

# INCONSISTENCY OF MERITOCRACY IN PPPK LECTURER CAREER RIGHTS: ISLAMIC LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS REVIEW

Faiq Tobroni & Izzatin Kamala

UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

[faiq.tobroni@uin-suka.ac.id](mailto:faiq.tobroni@uin-suka.ac.id) & [izzatin.kamala@uin-suka.ac.id](mailto:izzatin.kamala@uin-suka.ac.id)

## **ABSTRACT**

*This research aims to analyse the policy on the placement of lecturers as Government Employees with Work Agreements (PPPK), which raises serious issues in the higher education system, especially in terms of protecting the career rights of PPPK lecturers. The used method is a normative-empirical approach with a literature study of laws and regulations, policy documents, and Islamic literature. In addition to documents, researchers also used interviews with PPPK lecturers as triangulation in tracing the facts of regulation implementation. This study found that there is an inconsistency in the implementation of the meritocracy principle in treating PPPK lecturers. Although regulations on the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) promise the meritocracy principle, it does not apply to the career protection of PPPK lecturers. They cannot apply for promotion to functional positions (junior assistant professor, senior assistant professor, associate professor, and Professor). Some PPPK lecturers placed in the functional position of junior assistant professor at the time of recruitment, they cannot apply for a functional promotion to senior assistant professor. In contrast, all of these functional*

*promotion facilities apply to Permanent Civil Servants (PNS). Like PPPK, PNS is a part of ASN. This inconsistency shows serious problems in terms of human rights and Islamic law. In terms of human rights, the government has failed to carry out its duties as a duty bearer of human rights in protecting the career rights of PPPK lecturers. The inconsistency of meritocracy contradicts the perspective of Islamic law, which emphasises justice, equality, and trust in human resource development. The government has actually become an actor that perpetuates the injustice of treatment in managing ASN.*

**Keywords:** *PPPK Lecturer, Meritocracy, Career Rights, Islamic Law, Human Rights.*

## Introduction

The Indonesian constitution guarantees the fulfilment of human rights from the government or state to citizens. The law is the official instrument of the state to guarantee the human rights of citizens. The quality of the state's attention to the human rights depends on the legal system that surrounds it. The legal system realises social ideals, values of justice, equality, freedom, humanism and achieves order.<sup>1</sup> The legal system regulates relationships in a society through rules, principles, and legal institutions.<sup>2</sup>

It is the thesis used to look at the problematic fulfilment of career rights for Government Employees with Work Agreements

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<sup>1</sup> Andrii TALYMONCHYK, "Basic Approaches to Understanding the Concept of the Legal System," *Economics. Finances. Law*, no. 2/2 (February 28, 2020): 24–26, [https://doi.org/10.37634/efp.2020.2\(2\).5](https://doi.org/10.37634/efp.2020.2(2).5).

<sup>2</sup> Siniša Franjić, "A Few Words about Legal System," *Cross-Currents: An International Peer-Reviewed Journal on Humanities & Social Sciences* 7, no. 4 (May 12, 2021): 85–90, <https://doi.org/10.36344/ccijhss.2021.v07i04.005>.

(PPPK). The term PPPK is a new thing in the State Civil Apparatus (ASN). PPPK is considered as a solution to solve the honorary problem.<sup>3</sup> In addition to PPPK, the Indonesian government has a type of Permanent Civil Servant (PNS). This type of employee is a type of state civil apparatus that is legally established so that the fulfilment of rights related to their career path does not face many problems. However, this is different from PPPK who still experience problems with career development.

The regulatory policy on ASN has caused a number of problems, especially related to the inconsistency of meritocracy principle in regulating the career rights of PPPK lecturers. Meritocracy in the Indonesian ASN context refers to an ASN management system based on qualifications, competence, and performance, with the principles of fairness and without discrimination. Law Number 20 Year 2023 on the State Civil Apparatus, which replaced Law Number 5 Year 2014, regulates the merit system in ASN management. However, in reality, PPPK lecturers often face challenges in their career development. Despite having good qualifications and sufficient achievements, their rights to promotion and career development are often hampered.<sup>4</sup>

This situation seems to show an anomaly that the actor is the state itself. The state is ignoring the workers who work for its institutions. Seen from the discourse of human rights studies, the situation that befell the lecturers with PPPK status shows the failure of the state to fulfil the rights of its citizens, especially those who

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<sup>3</sup> Henny Juliani, "Diskresi Dalam Rekrutmen Pegawai Non Pegawai Negeri Sipil Setelah Pemberlakuan Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 49 Tahun 2018 Tentang Manajemen Pegawai Pemerintah Dengan Perjanjian Kerja," *Administrative Law and Governance Journal* 2, no. 2 (June 2, 2019): 314–25, <https://doi.org/10.14710/alj.v2i2.314-325>.

<sup>4</sup> Tim Dosen PPPK PTN, "Naskah Audiensi Dosen PPPK PTN, 20 Januari 2024," 2024.

work for its institutions. This situation does not only apply to lecturers with PPPK status, but also many other professionals with a scheme of PPPK.

