



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



Workplace learning in an effort to get recognition of Indonesian qualifications framework for career enhancement and employee competitiveness

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Abstract

The idea in this research is to add propositional enrichment to the theory of learning at work (WPL) linked to the Indonesian Qualifications Framework (IQF) to achieve equalization of WPL learning outcomes through recognition to improve competitiveness and enhance workforce careers. The education level of the workforce in Indonesia is still the cause of the low competitiveness and productivity of the Indonesian workforce, where the Global Human Capital Index ranking for Indonesia's human resources is in 65th position out of 130 countries. Discussion of research articles on the IQF as the basis for regulations for equalizing learning outcomes through education, job training, and experience, so far only in the scope of education, has not found one that focuses on WPL. Content analysis in this grounded theory research was conducted on 29 documents from two companies with the characteristics of having professional certification bodies. The originality of this study, based on the three characteristics of WPL proposed by Stern and Sommerlad, identifies more specifically WPL practices by companies in the form of a model. The twenty propositions in this study can be continued in further research as hypotheses to be tested, as well as recommendations to the Indonesian government authorities and industry players to focus on WPL which refers to the IQF.

Keywords: Workplace learning; Indonesian qualification framework; Recognition prior learning; Long life learning; National qualification framework; Human resource development

1. Introduction

The education level of the workforce is one of the factors that every country pays attention to in relation to the competitiveness and productivity of a country's industry. In developing countries like Indonesia, the education level of the workforce is a top priority in an effort to increase economic growth and increase the level of labor income.

Demographic bonuses can be both an opportunity and a threat for Indonesia. Indonesia has entered the era of the Demographic Bonus which will reach its peak in 2030 (BPS, 2020). The abundant number of human resources is a demographic bonus and gives great hope for Indonesia, but this cannot be enjoyed easily considering that investment in education, health, and infrastructure in Indonesia is still quite behind compared to other developing countries (Bappenas, 2017; Kemenkeu, 2016, 2019; Kusumanto, 2017). The demographic bonus without the quality of education will cause Indonesia to fail to capitalize on the productive age of its population and have an impact on threatening the resilience and competitiveness of the nation (LIPI, 2016; Republika, 2019).

The percentage of Indonesia's population graduating from tertiary education is relatively small. According to the results of the 2020 census, only 8.5% of Indonesians have successfully graduated from tertiary education (Caesaria, 2021). From these data, the number of Indonesians who are already working amounts to 131.06 million, including informal

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workers (BPS, 2022). Meanwhile, 8.75 million people, or around 6.26% of TPAK (Chaterine, 2021) are included in the number of open unemployed or TPT (BPS, 2022).

Undergoing formal education while working is a separate obstacle for students. There are 6.98% of students aged 10 to 24 years who go to school while working in 2020 (Jayani, 2021), where students who work intensely will increase risk of dropping out of school, especially students who are in a low economic class (Maseviciute in Jayani, 2021). Research on student subjects suggests that student motivation while working is lower than student motivation while not working (Sumartin, 2020).

Formal education and training have not been able to fully meet the skills needs of the world of work (Eraut cited Armstrong, 2014, p. 305). Based on the Global Human Capital Index by the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2017, Indonesia's HR rating is in position 65 out of 130 countries, lagging behind Malaysia (rank 33), Thailand (rank 40), and Vietnam (rank 64). The low quality of the workforce that has not responded to developments in the labor market is one of the reasons why Indonesia's productivity and competitiveness are still lagging behind. Reliable job market information that is not yet available and low involvement of the industry has resulted in mismatches, especially for universities (Bappenas, 2020). Another thing related to the occurrence of a mismatch is that the mechanism of interaction and coordination between institutions that produce and use tertiary institutions at the national and regional levels has not been fully developed (Ristekdikti, 2015).

