THE IDENTIFY POSSIBILITY OF DECENTRALIZED GOVERNANCE BASED ON SCENARIO PLANNING IN UNIVERSITAS TERBUKA

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Abstract

This article aims to identify various possibilities of decentralized governance by prioritizing collaboration in the face of uncertainty and rapid change. This research is a qualitative study. The method used is scenario planning. The unit of analysis is the governance of Universitas Terbuka. The data collection technique is carried out with the snowball technique. The instruments developed include Identify focal issue/concern, key forces, change driver, uncertainty, selecting the scenario logic, and flashing out the scenario. The findings of this study are the existence of a focal issue that develops as sustainability both in quality and quantity. The key forces of UT are through quality demands in carrying out the government's mandate. The triggering factors for change are community demands, technological developments, and increasing competition. Meanwhile, the elements of uncertainty include very rapid technological developments, changes in public preferences, and UT governance from PK-BLU to PTN-BH. The selection of scenarios includes the preparation of several alternatives to be tested, which includes decentralization with several alternatives, the use of AI in learning, and reviewing the current policies. This study concludes that the concept of agile organization in educational organizations tends to be functional rather than structural with egalitarian culture and decentralization principles. The *humanocracy* paradigm will develop in tandem with UT's development towards an agile organization. The implication of this study is the need to test alternatives prepared through quantitative research.

Keywords: alternative possibilities, governance, universities, UT

1 INTRODUCTION

After the Covid-19 Pandemic, the world is faced with uncertainty. And so far, organizational development is necessary for the sustainability of the business or the existence of the organization itself in the future (Castro Ijiri et al., 2025). In the midst of uncertainty, one approach that can be used to develop an organization is Scenario Planning (Caiati et al., 2025; Shavazipour & Stewart, 2023). This approach can be used to develop an organizational development plan, which allows the organization to transform in a direction that is more in line with needs (Aisyah et al., 2024; Caiati et al., 2025). The effectiveness of the organization can be traced from the current organizational structure (Dewi et al., 2025). In general, (Mintzberg, 1979) divides organizational

functions into five parts, namely strategic apex, middle line, operating core, technostructure, and support staff. Strategic apex is the position of someone who is given the overall responsibility of the organization. The operating core is the part that is given direct responsibility for the production and service of the company. The middle line is the link between the top policy-making officials and the operational front line. While technostructure is the part that has a planning function, and the support staff is the five parts can be seen in Figure 1.
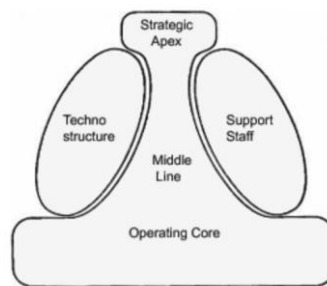

Figure 1 : Organization Section According to Mintzberg

The division of organizational functions was more or less adopted by formal organizations. However, in the era of uncertainty, VUCA has given rise to an agile governance approach, which prioritizes the use of AI, which gives rise to the term algorithmic bureaucracy (Li et al., 2025).

One of the organizations that has experienced quite rapid development is the Open University (UT). In four decades, UT has experienced significant developments both in terms of organizational structure and service coverage. This has consequences for UT to develop itself in accordance with the needs and development of the community. UT management can be likened to managing the Education industry (Armida Sari et al., 2022). On the one hand, these conditions are certainly very encouraging, but on the other hand, questions arise about UT's sustainability in the future, amid the challenges of facing an era of uncertainty and the character of Indonesia's regions that are different in culture, demographic and geographical variations, and diverse socio-economic conditions (Aboulkacim et al., 2025). As with managing the industry, decision-making is carried out by the center. However, with the growing needs of the organization and the importance of UT sustainability, the question is whether there is a possibility of governance of delegation of authority in several fields, which concerns the relationship between the Central UT and the Regional UT. This study aims to identify possibilities that prioritize decentralized governance in UT.

2   METHODS

This research is a qualitative study. The data collection technique uses purposive sampling, which includes:

a. The informants include the leaders and employees of the selected Regional UT, namely UT Bandung, Ternate.

b. The leadership of the Central UT which includes the rectorate, Deans, lecturers, and education staff, who are selected and considered to know about the future development of UT organizations.

c. UT Service Center (SALUT) which is a third party as an extension of student services in the region. The interviewed SALUT is the manager of SALUT in UT Bogor and the Tidore Islands.

d. Organizational experts.