The construction of law is a guarantee for the fulfilment of rights from the state to citizens. The government must be committed to human rights through the quality of laws and regulations.<sup>5</sup> The better the legal system, the more reliable it is for fulfilling rights. Conversely, the poorer the legal system, the less reliable it is in fulfilling rights. The quality of the law is a portrait of the reliability of the government's attention to human rights. This research will look at the quality of law surrounding PPPK.<sup>6</sup>

Consistency in meritocracy is not only supported by human rights, but also in accordance with Islamic law. In the perspective of Islamic law, the principle of meritocracy is not merely a principle relating to efficiency and fairness in an administrative context, but is also an integral part of the principle of universal justice affirmed in Islamic teachings.<sup>7</sup> Islam emphasises the importance of justice ('adl) and respect for individual rights in every aspect of life, including in the career system and professionalism. One of the fundamental teachings in Islam is that every individual should get their rights according to their capacity, ability, and achievement. In addition, the principle of trustworthiness (*amanah*) in Islam also

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<sup>5</sup> Risdiana Izzaty, "Urgensi Ketentuan Carry-Over Dalam Pembentukan Undang-Undang Di Indonesia," *Jurnal HAM* 11, no. 1 (April 28, 2020): 85, <https://doi.org/10.30641/ham.2020.11.85-98>.

<sup>6</sup> Harison Citrawan, "Analisis Dampak Hak Asasi Manusia Atas Regulasi: Sebuah Tinjauan Metodologi," *Jurnal HAM* 8, no. 1 (July 27, 2017): 13, <https://doi.org/10.30641/ham.2017.8.13-24>.

<sup>7</sup> A A Kumo, S S Shah, and L Zakariyah, "Family Mismanagement and Its Repercussions on the Society: Islamic Law Approach to Efface the Menace," in *Islamic Quarterly*, vol. 62, 2018, 125–50, <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?eid=2-s2.0-85056833007&partnerID=40&md5=b3e13727c6d71038862799fab667ff39>.

demands that the management of human resources be conducted in a fair and transparent manner.<sup>8</sup> Injustice in the application of meritocracy can be considered a violation of this principle of trustworthiness. The denial of trustworthiness is an attitude of cheating, which prioritises career assessment not on the basis of hard work and achievement, but other factors irrelevant to performance. In opposition to cheating, Islamic law demands a system that rewards individuals based on genuine merit.

Research on meritocracy in the legal framework is important to ensure fair, transparent, and compliant implementation, in order to create effective ASN governance and improve the quality of public services,<sup>9</sup> and to ensure that regulatory enforcement in the governance of the state civil apparatus avoids political interests.<sup>10</sup> Research on meritocracy in the context of PPPK is urgent to support the revitalisation and optimisation of the government's Human Resources management system in an equitable manner according to their rights. Revitalisation is needed to ensure that governance of ASN is based on measurable competencies, not other factors.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, optimisation focuses on using the best potential of ASN

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<sup>8</sup> Hendy Herijanto, "Al Amanah in Al Qur'an vs Trust: A Comparative Study," *International Journal of Ethics and Systems* 38, no. 4 (October 13, 2022): 549–75, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOES-03-2021-0064>.

<sup>9</sup> Ahmad Azharil, "Centralized Governance Reform of the State Civil Apparatus Based on the Merit System and Law Number 5 of 2015 Concerning the State Civil Apparatus," *STAATSRECHT: Indonesian Constitutional Law Journal* 6, no. 1 (October 9, 2022): 37, <https://doi.org/10.15408/siclj.v6i1.28475>.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmad Azharil and Daly Erni, "Problems of State Civil Apparatus Governance Centralistic In Law No. 5 of 2015 Concerning State Civil Apparatus," *YURISDIKSI : Jurnal Wacana Hukum Dan Sains* 19, no. 2 (October 2, 2023): 169–82, <https://doi.org/10.55173/yurisdiksi.v19i2.187>.

<sup>11</sup> Ahmad Faiz, Endang Larasati, and Teuku Afrizal, "Revitalisasi Merit System Dalam Pengangkatan Jabatan Fungsional Di Badan Kepegawaian Daerah Jawa Tengah," *Journal of Education, Humaniora and Social Sciences (JEHSS)* 4, no. 1 (June 24, 2021): 306–13, <https://doi.org/10.34007/jehss.v4i1.658>.

to increase bureaucratic effectiveness. This merit system will improve bureaucratic culture and sustainable innovation.<sup>12</sup>

This research questions how the career rights of PPPK lecturers are regulated in terms of the consistency of meritocracy in the review of human rights and Islamic law? The urgency of this problem formulation lies in the importance of identifying inconsistencies of meritocracy principle in the career rights of PPPK lecturers that can violate human rights and the principle of justice in Islamic law. This research is important to ensure that lecturers' career development policies are fairer, based on merit, competence, and equal rights.