Mismatch results of formal education and training and constraints on learning while working can be anticipated through workplace learning (WPL). Companies have an important role and become a learning environment (Stern and Sommerland cited by Armstrong, 2014) in the development of quality and competitive human resources (Billett, 2011, p. 47) according to the learning needs of stakeholders including the government. Individual learning and inter-organizational learning are considered "a must" for employees, regardless of which stage the company is in (Tam, 2016).

Domestic published research still minimally examines the implementation of the IQF on WPL. Almost all domestic journals and research always link IQF with formal education or the application of IQF to the educational curriculum (Hartono, 2017; Khalsiah, 2018; Masykur, 2018). Meanwhile abroad, although published research has not developed much (Allais, 2017b) it is still a topic that is still current and related to the topic of qualification framework and workforce development (Baker, 2017; Critten, 2016), including discussing informal learning in the workplace (Eraut, 2004; Thursfield, 2004), recognition of informal learning outcomes (Hager, 1998; Teresevičienė, 2007).

This study intends to develop a theoretical proposition of workplace learning (WPL). The proposition is built based on collecting data on WPL practices in the work environment (Garnett, 2016a) linked to the recognition of the National Qualifications Framework (Allais, 2017a; Baker, 2017; Bohlinger, 2012; Muravyeva, 2019; Schröder, 2019), career advancement and employee income (Oliver, 2017), and employee competitiveness (Adam, 2017; Permenaker 21, 2014; Permendikbud 73, 2013).

Previous research on WPL, RPL, KKN, and labor competitiveness is research that has similarities and interrelationships between topics. Based on mapping analysis and bibliometric clustering using VOSviewer (VOSviewer, 2022; Waltman et al., 2010) content analysis of title similarity and abstraction of previous studies on the topics of WPL, RPL, KKN, and workforce competitiveness, from sources SCOPUS, Google Scholar, and Crossref, with the year of publication From 2015 to 2020, an overview of previous research was obtained which was divided into 11 clusters with a total of 196 topic items, with the largest cluster being the recognition cluster (data processed by VOSviewer, 2021) as shown in attachment 94.

The main foundations of organizational innovation are learning and evolution, innovation implementation, leadership, and creativity (Fernandes, 2018). The learning environment is largely determined by the rational goals of the organization and individuals (Miller, 2003). For organizational learning to occur, it requires the awareness of business owners to develop and manage their company's learning processes and environment (Csillag, 2019; Vanthournout, 2014), a change in the mindset of how to see the organization and think of learning not only as an individual but also as a "communicative act" generative arising from collaborative relationships (Critten, 2016) and social interaction of employees (Rozkwitalska, 2019), where learning arises from work participation (Hollenstein, 2012; Katharina Klotz, 2014).

Regarding the fulfillment of employers' expectations and satisfaction of graduates (Hoang, 2019; Huy, 2017), it was found that there was a significant gap (Kenayathulla, 2019; Thursfield, 2004), where education service providers and human resource development services providers often pay less attention to that learning actually occur in a work context (Bierema, 2004; Nagle, 2018). While WPL plays a key role in organizational productivity and efficiency (Miller,

2003), it is also considered an effective strategy for professional development, career, and identity (Kopp, 2020; Poortman, 2014). Work-based learning and work application can also increase an organization's intellectual capital (Garnett, 2016b), and can be of real value to employers and employees, relevant to policymakers and contributing to society outside the workplace (Olsen, 2018).

RPL is a key factor in the policy and implementation of labor market integration (Andersson, 2020). In several countries, RPL has become an economic policy to promote employability, where all stakeholders have room to negotiate and influence policy designs (Singh, 2019). Autonomous parties need to design and implement validation and recognition procedures in higher education related to non-formal and informal learning outcomes, including learning in the workplace (Teresevičiene, 2007), or the articulation of knowledge and skills available in the organization (Harris, 2012). The use of RPL in standard programs allows one's work-based knowledge to be recognized as relevant, valuable, and equivalent to the learning gained in higher education classes (Garnett, 2016a). RPL includes lifelong learning which enables a person to learn at different times, in different ways, for different purposes at different stages of their life and career (Maphalala, 2014).