This study uses a Scenario Planning approach, with instruments, namely Identify Focal Concern or Decision, Identify Key Forces, Identify Driving Forces (change drivers), Identify Uncertainty, Selecting the Scenario Logic, Fleshing Out the Scenario. First-year data collection prioritizes exploring UT development based on the real conditions experienced by stakeholders and stakeholder views on the future development of UT organizations. The research flow can be seen in Figure 2
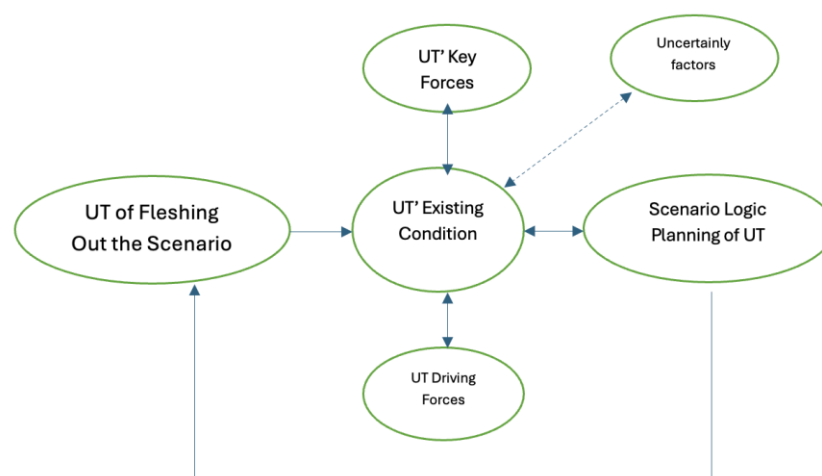

Figure 2: Logical Thinking Framework

Data analysis is carried out by making an Analysis Table by comparing stakeholder views. In the second year, several alternative options will be prepared that will be presented to stakeholders, by presenting various information obtained from the field.

3   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Judging from the reach and services provided to students, UT is included in the category of large-scale institutions. Based on student registration data, in 2024 semester 1 there are 671,967 students, with the most spread on the island of Java (52%), Sumatra (25%), Kalimantan (11%) and the rest spread across Bali, NTB, Nusa Tenggara, Papua, Maluku, and abroad. UT has more than 640 SALUTs spread across Indonesia. The distribution of UT students can be seen in Figure 3.
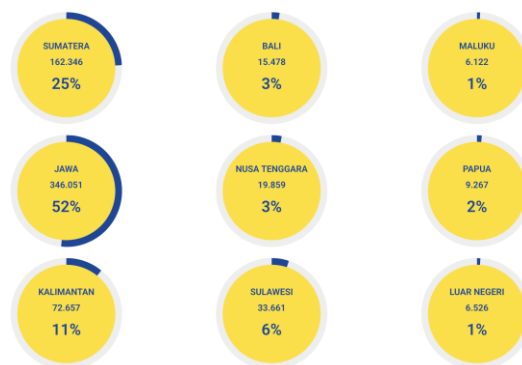

Figure 3: The Distribution of UT Student

The educational programs offered by UT are relatively varied, which include 2 diploma programs, 36 bachelor's programs, 9 master's programs, 2 doctoral programs, 1 teacher education professional program, and 3 certificate programs. UT's service range includes education services from Sabang to Merauke, and from Miangas Island to Rote UT student services in 52 countries. The number of service offices in the regions (UT Region) is 39 Regional UTs and 1 Foreign Service UT. The number of UT employees is 2,302 employees, with the distribution of civil servants (lecturers as many as 694 lecturers, and staff as many as 498 employees); PPPK employees (15 lecturers, and 2 staff), UT Non-Civil Servant employees (24 lecturers and 681 staff), and UT employees with Employment Agreements (4 lecturers, and 384 staff). Human resource data can be seen in detail in Figure 4.
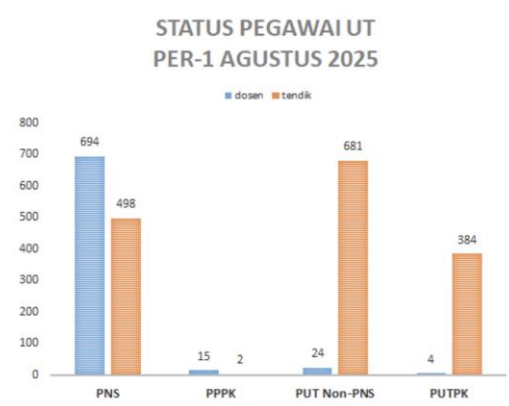
Figure 4 The Distribution of HR

