership and the Head of Study Programs and lecturers.

## CONCLUSION

Evaluating educational institutions is very important to improve lecturers' performance and academic quality. The evaluation results show that the teachers have a reasonably good performance, which is shown by lecturers who have the competence. Most of them are also not burdened with the current teaching assignments. However, there is still a need for increased competence to follow the demands of government regulations. Teachers also feel that they have great research opportunities to implement teaching tasks based on the Tri Dharma. However, the attention and appreciation from institutions in the form of financial and non-financial are still lacking. It needs more attention to increase the motivation of lecturers to provide the best performance. Further, the evaluation results at UHAMKA can be used as a basis for improving the quality and accreditation of universities and study programs.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors thank Allah SWT and all parties who have supported this research and the writing of this article. Gratitude is also delivered to Lemlitbang of Universitas Muhammadiyah, Prof. Dr. HAMKA, which has funded this research (SPK No.216/F.03.07/2019).

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