## **Literature Review**

Some existing research have predominantly focused on applying the concept of justice to analyze the disparities in rights between PPPK and PNS), emphasizing the need for equal treatment and opportunity. This views inequality in bureaucracy as an issue of injustice that must be corrected through the redistribution of rights and resources to ensure fairness. However, this approach tends to prioritize the balance of rights without focusing on individual performance and competence within the public administration system. In contrast, my research proposes the concept of meritocracy to assess the inequality between PPPK and PNS. This concept highlights the principle that individuals should be promoted or rewarded based on their abilities, achievements, and contributions, rather than their status or contract type. In this

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<sup>12</sup> Roery Ayu Mayangsari Riyadi, Mala Sondang Silitonga, and Asropi Asropi, "Strategy to Increase Merit System Index Value in The Management of State Civil Apparatus in Witness and Victim Protection Agency," *Kontigensi : Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen* 12, no. 2 (December 21, 2024): 767–81, <https://doi.org/10.56457/jimk.v12i2.628>.

context, although PPPK and PNS may have different contract, the meritocracy concept emphasizes that both should be treated equally when evaluated based on their qualifications, competencies, and work performance.

A previous study related to the status of PPPK has been pessimistic about the fairness and reliability of the state in fulfilling the rights of PPPK.<sup>13</sup> Broadly speaking, the research findings cast doubt on the general fulfilment of the rights of the PPPK. There are things that lead to the neglect of the general principles of good governance in the PPPK arrangement. The presence of PPPK is an anomaly in the structure of the civil service bureaucracy.<sup>14</sup> On the one hand, the state needs the existence of PPPK. But on the other hand, the state marginalises their status. Although both are ASN, PPPK do not have the same rights as PNS. Behind the difference in rights, it turns out that PPPK have the same obligations as PNS.<sup>15</sup>

A subsequent study highlighted the polemics over the state's commitment to treat work as an economic and social cultural right in the case of PPPK. This research concludes that the regulation on PPPK is a form of inaccuracy in terms of socio-cultural economic rights. This rule shows the degradation of the state towards the

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<sup>13</sup> Dwi Aryanti Ramadhani and Iwan Erar Joesoef, "Perlindungan Hukum Pegawai Pemerintah Dengan Perjanjian Kerja (PPPK) Dalam Konsep Perjanjian Kerja Waktu Tertentu Di Institusi Perguruan Tinggi," *Jurnal Yuridis* 7, no. 1 (June 30, 2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.35586/jjur.v7i1.1830>.

<sup>14</sup> Legina Nadhila Qomarani, "ANOMALI KEHADIRAN PEGAWAI PEMERINTAH DENGAN PERJANJIAN KERJA (PPPK) DALAM CAKRAWALA KEPEGAWAIAN DI INDONESIA," *Cepalo* 4, no. 2 (September 29, 2020): 95–110, <https://doi.org/10.25041/cepalo.v4no2.1979>.

<sup>15</sup> Nuzlia Maulida, Sukarno Sukarno, and Hafizatul Ulum, "Kedudukan Pegawai Pemerintah Dengan Perjanjian Kerja (Pppk) Berdasarkan Undang-Undang Nomor 5 Tahun 2014 Tentang Aparatur Sipil Negara," *UNIZAR RECHT JOURNAL (URJ)*; Vol 1 No 1 (2022): *Unizar Recht Journal (URJ)*, April 5, 2022, <https://e-journal.unizar.ac.id/index.php/urj/article/view/641>.

fulfilment of workers' rights. In fact, previously the state had made a rule that workers who have worked for a certain period of time, these workers must be appointed as permanent employees. However, this regulation on PPPK actually perpetuates the state will contract employees who work in their institutions on a recurring contract basis.<sup>16</sup> The differentiation between the status of PPPK and PNS rights is prone to cause discrimination in the fulfilment of their rights. PPPK are vulnerable to not being able to obtain justice, expediency and legal certainty.<sup>17</sup>

The next article highlights the state's deliberate discrimination against PPPK since the drafting of the regulation. This can be seen in the granting of different rights between PPPK and PNS, even though both work in the same agency with the same burden. The state actually discriminates against the PPPK group. What is worrying for PPPK is that the contract will not continue if the state uses reasons such as organisational downsizing.<sup>18</sup> PPPK can quit without being compensated on the ground that their contract has expired. This is certainly very sad, considering that even private

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<sup>16</sup> Faiq Tobroni, "Tinjauan HAM Dalam Regulasi PPPK Dengan Intertekstualitas Teks Hukum," *Jurnal HAM* 11, no. 2 (August 28, 2020): 219, <https://doi.org/10.30641/ham.2020.11.219-238>.

<sup>17</sup> Salwa Husna Sekai Suryawi, Waluyo Waluyo, and Asianto Nugroho, "Telaah Implikasi Pembedaan Status Kepegawaian PPPK Dan Pemenuhan HAM Dalam Payung Hukum PPPK Di Indonesia," *PLEDOI (Jurnal Hukum Dan Keadilan)* 2, no. 2 (September 30, 2023): 156–70, <https://doi.org/10.56721/pledoi.v2i2.230>.

