

## LEGAL POLICY, ETHICAL COMPLIANCE, AND GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE LECTURER CODE OF ETHICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF RIAU, INDONESIA

### DESAFIOS EM MATÉRIA DE POLÍTICA JURÍDICA, CONFORMIDADE ÉTICA E GOVERNANÇA: UMA ANÁLISE ABRANGENTE DO CÓDIGO DE ÉTICA DOS DOCENTES DA UNIVERSIDADE DE RIAU, NA INDONÉSIA

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#### Abstract

The lecturer code of ethics is a normative instrument designed to uphold integrity, professionalism, and accountability among educators in the implementation of the tridharma of higher education. The University of Riau has issued Rector Regulation Number 6 of 2017 concerning the Lecturer Code of Ethics as the legal foundation governing professional behavior; however, the dynamic development of higher education regulations and the evolution of academic culture necessitate an evaluation of its implementation effectiveness. This legal research aims to analyze the legal framework underlying the formulation of the lecturer code of ethics and to assess its implementation within the University of Riau. The study employs a mixed-method approach that integrates a doctrinal analysis of legal policy documents with empirical methods, including interviews, focus group discussions, and surveys involving university stakeholders. The findings indicate that the implementation of the lecturer code of ethics has not been optimal due to regulatory, institutional, infrastructural, and academic cultural constraints. Moreover, lecturers' understanding of the code's substantive provisions varies, and enforcement mechanisms remain inconsistent. This research recommends

#### Resumo

*O código de ética do docente é um instrumento normativo destinado a garantir a integridade, o profissionalismo e a responsabilidade entre os educadores na implementação do tridharma do ensino superior. A Universidade de Riau promulgou o Regulamento do Reitor nº 6 de 2017, relativo ao Código de Ética do Docente, como base jurídica que rege o comportamento profissional; no entanto, o desenvolvimento dinâmico da regulamentação do ensino superior e a evolução da cultura acadêmica exigem uma avaliação da eficácia de sua implementação. Esta pesquisa jurídica tem como objetivo analisar o marco legal subjacente à formulação do código de ética do professor e avaliar sua implementação na Universidade de Riau. O estudo emprega uma abordagem de método misto que integra uma análise doutrinária de documentos de política jurídica com métodos empíricos, incluindo entrevistas, discussões em grupos focais e pesquisas envolvendo partes interessadas da universidade. Os resultados indicam que a implementação do código de ética do professor não tem sido ideal devido a restrições regulatórias, institucionais, infraestruturais e de cultura acadêmica. Além disso, a compreensão dos professores sobre as disposições substantivas do código varia, e os*



updating the legal policy to align with developments in higher education governance, strengthening ethical institutions, and developing a more participatory and ethically-oriented model of implementation. The implications of this study are significant for ensuring that academic ethical governance operates effectively and in accordance with the principles of institutional accountability and integrity.

**Keywords:** Legal Policy. Ethical Compliance. Code of Ethics. Lecturer. University of Riau.

*mecanismos de fiscalização permanecem inconsistentes. Esta pesquisa recomenda a atualização da política jurídica para se alinhar com os desenvolvimentos na governança do ensino superior, o fortalecimento das instituições éticas e o desenvolvimento de um modelo de implementação mais participativo e orientado para a ética. As implicações deste estudo são significativas para garantir que a governança ética acadêmica opere de forma eficaz e de acordo com os princípios de responsabilidade e integridade institucionais.*

**Palavras-chave:** Política Jurídica. Conformidade Ética. Código de Ética. Docente. Universidade de Riau.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Lecturers, as the central pillars of higher education institutions, play a strategic role in creating a high-quality academic environment. Their integrity and professionalism are strongly influenced by the existence and implementation of a code of ethics that governs the conduct and responsibilities of lecturers (Maulana *et al.*, 2016). The lecturer code of ethics constitutes a set of norms, values, and moral principles that guide professional behavior in fulfilling the tridharma of higher education—teaching, research, and community service (Wibowo *et al.*, 2024). This code is formulated to ensure integrity, responsibility, and professionalism, as well as to safeguard the dignity of the academic profession and higher education institutions (Mulyadi, 2018).