IQN has a very high level of positive impact on teacher performance in producing Magnus Opus for universities in the next five years (Khalsiah, 2018). Planning on a common workplace curriculum will shape the nature of the curriculum and in terms of appearance, it defines and redefines the workplace curriculum discourse (Doosti, 2019).

Earnings, use of skills at work, sector, and gender are significant drivers of participation in all countries in work-related lifelong learning among adult-age employees with low levels of education (Tikkanen, 2018). Participating in learning programs at work positively influences job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as well as intrinsic learning motives that are also positively related to work attitudes (Ryu, 2019). HRM practices such as selective hiring, extensive training, performance appraisal, compensation practices, empowerment, and information sharing, are significantly related to informal learning in the workplace (Khandakar, 2019).

2. Material and methods

As with grounded theory research, evidence is collected from the field regarding WPL practices or events (Rahadi, 2020, p. 176), developed, interpreted, classified group by group, and then analyzed in depth to obtain theories, concepts, and or propositions related to WPL (Yusuf, 2014, p. 344) then builds on the data collected, at a broad conceptual level, processes, actions, or interactions on WPL topics, recognition of employee competency qualifications, career advancement in companies, and workforce competitiveness (Creswell, 2012, p. 423). According to Catherine Marshal, it is expected to gain a better understanding (Sarwono, 2006, p. 193) regarding the application of WPL through disclosure (Creswell, 2014, p. 112) of various qualitative information with detailed and meaningful analytical descriptions (Saldana, 2011, p. 7), which also does not reject quantitative information in the form of numbers or amounts (Merriam, 2009, p. 5).

During the research, the theoretical concepts compiled were tested again which needed to be revised or refined through various revisions and improvements or refinements, using accurate data through analysis and comparative situations, as well as the right group to test or find theories (Yusuf, 2014, p. 345). The analysis process begins before the research is carried out in the field and after it is completed interactively during the data collection process, and after completing data collection within a certain period of time. Data collection during data analysis is possible to obtain credible data (Sugiyono, 2016, pp. 245–246).

To ensure the validity of the data collected (Creswell, 2014, p. 259), a triangulation technique is used by making comparisons (Sarwono, 2006, p. 246) using triangulation of data sources (Merriam, 2009, pp. 215–216) through constant comparison analysis, analysis of classic content, keywords in context, and the number of words using NVivo (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011) version 12. This was done to increase the accuracy and correctness of research data, thus leading to the accuracy of research results to further validate data (Yusuf, 2014, p. 335).

Triangulation of data sources is carried out by collecting data with similar categories from different sources, namely from the company's official web portal, official news web portal, and official web portal of the National Professional Certification Agency (BNSP). The data is selected by being coded so that it is known which data is pulled out, and which data is used as a summary pattern for display.

Analysis of documented information is carried out in the form of text, and media obtained from document review techniques (Kristanti, 2020, p. 182). According to Paille, the stages of data analysis in grounded theory research have

six stages, namely codification, categorization, linking categories, integration, conceptualization, and theorems (Subu et al., 2021).

3. Results and discussion

Secondary documents issued by the company or other than the company have been identified and considered relevant to provide data on WPL activities in the company.

Table 1 Document type list

| Document | Total | Type |
|----------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Web news | 4 documents | Secondary |
| E-learning | 5 documents | Secondary |
| Report | 4 documents | Secondary |
| Company magazines | 10 documents | Secondary |
| Online library | 2 documents | Secondary |
| Certification scheme | 6 documents | Secondary |

Document data codes are given to identify document sources at the analysis stage, as shown in the following table.