<sup>18</sup> Rudi Kurniawan et al., "Upaya Pemerintah Dalam Menerapkan Peraturan Pemerintah No. 49 Tahun 2018 Tentang Pegawai Pemerintah Dengan Perjanjian Kerja (P3K) DI Kabupaten Aceh Utara," *Jurnal Public Policy* 6, no. 1 (April 30, 2020): 41, <https://doi.org/10.35308/jpp.v6i1.1899>.



employees will receive compensation in the event of termination of employment.<sup>19</sup>

The disadvantage of fulfilling rights due to status of PPPK has afflicted professions as teachers. Many teachers complain about their status as PPPK. They cannot develop their careers. Instead, they feel more flexible and progressive in their capacity as private teachers.<sup>20</sup> Today, the anxiety of a few years ago, which has afflicted most professions with status of PPPK, also afflicts professions as lecturers in fighting for careers. They just can't get the fulfilment of career paths like lecturers as PNS.

Using the concept of meritocracy, this study examines how the legal construction that distinguishes the status and rights between PNS and PPPK lecturers affects the application of the principle of equality in functional positions. In a meritocratic system, ideally each individual obtains a position, recognition, and rights based on their competence, performance, and contribution to the institution. However, in practice, the legal construction governing ASN in Indonesia creates differentiation of rights and treatment that does not fully reflect this principle, especially in the context of lecturers with PPPK status.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Meritocracy and Career System in ASN**

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<sup>19</sup> Indra Budi Sumantoro, "Kategorisasi PNS Dan PPPK Dalam Undang-Undang Nomor 5 Tahun 2014 Tentang ASN Ditinjau Dari Sudut Pandang Transisi Kepegawaian," *Jurnal Bisnis Darmajaya* 4, no. 2 (2018): 27–33.

<sup>20</sup> Sahida Ayu Fajjari and Yati Sharfina Desiandri, "Perspektif Human Rights Principles Dalam Penetapan Jabatan Fungsional Guru Sebagai Pegawai Pemerintah Dengan Perjanjian Kerja (PPPK)," *Journal of Education, Humaniora and Social Sciences (JEHSS)* 6, no. 3 (February 23, 2024): 1126–38, <https://doi.org/10.34007/jehss.v6i3.2009>.

In a democratic government system, the management of the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) is one of the determining factors in achieving state development goals. One of the most fundamental principles in ASN management is the principle of meritocracy<sup>21</sup>. This principle serves to ensure that in the management of ASN, decisions are not influenced by subjective or political factors, but are based on the competence, qualifications, and performance of the concerned individual.

This principle serves to ensure that decisions in management of ASN are not influenced by subjective or political factors, but based on the competence, qualifications, and performance.<sup>22</sup> ASN who has better abilities and qualities, and who is able to demonstrate optimal performance, will get equal opportunities to develop in their careers.

The principle of meritocracy has a very important position in ASN management, especially in Law Number 20 of 2023 concerning ASN which is the new legal basis for managing civil servants. This law replaces Law Number 5 Year 2014, which previously regulated the ASN administration system in Indonesia. The principle of meritocracy is the main pillar in determining promotion and promotion in the system of ASN.<sup>23</sup> As the largest group in ASN, the promotion system for PNS is clearly regulated in various existing

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<sup>21</sup> Rasona Sunara et al., "Meritocracy Implementation Of The State Civil Servants As An Embodiment Of The Values Of Integrity And National Defense Through A Public Ethics Perspective," *Edunity Kajian Ilmu Sosial Dan Pendidikan* 3, no. 5 (June 8, 2024): 325–36, <https://doi.org/10.57096/edunity.v3i5.245>.

<sup>22</sup> Septiana Dwiputrianti et al., "Talent Management Policy and Meritocracy to Accelerate Bureaucratic Reform of Local Government: Comparative Study of Pontianak and Pekanbaru Cities," *KnE Social Sciences*, March 19, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v9i7.15535>.

<sup>23</sup> Aminuddin Aminuddin and Ida Rindaningsih, "Peran Sentral Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia Aparatur Melalui Meritokrasi," *Al-DYAS* 4, no. 1 (January 6, 2025): 504–17, <https://doi.org/10.58578/alldyas.v4i1.4595>.

regulations. PNS has a structured career path with periodic promotions.<sup>24</sup> This is one of the applications of the principle of meritocracy.

However, although the principle of meritocracy has been clearly regulated in the management of PNS, the application of this principle has not been seen to apply to PPPK, especially for PPPK lecturers. In Government Regulation No. 49/2018 on PPPK Management, as a derivative of the 2014 ASN Law, there are no explicit arrangements regarding promotion for PPPK. Although the current ASN Law 2023 is in effect, because the Government Regulation on PPPK Management as a derivative of the ASN Law 2023 does not yet exist, the Government Regulation on PPPK Management 2018 applies. This causes inequality in treatment between civil servants and PPPK, even though both perform equal duties in government, especially in the education sector. PPPK lecturers function almost identically to PNS lecturers.