The urgency of this research arises from the need to maintain integrity, professionalism, and accountability among academic staff, particularly lecturers as key actors in higher education (Hafids, 2018). The existence and enforcement of a lecturer code of ethics serve as a crucial normative instrument to ensure academic quality, uphold ethical relations within the academic community, and protect the institutional reputation as a whole. However, various challenges persist in the implementation of the lecturer code of ethics, including issues related to regulatory adequacy, institutional capacity, and academic culture (Saputra, 2017). The Research Integrity Risk Index developed by Meho even reveals the low integrity levels in several prominent Indonesian universities (Meho,

2025), indicating that existing ethical enforcement mechanisms have not been sufficiently effective in preventing academic misconduct.

The University of Riau has enacted Rector Regulation Number 6 of 2017 concerning the Lecturer Code of Ethics as the legal framework for regulating professional conduct. Nevertheless, several provisions within the code are no longer aligned with recent developments in higher education policies nor with the current institutional needs of the University of Riau. In practice, the implementation of this code faces notable constraints, including limited understanding among lecturers regarding its content, inconsistent application of sanctions, and insufficient institutional support and resources. If left unaddressed, these issues will hinder the university's efforts to strengthen academic integrity.

This research is therefore intended to critically analyze the legal policy underlying the formulation of the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau and to examine its empirical implementation across faculties and study programs. The scope of analysis includes the normative foundation, enforcement mechanisms, the effectiveness of ethical bodies, and the perceptions and compliance levels of lecturers with regard to the existing code of ethics. The study also seeks to identify obstacles and formulate strategic recommendations for optimizing the implementation of the lecturer code of ethics in the future.

Previous studies on lecturer codes of ethics have focused largely on partial aspects of ethical issues in higher education. Findings from Wibowo's research indicate persistent occurrences of academic misconduct, such as plagiarism, conflicts of interest, grade manipulation, unfair treatment of students, and the abuse of academic authority, across Indonesian universities. This demonstrates that the presence of a code of ethics alone is insufficient without robust enforcement mechanisms. Winarno's research further emphasizes that the lecturer code of ethics, when implemented effectively, can serve as an important control mechanism in improving the quality of learning in higher education institutions (Winarno, 2015). Although these studies highlight the significance of ethics in supporting lecturer professionalism, they do not comprehensively examine the legal policy dimensions or the contextual implementation at a specific university.

In light of this gap, the present study offers novelty by providing a critical analysis of the legal policy governing the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau,

assessing its implementation, and proposing strategic recommendations for its improvement. The findings of this research are expected to contribute to academic discourse while providing practical guidance for university leaders and policymakers in developing and implementing a more effective and responsive lecturer code of ethics to uphold academic integrity and institutional professionalism.

## **2 MATERIAL AND METHOD**

### **2.1 Description of the study sites**

This study was conducted at the University of Riau, located in Pekanbaru City, Riau Province, Indonesia. The research employed a mixed-methods approach that integrated normative and empirical analyses. Normative data were obtained through a thorough review of relevant legislation, the university statute, and the Rector Regulation on the Lecturer Code of Ethics. Empirical data were collected through structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and surveys administered to lecturers and institutional stakeholders at the University of Riau. Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique involving university leadership, faculty senates, ethics committee members, and lecturers. Data were analyzed qualitatively through processes of reduction, categorization, and thematic interpretation. The validity of the data was ensured through source and method triangulation. The entire research process was conducted over a five-month period, from August 2025 to December 2025, and adhered to established academic research ethics protocols.