UT's organizational structure is arranged with a hierarchical level that better reflects the command/centralistic structure. The organizational structure can be seen in Figure 5.
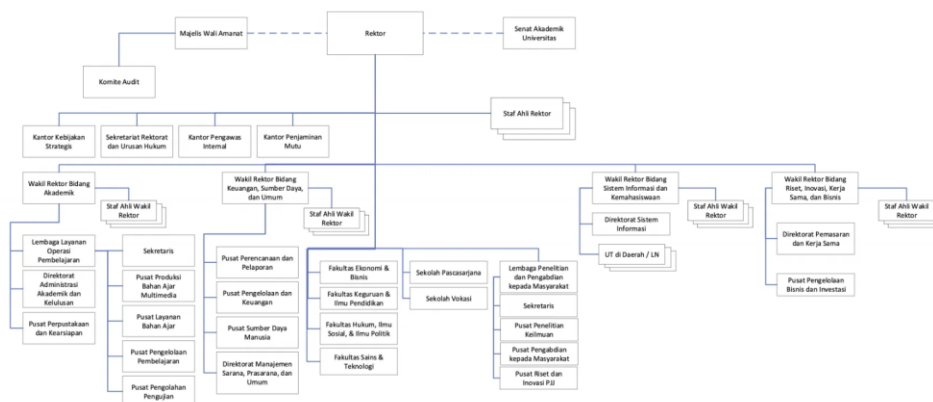

Figure 5 The UT Organization Structure.

Based on Figure 3 mentioned above, by referring to the opinion of Mintzerberg (1979), the strategic apex element is carried out by elements of the Board of Trustees (MWA), the Rectorate, and the University Academic Senate (SAU). The middle line was carried out by the leaders of the Faculty and 40 Regional UT Directors. Tecnostructure is carried out by the Head of the Institution (LPPM and LLOP), the Head of the Center (Human Resources Center, Testing Center, Student Learning Center/PBB, and so on). Meanwhile, staff support is carried out by lecturers and education staff.

The results of the FGD and interviews with the selected informants, can be formulated that the focal issue that is currently developing is sustaibility in the balance of quality and quantity. Sustainability of the quality is intended to be the sustainability of quality that has been achieved in the Tridharma of Higher Education, more specifically quality in education and teaching. This is because in the post-Covid 19 Pandemic era, UT competitors have emerged, both from public and private universities. Sustaibality of quantity is intended to fulfill the minimum number of students in BEP positions, but UT has set a target of being able to serve 1 million students, by 2045. The number of students is the main benchmark in determining the success of UT Region, with the results as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Scenario Planning Analysis

No	Aspects	Result
1	Identify Focal Issue (Focal Concern) or Decision	Sustainability in the balance of quality and quantity.
2	Identify Key Forces.	• mandate from government through regulation about distance education in Indonesia since 1984 • The mindset of studying in remote areas still tends to be face-to-face, especially in archipelago areas such as Ternate and Ambon • equalization of cost standards in all regions without regard to demographic characteristics and regional costliness • Centralization of academic policy
3	Identify Driving Forces (change drivers).	• strengthening learning technology, readiness in competition • Need to socialize consistently to change the mind and distance lectures are as quality as face-to-face lectures • the need for money follow programs that are tailored to the characteristics of the region and the community. Of course, with strict planning and monitoring.
4	Identify Uncertainty.	• rapid changes in government and technological policies, and changes in public preferences
5	Selecting the Scenario Logic	• Governance: decentralization with multiple models and Flexibility • development of AI in learning and governance • humanocracy and strengthening human resources • One-command academic policy
8	Fleshing Out the Scenario.	• decentralization with several models taking into account regional characteristics, • Strengthening the quality of learning • strengthen SALUT with mutually beneficial networking. • Positioning SALUT as an extension of UT's academic arm with a personal touch according to the needs of students

Source: Analysis Results, 2025.

The data mentioned above shows that in the near future the possibility of decentralization in academic and non-academic management is a viable option considering the complexity in UT management, scientific development, and the need for UT organizational development in the future. On the other hand, UT's organizational structure is more reflective of bureaucracy with strict procedures. The characteristics of strict centralized decision-making in large organizations need to be thought about in the context of more effective governance. In addition to the decentralization point, the humanocracy paradigm can be a proposed change as a support for UT's development as an agile organization and support to competitiveness in future (Aisyah et al., 2023; Asthana et al., 2024; Castro Ijiri et al., 2025).

4   CONCLUSION

Over the course of four decades, UT has grown into a large and complex organization. The focal issue in UT's organizational development is sustainability in quality and quantity. The quality element is needed to support competitiveness in the university business in Indonesia, and the aspect of the number of students is needed to support UT's business. The development of uncertainty in business and characteristic factors that tend to differ from one region to another allows for a more decentralized governance in certain aspects. However, the unity of command in academic policy is still chosen which is centralistic. The implication of this study is that it is still necessary to formulate several policy alternatives as an option in organizational development reviewed from the Scenario Planning approach.

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