The principle of meritocracy in ASN management should provide equal opportunities for all civil servants (ASN) to progress in their careers based on their achievements and performance. The difference in arrangements regarding career rights between PNS and PPPK has created injustice that is contrary to the spirit of meritocracy itself. The lack of clarity regarding career paths for PPPK lecturers, who have no certainty regarding promotions, has marginalised them. They do not get the same opportunities as PNS in terms of rewards for their performance, even though both have similar responsibilities.

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<sup>24</sup> Badan Kepegawaian Negara, "Peraturan Badan Kepegawaian Negara Nomor 4 Tahun 2023 Tentang Periodisasi Kenaikan Pangkat Pegawai Negeri Sipil." (2023); Badan Kepegawaian Negara, "Peraturan Badan Kepegawaian Negara Nomor 3 Tahun 2023 Tentang Angka Kredit, Kenaikan Pangkat, Dan Jenjang Jabatan Fungsional." (2023).

Consistent implementation on meritocracy principle is very important so that there's none of ASN is marginalised or disrespected for their contribution to public services. The uncertainty regarding the career of PPPK lecturers, who do not have a clear promotion system, is one example that the principle of meritocracy has not been fully implemented consistently for all categories of ASN. This lack of clarity not only creates frustration among PPPK lecturers, but also has the potential to undermine trust in the state civil service system.

In addition, the principle of meritocracy should be able to create a transparent and accountable system.<sup>25</sup> Every decision regarding promotion can be accounted for objectively.<sup>26</sup> However, if there are inequalities in career management as the case with PPPK, the existing system creates uncertainty and injustice in rewarding ASN performance. For this reason, a more comprehensive regulatory improvement is needed that not only provides clear career rights for PPPK, but also ensures that overall ASN management can run in accordance with the principles of meritocracy.

### **Inconsistency of Meritocracy and Structural Discrimination**

The ambiguity surrounding career regulation for PPPK lecturers represents a significant finding in the study of ASN management in Indonesia. Although the principle of meritocracy is considered the foundation of ASN governance, in practice, PPPK

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<sup>25</sup> Syifa Nahda Azkiya, Rodiyah Rodiyah, and Sang Ayu Putu Rahayu, "Construction of an Ideal Bureaucratic Meritocracy System Based on Good Governance in Civil Servant Recruitment," *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* VIII, no. XII (January 23, 2025): 4239–53, <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8120354>.

<sup>26</sup> Eloy Oliveira et al., "What Does the Evidence Tell Us about Merit Principles and Government Performance?," *Public Administration* 102, no. 2 (June 13, 2024): 668–90, <https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12945>.

lecturers face unclear pathways for career advancement. They are hindered by regulatory deficiencies that prevent the promotion of their functional positions, despite possessing high competencies in teaching, research, and community service. The structured promotion and rank advancement system afforded to PNS does not apply to PPPK lecturers. This regulatory ambiguity contradicts the meritocratic principles outlined in Law No. 20 of 2023 concerning ASN and creates structural discrimination that disadvantages PPPK lecturers.

The absence of state-provided regulations that protect the careers of PPPK (Government Employees with Work Agreements) is particularly evident in the profession of lecturer. This issue is illustrated by the case of several PPPK lecturers at public universities (PTN). One such case is MM, a lecturer recruited under the 2024 PPPK scheme. Prior to becoming a PPPK lecturer, MM served as a permanent non-civil servant lecturer and had already attained the functional rank of Assistant Professor as Lektor. However, upon entering the PPPK system, MM's functional rank was downgraded to Assistant Professor as Asisten Ahli, a position below Lektor. This demotion occurred because the PPPK recruitment position applied for was Asisten Ahli. Nevertheless, the issue lies not in the selected position itself, but in the fact that MM is currently unable to apply for a promotion in functional rank. MM could not manage the functional promotion to Assistant Professor as Lektor, Associate Professor, and even Full Professor.<sup>27</sup>

The experience of MM is not unique; it also applies to other PPPK lecturers. Before obtaining PPPK status, many of them served as permanent non-civil servant lecturers or as lecturers under the

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<sup>27</sup> MM, "Interview with MM, A PPPK Lecturer in PTN, 12 October 2024," 2024.

Public Service Agency (BLU) scheme. As BLU lecturers, their career advancement was protected. This is evidenced by their ability to obtain functional academic positions such as Junior Assistant Professor (Asisten Ahli), Senior Assistant Professor (Lektor), Associate Professor (Lektor Kepala), and Full Professor. While serving as BLU lecturers, they were able to apply for these functional positions and receive credit score evaluations necessary for advancement. However, upon transitioning to PPPK status, they lost access to this system. They can no longer apply for credit evaluations or pursue promotions to higher academic ranks. Another form of structural discrimination is the restriction preventing PPPK lecturers from applying for study leaves or scholarships to pursue further education.<sup>28</sup>

The inconsistency in applying the principle of meritocracy in Indonesian ASN management, particularly in the career advancement of PPPK lecturers, has significantly contributed to structural discrimination. This structural discrimination undermines the principle of fairness, which should be central to ASN governance, and may also erode public trust in the state's administrative system. Structural discrimination arises when systems that are intended to be fair and performance-based instead treat individuals unequally. In this context, PPPK lecturers are denied equal opportunities compared to their PNS counterparts in terms of rank promotion and career advancement. This occurs even though PPPK lecturers possess high levels of competence and have demonstrated strong performance in teaching, research, and community service. Such inequality creates a profound disparity between two groups of

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<sup>28</sup> DN, "Interview With DN, A PPPK Lecturer in PTN, 20 November 2024.," 2024.

lecturers who, in principle, should have equal rights to career development.