### **2.2 Implementation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics**

The analysis of the implementation of the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau was conducted using a doctrinal approach through an examination of relevant legislation, the University of Riau Statute, and the Rector Regulation on the Lecturer Code of Ethics. This approach served to assess the legal foundation and policy design. The empirical component was carried out through structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and surveys involving lecturers and institutional stakeholders to

capture the actual implementation, challenges, and levels of ethical compliance in the field. The data were analyzed qualitatively using thematic techniques grounded in public policy theory, professional ethics theory, and legal effectiveness theory. Through this combined approach, the study was able to provide a comprehensive depiction of the extent to which the lecturer code of ethics has been implemented within the academic practices of the University of Riau

### **2.3 Obstacles in the implementation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics**

The identification of obstacles was conducted using a doctrinal approach to examine weaknesses in regulatory substance based on public policy theory and the principles of regulatory formulation. Meanwhile, empirical data were obtained through interviews, FGDs, and surveys to uncover structural, cultural, and procedural constraints, which were analyzed using Soekanto's theory of legal effectiveness (Soekanto, 1983). The findings reveal several key barriers, including weak technical provisions, limited capacity of the Ethics Council, insufficient supporting facilities, low legal awareness among lecturers, and an academic culture that does not yet place ethics as a priority. This combined approach enables a comprehensive identification of obstacles from both doctrinal and practical perspectives.

### **2.4 Formulation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics**

The formulation of the policy was analyzed by emphasizing a doctrinal examination as its principal foundation. The doctrinal approach was employed to trace the philosophical, sociological, and juridical bases underlying the Rector Regulation, drawing upon public policy theory as well as the legal formulation theories of Attamimi and Yuliandri (Attamimi, 1990; Yuliandri, 2009). Meanwhile, empirical data obtained through interviews and FGDs were used to confirm the alignment of the policy with institutional needs and academic realities. Thematic analysis was then conducted to map the institutional and regulatory considerations that motivated the establishment of the code of ethics. Through this method, the study reveals that the formulation of the policy is driven by the need to safeguard academic integrity, comply with higher education

regulatory requirements, and respond to the evolving dynamics of lecturer professional ethics.

## **2.5 Strategies for optimizing the implementation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics**

The formulation of optimization strategies was carried out using a mixed-methods approach that integrates doctrinal analysis with empirical findings. The doctrinal approach was utilized to assess regulatory gaps and principles of good governance based on public policy theory and legal effectiveness theory. Meanwhile, empirical data derived from interviews, FGDs, and surveys were used to identify practical needs, operational constraints, and lecturers' perceptions regarding ethical enforcement. Thematic analysis of both data sources produced several strengthening strategies, including regulatory revision, capacity building for the Ethics Council, digitalization of ethical governance, and the development of an institutional culture of academic integrity. Therefore, the proposed strategies are not only normatively grounded but also aligned with the actual dynamics within the university environment.

## **3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Implementation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics**

The implementation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau demonstrates that while most lecturers are aware of Rector Regulation Number 06 of 2017, their level of understanding of its substantive provisions varies considerably. Many lecturers understand only general ethical principles but have not fully mastered the detailed norms contained in the code. This condition indicates a gap between the regulatory design and the internalization of values among policy implementers. In the perspective of Soekanto's theory of legal effectiveness, weak understanding among actors represents a cultural legal factor that may hinder effective implementation (Soekanto, 1983).

In terms of dissemination mechanisms, the implementation of the code of ethics remains sporadic and lacks a systematic schedule. Dissemination activities are often carried out only during certain moments, such as new lecturer orientations or when ethical violations occur within a faculty. Limited communication of the regulation has resulted in many lecturers being unaware of updates and failing to develop adequate understanding of ethical obligations. In fact, public policy literature emphasizes that implementation effectiveness is strongly influenced by the frequency, quality, and continuity of policy communication (Parsons, 2005).

From an institutional perspective, although the University Ethics Council and Faculty Ethics Teams have been established, their roles have not functioned optimally. The study found that ethical violations are often handled informally by faculty leaders rather than through the official mechanisms mandated by the Rector Regulation. Such practices result in inconsistent enforcement and may undermine the credibility of ethical institutions. According to ethical governance theory, weak ethical bodies lead to inadequate oversight and uncertainty in sanctioning (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019).