Table 2 Document code list

| Code | Document title |
|------|--|
| D1 | Laporan bulanan Desember 2021 |
| D2 | Annual Report Badak LNG 2020 |
| D3 | Laporan tahunan 2020 PKT |
| D4 | Sustainability Report Badak LNG-2020 |
| D5 | Cetak Puluhan SDM Andal Berkompeten, Program Magang Pupuk Kaltim Apprentice Challenge 2021 Resmi Ditutup |
| D6 | Hadirkan Motivator Gisneo Pratala, Badak LNG Siap Cetak 1001 Pengusaha Muda Bontang |
| D7 | Hadirkan Narasumber Ternama, Badak LNG Gelar Workshop 'Reach Your Dream Job' |
| D8 | Irfan Harap Tenaga Kerja Lokal Tak Jadi "Penonton" |
| D9 | Kalibrasi Alat Laboratorium ~ Belajar Pupuk Kaltim |
| D10 | Pengenalan Proses Kerja Turn Around Pabrik ~ Belajar Pupuk Kaltim |
| D11 | Pengenalan Proses Pabrik Amonia ~ Belajar Pupuk Kaltim |
| D12 | Pengenalan Proses Pabrik Urea ~ Belajar Pupuk Kaltim |
| D13 | Portal Belajar Pupuk Kaltim |
| D14 | Sinergy_40 |
| D15 | Sinergy_45 |
| D16 | Sinergy_46 |
| D17 | Sinergy_47 |
| D18 | Sinergy_49 |
| D19 | Sinergy_50 |

| Code | Document title |
|------|---------------------------|
| D20 | Sinergy_51 |
| D21 | Sinergy_53 |
| D22 | Sinergy_54 |
| D23 | Sinergy_56 |
| D24 | Perpustakaan Pupuk Kaltim |
| D25 | Bantuan Referensi |
| D26 | Skema Sertifikasi pkt |
| D27 | Skema Sertifikasi-badak |
| D28 | TUK LSP Badak |
| D29 | TUK LSP PKT |

Based on document review using content analysis and triangulation techniques, namely comparing document content from document data sources using NVivo 12, it was identified that there were 36 (thirty-six) cases/facts in companies related to 36 (thirty-six) nodes/categories in this study, as in attachment 75 matrices of cases threads to code

Based on the analysis, the framing of meaningful concepts leads to the discovery or development of theoretical propositions by connecting all categories with facts or cases found based on data. This process leads to the development of WPL theory from the identification of the threads of the relationship between all categories, as described in the following conceptual model.