### **Structural Discrimination in Human Rights Review**

The structural discrimination resulting from the inconsistent application of the meritocracy principle in the ASN management, particularly regarding PPPK lecturers, not only creates disparities in career development opportunities but also contradicts fundamental principles of human rights. The ambiguity in career regulation for PPPK lecturers has disadvantaged them in terms of recognition for their demonstrated performance and competencies. PPPK lecturers bear responsibilities equivalent to those of permanent civil servant (PNS) lecturers in the education sector, and therefore, they should be granted equal opportunities for professional growth. In reality, however, they are hindered by a system that lacks transparency and consistency.

From a human rights perspective, the principles of equality and non-discrimination are fundamental rights guaranteed by many international instruments,<sup>29</sup> such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). All people are born free and equal in dignity and rights.<sup>30</sup> The right to equal opportunities in employment and careers, including in the public sector such as in educational institutions, is part of a human right that cannot be differentiated between one individual and another based on their status or type of employment contract.<sup>31</sup> Inconsistency in the application of

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<sup>29</sup> Anne F. Bayefsky, "Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights," in *The UN Human Rights Treaty System in the 21 Century* (Brill | Nijhoff, 2000), 451–58, [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004502758\\_044](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004502758_044).

<sup>30</sup> Jeffrey A. Brauch, "Preserving True Human Dignity in Human Rights Law," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4200573>.

<sup>31</sup> Alan Gutterman, "The Human Right to Work," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4143934>.

meritocracy principles for PPPK lecturers creates structural discrimination that disadvantages them.

The ambiguity in the regulation of career rights for PPPK lecturers contradicts the state's obligation to protect, respect, and fulfil the human rights of every citizen. The state has an obligation to not only recognise the human rights of individuals, but also to ensure that these rights can be realised in a real and equal manner. The state must take active steps to guarantee and protect these rights.<sup>32</sup> Positive obligations of the state include equitable access for all citizens.<sup>33</sup> In this context, the state must provide equal opportunities for PPPK lecturers to develop according to their abilities. The government as the state administrator has the responsibility to create a fair and transparent system that allows all ASN, both PNS and PPPK, to have a clear path for their career development. When PPPK lecturers are not given equal opportunities in terms of career development, the state has indirectly failed to fulfil this obligation.

From the perspective of human rights theory, the state's obligation to protect the rights of its citizens includes protecting them from discriminatory actions,<sup>34</sup> including in career management. The state is obliged to ensure that every individual has equal opportunities to develop based on their competence and performance, regardless of status or type of employment contract.

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<sup>32</sup> Vitaliy B. Kovalchuk et al., "Human Rights and Positive Obligations of the State," *Journal of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine* 28, no. 3 (September 17, 2021): 27–35, [https://doi.org/10.37635/jnalsu.28\(3\).2021.27-35](https://doi.org/10.37635/jnalsu.28(3).2021.27-35).

<sup>33</sup> Anumeha Mishra, "State-Centric Approach to Human Rights: Exploring Human Obligations," *Revue Québécoise de Droit International*, April 20, 2020, 49–66, <https://doi.org/10.7202/1068731ar>.

<sup>34</sup> Irina A. Nesmeianova, "Age and Discrimination," *Sociopolitical Sciences* 14, no. 5 (October 15, 2024): 198–205, <https://doi.org/10.33693/2223-0092-2024-14-5-198-205>.



The inconsistency in the regulation of PPPK lecturers' career rights shows the state's failure to fulfil its obligation to protect their human rights to equal access to career opportunities.

The state's obligation to respect human rights means that it must not hinder or discriminate against individuals based on factors irrelevant to their performance.<sup>35</sup> When the state does not provide equal opportunities for PPPK lecturers to develop in their careers, the state has indirectly violated the principle of respect for individual dignity. In this case, PPPK lecturers who have the same qualifications and experience as PNS lecturers should be equally rewarded for their contributions to education. The state's failure to ensure a fair and transparent system for the promotion of PPPK lecturers is a violation of the principle of respect for their rights.

The state's obligation to fulfil human rights means that it must create a system that allows every individual to fulfil their rights, in this case equal access to promotion and advancement in their career. The uncertainty in career arrangements for PPPK lecturers shows that the state has not fulfilled its obligation to create a fair system for all state employees. This ambiguity creates difficulties for PPPK lecturers in achieving equal recognition with PNS lecturers, even though both have almost identical duties.