With regard to lecturer behavior, the implementation of the code of ethics is relatively strong in the areas of research ethics and academic publication. Awareness of plagiarism, research misconduct, and publication standards tends to be high due to performance requirements in the tridharma and increasingly strict plagiarism detection systems. However, the implementation of ethics in teaching and student supervision continues to face challenges such as delayed supervision, inconsistency in assessment standards, and limited sensitivity to ethical issues within academic interactions. This aligns with international studies indicating that teaching ethics is often weaker than research ethics (Tierney & Lechuga, 2022).

Obstacles to implementation also arise from infrastructural limitations. The absence of a digital reporting system for ethical violations, the lack of a dedicated secretariat for the Ethics Council, and limited administrative support contribute to slow and poorly documented handling of cases. From the perspective of legal effectiveness theory, inadequate facilities constitute a structural factor that weakens the enforcement of norms (Evan, 1965). These infrastructural deficiencies directly affect low reporting rates and weak oversight.

Overall, the implementation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau shows that although the regulatory framework exists, its effectiveness in practice still requires improvement. Strengthening lecturers' understanding, establishing a regular dissemination system, enhancing the capacity of the Ethics Council, and providing adequate infrastructural support are necessary steps. This analysis highlights the gap between policy design and policy practice, as described in modern public policy theory, where successful implementation depends not only on the quality of regulations but also on the capacity of implementing actors, institutional support, and organizational culture (Dunn, 2018). Thus, optimizing the implementation of the code of ethics requires strategic interventions across regulatory, structural, and cultural dimensions simultaneously.

### **3.2 Obstacles in the implementation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics**

The primary obstacle in implementing the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau lies in the weakness of the regulatory substance, particularly the lack of clarity regarding enforcement procedures and the workflow for addressing ethical violations. Several provisions in Rector Regulation Number 06 of 2017 do not provide detailed technical guidelines, resulting in varying interpretations across faculties. This normative uncertainty affects legal certainty and procedural justice, consistent with Attamimi's view that incomplete regulations hinder effective policy implementation (Attamimi, 1990).

At the institutional level, both the University Ethics Council and the Faculty Ethics Teams face capacity-related and resource-related constraints. Many members have not received specialized training in ethical enforcement, handling ethical violations, or conducting ethical examinations. As a result, they often struggle to manage cases professionally and consistently. From a policy implementation perspective, limited capacity among policy implementers is a determining factor that affects the success of regulatory enforcement (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975).

Another major obstacle concerns the low level of dissemination of the code of ethics among lecturers. Dissemination efforts have been sporadic and unstructured, leading many lecturers to lack comprehensive understanding of their rights, obligations, and forms of ethical violations. Insufficient policy communication creates a gap between

regulatory objectives and the behavior of implementers. This reinforces Parsons' assertion that policy communication is essential to successful implementation (Parsons, 2005).

The permissive academic culture also presents a significant challenge. In practice, ethical violations are often treated as internal matters resolved informally without following official mechanisms of the Ethics Council. The tendency to avoid conflict and reluctance to report colleagues results in violations remaining undocumented or unaddressed. This phenomenon aligns with Friedman's legal culture theory, which posits that societal culture significantly influences the functioning of law (Friedman, 1975).

Infrastructural limitations constitute additional technical barriers. The university lacks a digital reporting system or whistleblowing mechanism that would allow lecturers and students to confidentially and anonymously report ethical violations. The absence of such systems reduces transparency and slows down case handling. Governance literature emphasizes that technological support greatly enhances institutional accountability (Heeks, 2001).

Furthermore, documentation of ethical violations has not been conducted systematically. Faculties tend to maintain individual records without integrating them into the university-wide system, leading to data loss or unreported cases. This weakness in documentation hinders regular evaluation and evidence-based policy reform. According to evidence-based policy theory, poorly organized data impede the continual improvement of policy effectiveness (Nutley *et al.*, 2007).