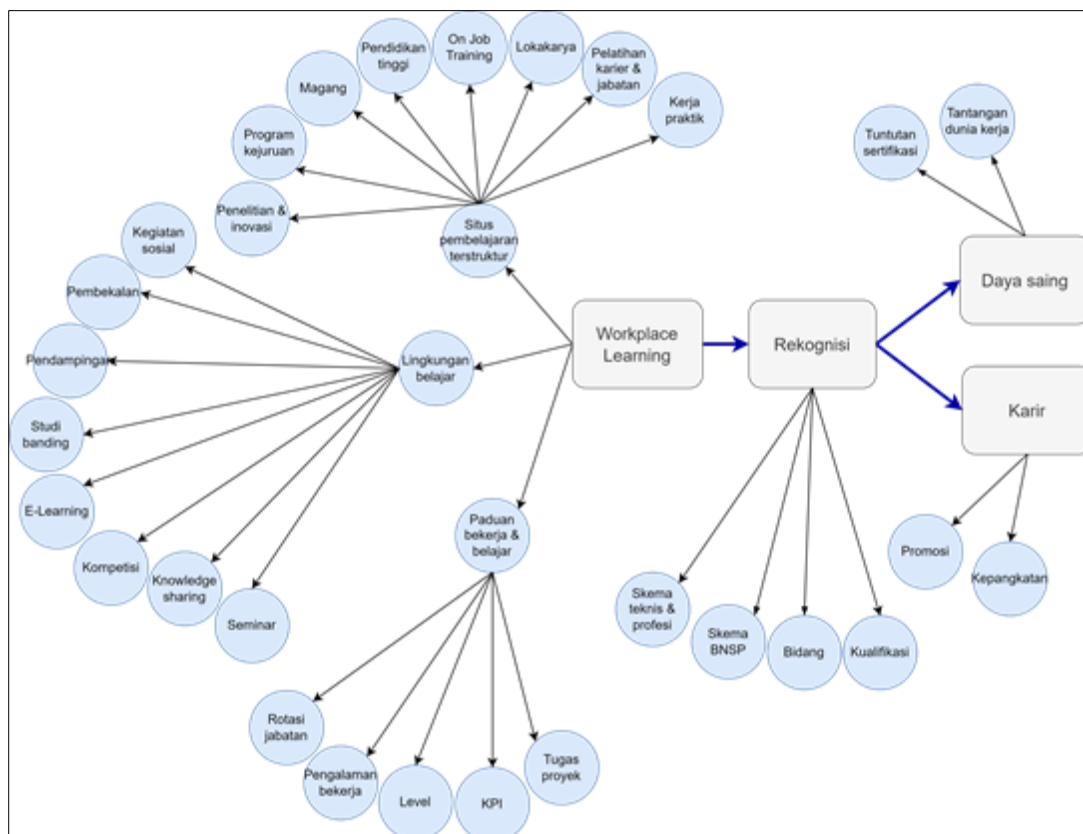


Figure 1 WPL implementation model in the company

Based on the content analysis matrix coding, the proposition is conveyed that equalizing workplace learning outcomes through recognition can improve employee competitiveness and careers. From these propositions, several propositions from this study are detailed in detail as follows:

- Job rotation can improve employee job qualifications.
- Appropriate position levels can improve employee position qualifications.
- Appropriate vocational programs can improve the qualifications and recognition of employee certification schemes in certain fields.
- Relevant competition can improve performance in the challenges of the world of work employees.
- Appropriate assistance can overcome the challenges of the world of work employees.
- Appropriate work experience can help employees overcome the challenges of the world of work.
- Appropriate workshops can address the challenges of the employee's world of work.
- Internships in appropriate fields can overcome the challenges of the world of work employees.
- Appropriate vocational programs can address the challenges of the world of work and demands for employee certification.
- Appropriate position rotation can increase the rank and promotion of employee positions.
- Appropriate KPIs can increase the rank and promotion of employee positions.
- The appropriate level of position can increase the rank and promotion of employee positions.
- Appropriate work experience can increase the rank and promotion of employee positions.
- Appropriate career and job training can increase the rank of employees.
- Research and innovation in appropriate fields can increase employee promotion.
- Appropriate certification areas can address the demands of employee certification.
- Appropriate certification qualifications can overcome the demands of employee certification.
- An appropriate BNSP certification scheme can address the challenges of the world of work and the demands for employee certification.
- Appropriate technical and professional certification schemes can address the challenges of the world of work and demands for employee certification.
- Appropriate certification qualifications can increase the rank and promotion of employee positions.

The qualifications framework is a policy instrument that should facilitate the assessment of learning outcomes (Bohlinger, 2012), whereby equivalence with learning outcomes resulting from education, job training, or work experience has been regulated by the Indonesian government (PP 8, 2012). The meaning of this is the acknowledgment of the equality of learning through education, job training, or experience in the equality of learning outcomes.

The critical question that needs to be discussed is whether the practitioners of the three learning paths have ever sat together to discuss and agree on using the same learning outcomes. Furthermore, has the Indonesian government so far facilitated, educated, and/or disseminated that the IQF is a national resilience strategy related to Indonesian employment in which every Indonesian citizen can take learning from three pathways, each of which is recognized as having equal learning outcomes. Apart from that, industry practitioners, do recognize that the corporate environment has potential as a learning environment, where if workplace learning is developed into an IQF-based curriculum, company employees have the potential to be recognized for their learning outcomes equivalent to formal education levels.