In terms of distributive justice theory, distributive injustice can have an impact on individual welfare. Distributive justice emphasises the sharing of resources based on the principle of equality (everyone gets an equal share).<sup>36</sup> Fair distribution in the

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<sup>35</sup> Indah Indah permata, "ANALISIS HUKUM PENGADAAN PEGAWAI PEMERINTAH DENGAN PERJANJIAN KERJA PPPK DI INDONESIA," *Indragiri Law Review* 2, no. 2 (August 30, 2024): 59–67, <https://doi.org/10.32520/ilr.v2i2.64>.

<sup>36</sup> Zakiyuddin Baedhaw, "Distributive Principles of Economic Justice: An Islamic Perspective," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 2, no. 2 (December 1, 2012): 241, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v2i2.241-266>.

context of career opportunities should reflect the contribution of equal access for each type in society. In this context, PPPK lecturers who have demonstrated real contributions to education should have the same opportunities as PNS lecturers to progress in their careers, and the state is obliged to ensure equality in the provision of these opportunities. The state's failure to fulfil this right can be interpreted as a form of distributive injustice, where opportunities for promotion are not fairly distributed to PPPK lecturers.

### **Islamic Law Review on Structural Discrimination and Inconsistency of Meritocracy**

One of the main principles in Islamic law is justice (al-'adl), which is one of the fundamental values expected to be applied in various aspects of life, including in human resource management. In the Qur'an, Allah SWT says, 'Verily Allah enjoins (you) to be just...' (QS. An-Nisa: 58). This verse instructs that every decision must be made fairly, without favour or discrimination.<sup>37</sup> This justice is not only related to actions, but also to giving rights to each individual according to their capacity and achievements, without discrimination or favouritism.

In this case, the principle of meritocracy is very much in line with the teachings of Islam, which demands that each individual be treated based on their abilities and contributions. Islam teaches rewarding based on competence, achievement, and performance.<sup>38</sup> In the context of PPPK lecturers, they should get equal opportunities to develop according to their abilities and performance, regardless

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<sup>37</sup> Jefri Geovani and Tera Saputra, "SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE QUR'ANIC PERSPECTIVE: A STUDY OF THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE QUR'ANIC VERSES," *Al - Mujaddid: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Agama* 5, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 12–30, <https://doi.org/10.51482/almujaddid.v5i1.113>.

<sup>38</sup> Abdul Mun'im, Renny Oktafia, and Taufiq Churrahman, "Reward and Punishment to Motivate Performance in Islamic Perspective," *Proceedings of The ICECRS* 6 (June 13, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.21070/icecrs2020375>.

of their contract type or status. Structural discrimination that does not allow PPPK lecturers to have a clear and structured career path like PNS lecturers is clearly against the principles of Islamic justice. Islamic law demands equal treatment based on ability, not based on status or social standing.

In the Islamic perspective, equality (*al-musawat*) is a very important principle, which demands that all people be treated fairly regardless of their social, economic or even job status. Sharia establishes the right of all people to work and earn a fair wage as long as it does not violate the principles of sharia and preserves human dignity.<sup>39</sup> Several values in Islamic teachings affirm that every individual has an equal right to equal opportunities, both in personal and professional life.

Therefore, in the state employment system, including for PPPK lecturers, the state is obliged to provide equal opportunities for each individual based on their achievements and performance, without distinguishing between PNS and PPPK. The inequality in career development opportunities for PPPK lecturers clearly contradicts the principle of equality upheld in Islam.

Islamic law also emphasises the principle of trustworthiness (*amanah*). Every individual who is given a position or responsibility must carry it out with full responsibility and based on the principle of justice. This trustworthiness is reflected in the Qur'anic verse which reads, 'Verily Allah commands you to deliver the trust to those entitled to receive it...' (QS. An-Nisa: 58). For state officials who are given the mandate to manage ASN, the obligation to create a fair and structured management system is very important. The

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<sup>39</sup> Aye Sudarto et al., "The Role of Women in Maintaining Family Income in Islamic Economy and Mubādalāh Review," *Fikri : Jurnal Kajian Agama, Sosial Dan Budaya* 8, no. 2 (December 22, 2023): 162–74, <https://doi.org/10.25217/jf.v8i2.3171>.

state must ensure that every ASN, both PNS and PPPK, is treated equally in terms of their career development without discrimination. When state officials neglect to regulate the career rights of PPPK lecturers, they are considered not fulfilling their mandate in managing existing human resources.

Structural discrimination that occurs between PNS and PPPK lecturers is contrary to the principles of justice in Islamic law. Inequality in career opportunities for PPPK lecturers indicates discrimination that is not in accordance with the basic principles of Islamic justice. Islam strongly emphasises the need to treat each individual based on ability, performance and achievement. Islam prohibits discrimination based on employment status or contract type. Therefore, the inequality that occurs between PNS and PPPK lecturers is not only contrary to the principle of justice in human rights law, but also to the principle of equality upheld in Islamic law.