From an individual behavioral perspective, obstacles arise from low legal and ethical awareness among some lecturers. Some view the code of ethics merely as an administrative document rather than a binding moral guide for academic conduct. This lack of internalized values results in inconsistent behavior, particularly in student supervision and academic assessment. Deontological ethics theory emphasizes that awareness of moral duty is fundamental to ethical behavior (Kant, 1998).

Variations in ethical commitment across faculties also constitute a significant barrier. Faculties with strong academic cultures and firm leadership tend to adhere more closely to ethical regulations, while those with weaker traditions of academic discipline exhibit lower compliance. This disparity demonstrates that implementation is influenced

by organizational structure and leadership style, as explained in organizational behavior theory (Robbins & Judge, 2019).

Inconsistency in sanction enforcement is another critical issue. Many cases are resolved without formal sanctions or are handled internally within faculties, creating perceptions of unfairness and undermining legal certainty. Procedural justice theory suggests that consistency in sanctioning is essential to ensuring that actors perceive rules as applying equally to all (Tyler, 2006). Without consistency, trust in ethical institutions may deteriorate.

Overall, the obstacles to the implementation of the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau encompass regulatory, institutional, technical, cultural, and individual factors. These challenges illustrate a gap between policy design and policy practice. To improve implementation, comprehensive interventions are required, including regulatory revision, strengthening of ethical institutions, provision of reporting technology, and the cultivation of academic integrity. These findings align with public policy theory, which states that implementation success is influenced by coordination, capacity, resources, and the social environment of the organization (Dunn, 2018).

### **3.3 Formulation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics**

The formulation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau is grounded in the institutional need to uphold integrity, professionalism, and the quality of the university's tridharma. In the context of modern higher education, the existence of a code of ethics serves as a normative instrument to ensure that all academic activities are conducted based on moral values, scientific honesty, and professional responsibility. This aligns with professional ethics theory, which asserts that the academic profession requires behavioral standards to safeguard service quality and maintain public trust (Beauchamp & Childress, 2019).

Philosophically, the establishment of a code of ethics is driven by the university's commitment to instill moral values in academic interactions between lecturers, students, and the academic community. Principles such as integrity, fairness, objectivity, and respect for human dignity constitute fundamental values that must be embedded in the lecturer profession. From the perspective of deontological ethics, lecturers have a moral

obligation to uphold these values as a form of commitment to their profession and the academic community (Kant, 1998).

From a sociological perspective, changes in academic dynamics, the increasing number of lecturers, and the complexities of lecturer–student and lecturer–institution relationships necessitate clearer behavioral guidelines. Issues related to plagiarism, conflicts of interest, inconsistent assessment standards, and supervision problems often create tension. The code of ethics thus functions as a mechanism to maintain harmony in academic relations, consistent with organizational culture theory in which collective values and norms guide individual behavior (Robbins & Judge, 2019).

Legally, the formulation of the code of ethics is based on statutory requirements obligating higher education institutions to establish ethical frameworks as part of their internal quality assurance system. The Higher Education Act and the University of Riau Statute provide the legal basis for the rector to develop ethical regulations to support university governance. According to Yuliandri's theory of legal formulation, legal policies must possess philosophical, juridical, and sociological foundations to be accepted and effectively implemented (Yuliandri, 2009).

Several Indonesian laws and regulations must also be considered in formulating the lecturer code of ethics in higher education institutions. These include: (1) Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System; (2) Law No. 14/2005 on Teachers and Lecturers; (3) Law No. 12/2012 on Higher Education; (4) Law No. 20/2023 on Civil Servants; (5) Government Regulation No. 37/2009 on Lecturers; (6) Government Regulation No. 4/2014 on the Administration of Higher Education and Management of Universities; (7) Ministerial Regulations on University Statutes; and (8) Ministerial Regulations on University Organization and Governance. These legal instruments collectively form the normative framework underpinning the ethical policy.

In addition, the development of the code of ethics is influenced by global trends in ethical standards within higher education, including international accreditation requirements, improved research quality, and the application of good university governance principles. Universities lacking a robust ethical framework risk losing academic credibility and public trust. In public policy theory, ethical policy is regarded as an institutional response to environmental needs and accountability demands (Dunn, 2018).