In reality, the government and industry pay little attention to equalizing learning outcomes through the experiences of 126.5 million Indonesians aged 15 years and over who are working (BPS, 2020). This lack of attention is indicated by the lack of qualification and occupational certification schemes owned by professional certification bodies in the industrial environment (BNSP, 2022). Another indication is the mismatch between information on the labor market, industry, and educational institutions, especially universities (Bappenas, 2020).

For this reason, efforts are needed to link learning in the workplace with theoretical and practical learning carried out in "universities" as further level learning or higher education. There is also a need to develop new models to link workplace learning to the types of curriculum requirements of employers and professional institutions (Peter Senker in Evans, 2006, Chapter 21).

The IQF-based curriculum is a bridge between learning in higher education and in the workplace. IQF has a very high degree of positive impact on teacher performance in producing Magnus Opus for tertiary institutions in the next five years (Khalsiah, 2018), and redefining the workplace curriculum discourse (Doosti, 2019).

Alignment of learning curricula in higher education and workplace learning in companies can encourage varied and dynamic discourse on learning strategies (Suryadi et al., 2019), as well as encourage alignment on the same certification scheme so that opportunities for equalizing qualifications for learning outcomes are generated through education, job training or work experience through certification can be an alternative for Indonesian workers (PP 8, 2012).

4. Conclusion

The conclusions of this study are as follows:

- There are three approaches to implementing WPL in companies (Stern and Sommerland quoted by Manuti, 2015), with specifications for the form of WPL practice as follows:
 - The workplace as a place of learning
 - Further higher education studies, internships, vocational training programs, work practices, workshops, on-the-job training (OJT), research and innovation, career and position training, and seminars.
 - The workplace as a learning environment
 - Social activities, expert debriefing, comparative studies, knowledge sharing, competitions, mentoring, e-learning, and libraries.
 - Work and study as a blend
 - Project assignment, job rotation, KPI, position level, and work experience.
- Recognition of employee learning outcomes implemented by the company, namely competency certification. Competency certification is carried out by LSP licensed by BNSP with a national and cluster occupational qualification scheme.
- The company implements a policy of equal distribution of career opportunities for all employees by establishing a succession planning system by calculating the employee readiness index, namely (1) grade service period, (2) job rotation, (3) talent classification, (4) assessment result, and (5) key performance indicators. Employee recognition results are part of the employee readiness index measurement.
- The company has not implemented equalization of qualifications on the results of recognizing the ability of its employees, although, in terms of mechanism and adequacy of regulatory requirements, it tends to meet the competency certification implementation.
- In this study, the model for implementing WPL, recognition, career advancement, and equalization of employee qualifications in the proposed company is shown in Figure 5.14.

Some recommendations from this research are as follows:

- Companies should better organize implementation as a form of learning for their employees with the aim of equal learning outcomes through WPL.
- With the existence of LSP and ownership of existing certification schemes, companies can further develop the scope of national occupational qualification certification, and the IQF to facilitate the equalization of WPL achievements of their employees, and can enter into partnerships with higher education institutions.
- By implementing competency certification as a strategy to equalize learning qualifications, in utilizing the results of recognition in improving the careers of its employees, companies can develop career advancement mechanisms that require competency certification for certain positions, bearing in mind that competency certificates are equivalent to formal education diplomas in the regulations.
- The government, industry, and higher education institutions should start paying more attention to developing and aligning learning curricula through education, training, and experience so that they can be equalized through competency certification.
- Given the limited number of company objects studied, but considering the number of workers who are currently learning through experience, and the lack of research outcomes on WPL associated with the IQF, it is recommended that further research be carried out in this regard.

Compliance with ethical standards

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All authors contributed positively to the writing of this manuscript and there no conflict of interest as agreed to the content of this research.

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