#### **Pending Regulatory Improvements**

In the midst of the tragic fate of PPPK Lecturers and the existence of laws and government regulations that do not pay attention to the career rights of PPPK Lecturers, there have actually been efforts from other sectors that seek to address this issue. The hope is the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (*Permendikbudristek*) Number 44 of 2024 concerning Profession, Career, and Income of Lecturers. *Permendikbudristek* regulates the profession, career, and income of all types of lecturers including PPPK lecturers. The enactment of *Permendikbudristek* is very important and urgent in the context of higher education in Indonesia, especially in relation to regulating the status and rights of PPPK lecturers. Sociologically, this regulation emerges as a response to the uncertainty experienced by PPPK lecturers, who often feel marginalised and do not have clear career guarantees. The presence of this regulation provides hope for better

equality and recognition of the role of PPPK lecturers in the education system, so that they can contribute optimally without worrying about the future of their careers.

One of the unique features of *Permendikbudristek* is the definition of permanent lecturers and their rights to functional lecturer positions. *Peremendikbudristek* stipulates that permanent lecturers are entitled to functional positions. The definition of permanent lecturers is not based on the lecturer's status; whether they are permanent civil servants (PNS), lecturers of public service agencies (Dosen BLU), lecturers of legal entity state universities (Doosen PTNBH), or PPPK lecturers. Permanent lecturers are those who are assigned a minimum of 12 Semester Credit Units (SKS) in one semester (Article 2 paragraph 2 *Permendikbudristek*). All types of lecturers, regardless of the type of contract, who fulfil the 12 SKS requirement, are entitled to functional positions from junior assistant professor (*asisten ahli*), senior assistant professor (*lektor*) associate professor (*lektor kepala*), and professor. This new regulation is a solution for the career protection of PPPK lecturers (Article 3 paragraph 1 *Permendikbudristek*).

This regulation provides clarity and fairness for PPPK lecturers. However, unfortunately, the implementation of *Permendikbudristek* Number 44 of 2024 has been delayed. This was conveyed through the Circular Letter of the Minister of Education, Science, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2024 concerning the Postponement of the Implementation of the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 44 of 2024 concerning Profession, Career, and Income of Lecturers. One of the reasons for the postponement is in order to improve the content of regulation.

This delay is certainly a big challenge for improving the lecturer career management system, which has been faced with

inequality of treatment between PNS and PPPK lecturers. Although this regulation is supposed to provide a solution to the inequality in lecturer career development, the delay in its implementation extends the uncertainty that has been felt by PPPK lecturers.

The postponement in implementing *Permendikbudristek* adds to the difficulties for PPPK lecturers, who already feel neglected in the state employment system. Without a regulation that clearly regulates functional positions and promotion for PPPK lecturers, they are again trapped in a situation of uncertainty. This not only has the potential to damage the motivation and morale of PPPK lecturers, but also disrupt the quality of teaching and academic productivity in higher education. A lack of recognition in career advancement may lead lecturers to experience decreased performance levels.

The delay further reinforces the existing inequality between PPPK and PNS lecturers. Although both have similar responsibilities in terms of teaching, research, and community service, this difference in treatment indicates a structural discrimination that cannot be sustained in an ideal meritocratic system. Without clear protection for PPPK lecturers, their potential to grow in their profession is limited, which in turn affects the quality of education provided to students.

The postponement in implementing *Permendikbudristek* Number 44 of 2024 shows that there is uncertain regulatory that is detrimental to PPPK lecturers. The state should immediately ensure that the implementation of this regulation is carried out as planned, to avoid more inequality and discrimination against PPPK lecturers. Without clarity and sustainability of this policy, PPPK lecturers will continue to face challenges in gaining equal recognition with PNS lecturers.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study reveal that the current legal framework regulating the career rights of PPPK lecturers is not fully aligned with the principles of meritocracy. Although Law Number 20 Year 2023 on the State Civil Apparatus promises the principle of meritocracy, it does not apply to the career protection of PPPK lecturers. They cannot apply for promotion to functional positions. They can only get functional positions according to the name of the position in the first recruitment. Some PPPK lecturers choosing the functional position as junior assistant professor at the time of recruitment, they cannot apply for a functional promotion at one level above, to senior assistant professor. In terms of human rights, the government has failed to carry out its duties as a duty bearer of human rights in protecting the career rights of PPPK lecturers. From the perspective of Islamic law, the inconsistency of meritocracy in treating PPPK lecturers are contrary to the principles of justice (*al-'adl*) and equality (*al-musawat*). Islam emphasises that ability and merit are the main measures in determining one's rights and obligations. The discrimination between the treatment of PNS and PPPK lecturers clearly contradicts the basic values in Islamic law that require equality of opportunity and respect for each individual based on their contribution.

## **Acknowledgments**

The authors would like to thank Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, which has helped fund this research in the cluster of Policy on the Development of General and Financial Administration (Penelitian Kebijakan Pengembangan Administrasi Umum dan Keuangan) in the 2024 fiscal year.

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