Accordingly, the formulation of the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau is the result of a combination of normative needs to maintain professional morality, regulatory and accreditation demands, evolving social academic dynamics, and organizational requirements for sound governance. This policy does not stand alone but forms part of a broader system designed to safeguard academic quality and institutional reputation. Based on legal effectiveness theory, the presence of clear ethical norms constitutes an essential initial step before implementation, dissemination, and continuous enforcement can occur (Soekanto, 1983).

It is also important to consider the development of ethical legal policies practiced at leading universities worldwide. The content of lecturer ethical policies globally generally includes moral values, academic standards, professional relationships, conflict of interest management, social behavior, and legal compliance. These international benchmarks may serve as a useful reference for the University of Riau in future development of its lecturer ethical legal policy.

**Table 1**

*Comparison of Legal Policies on Lecturer Codes of Ethics in Higher Education Institutions Across Several Countries*

Legal Policy Aspects of the Code of Ethics	United Kingdom (University of Oxford)	Germany (Humboldt University Berlin)	Japan (University of Tokyo)	Singapore (National University of Singapore – NUS)	Indonesia (University of Riau)
Legal Framework	<i>Code of Practice, Academic Integrity Policy, Staff Conduct Regulations</i>	<i>Rules of Good Scientific Practice, GSP National Standard</i>	<i>UTokyo Code of Conduct, Research Ethics Guidelines</i>	<i>NUS Code of Conduct, Academic Integrity Policy</i>	Rector Regulation No. 06/2017 (Lecturer Code of Ethics)
Ethical Philosophy	Integrity–Objectivity–Openness	Good Scientific Practice (GSP)	Professionalism–Responsibility–Public Trust	Institutional Integrity–Accountability	Academic Integrity and Professionalism
Research Ethics	Anti-plagiarism, data transparency, authorship rules	Anti-fabrication, falsification, manipulation; ombudsman system	Human and animal research ethics; data security	Research must be accountable; grant audits are strictly enforced	Normatively regulated; detailed GSP rules have not yet been established
Academic Publication	Strict authorship rules, prohibition of gift authorship	National GSP mandates strict publication ethics	Contribution rules and data integrity standards	Publication misconduct reporting system	No specific regulations in place beyond general prohibitions

Conflict of Interest	Mandatory disclosure; research COI (Conflict of Interest) reporting forms	Formal COI reporting; academic auditing	Research and industry partnership COI management	Highly stringent COI regulations, including off-campus activities	Present normatively but not yet structured
Lecturer–Student Relationship Ethics	Fairness, equality, boundaries, duty of care	Avoid coercion; equal treatment	Strict anti–academic harassment policies	Professional relationships with clearly defined boundaries	Exists, but lacks measurable standards
Student Safeguarding	Anti-bullying, anti-harassment	Anti-discrimination, anti-harassment	Power harassment & sexual harassment policy	Zero-tolerance harassment	Well-specified in accordance with national regulatory frameworks outside the ethical code
Data Confidentiality	GDPR-aligned	Data protection strict in GSP	Confidentiality & privacy ethics	Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA)	Exists, but is not supported by technical guidelines
Ethical Institutional Bodies	University Ethics Committee	Ombudsman + GSP Commission	Research Ethics Committee	Office of the Vice Provost (Academic Integrity)	Ethics Councils at the University and Faculty Levels
Reporting System	Integrated digital reporting system	Ombudsman reporting system	Hotline & anonymous reporting	Advanced whistleblowing system	No digital system available (manual procedures)
Enforcement of Sanctions	Detailed sanction rules; consistent enforcement	Formal and nationally standardized investigation procedures	University ethics committee	Transparent tiered sanctioning	Exists, but lacks consistent implementation
Academic Ethical Culture	Strong tradition of integrity	Strong scientific ethos	Discipline, compliance, and hierarchical culture	High accountability and discipline	Tends to be permissive and not yet integrity-based

Comparative analysis of the table above indicates that leading universities in the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, and Singapore possess lecturer codes of ethics that are significantly more comprehensive, detailed, and aligned with global standards compared to the University of Riau. Oxford and Humboldt demonstrate systematic ethical frameworks that cover research conduct, publication integrity, conflict of interest management, and independent oversight mechanisms such as ombuds offices, thereby ensuring legal certainty and a high level of professionalism (Oxford University, 2022; Humboldt University, 2021). In Japan and Singapore, major emphasis is placed on student protection, anti-harassment measures, professional governance, and the use of

technology-based systems for ethical reporting (University of Tokyo, 2021; National University of Singapore, 2020).

By contrast, the University of Riau has established a regulatory foundation through a Rector Regulation, yet the substantive provisions remain general and are not supported by detailed technical guidelines for implementation. Ethical institutional structures at the University of Riau also lack the structural robustness of international ethical bodies, resulting in investigative processes that often depend on faculty-level discretion rather than standardized procedures. Ethical reporting facilities are not yet digitalized, limiting documentation accuracy and transparency. Differences in academic culture are also evident, as foreign universities have firmly embedded ethics as a core institutional value, while the University of Riau is still in the process of developing a strong ethical culture.

This comparison underscores the need for strengthening regulatory substance, enhancing institutional capacity, digitalizing ethical governance systems, and fostering a culture of integrity to enable the University of Riau to approach international standards of academic ethical governance.

### **3.4 Strategies for optimizing the implementation of the legal policy on the lecturer code of ethics**

The first proposed strategy is to revise the code of ethics regulation so that it becomes more detailed, explicit, and adaptive to evolving academic dynamics. Rector Regulation Number 06 of 2017 requires updating by incorporating clear ethical enforcement procedures, standardized investigative protocols, and measurable classifications of violations and sanctions. According to policy design theory, effective policies must possess clear objectives, appropriate instruments, and adequate technical guidelines to ensure consistent implementation (Dunn, 2018).

The next strategy involves strengthening institutional capacity, particularly the University Ethics Council and Faculty Ethics Teams. This can be achieved through professional ethics training, case-handling workshops, and improved investigative competencies. Ethical governance theory emphasizes that strong ethical bodies are essential prerequisites for effective moral oversight within academic institutions

(Beauchamp & Childress, 2019). Without capacity building, the enforcement of the code of ethics risks becoming inconsistent and lacking in credibility.

A third strategy is the digitalization of ethical reporting and oversight systems through the development of an online whistleblowing platform that guarantees confidentiality and protection for whistleblowers. Digital technologies can streamline reporting processes, enhance documentation, and increase transparency in the handling of ethical violations. Heeks (2001) asserts that digital innovation in governance can help reduce structural barriers and improve the accountability of public institutions, including universities.

The fourth strategy is to strengthen ethical dissemination and education through regular training programs, new lecturer orientations, academic integrity workshops, and accessible ethics modules. Continuous dissemination is critical for fostering ethical awareness and internalizing moral values within academic practice. Public policy literature notes that intensive and sustained policy communication is a key determinant of implementation success (Parsons, 2005).

Finally, the cultivation of academic integrity must be prioritized by implementing a consistent reward and punishment system, reinforcing exemplary leadership, and promoting community-based ethical oversight (peer monitoring). Legal effectiveness theory underscores that legal culture plays a decisive role in determining whether a norm will be adhered to or merely remain a formal document (Soekanto, 1983). Therefore, strategies to optimize the implementation of the code of ethics must involve organizational cultural transformation, not solely regulatory revision.

#### **4 CONCLUSIONS**

This study demonstrates that the legal policy governing the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau has strong philosophical, sociological, and juridical foundations, as articulated in Rector Regulation Number 06 of 2017. However, the effectiveness of its implementation remains suboptimal due to gaps between policy design and actual practice. Lecturers' understanding of the code's substantive provisions varies considerably, influenced by limited dissemination that is neither systematic nor continuous. Ethical enforcement mechanisms have not operated consistently, with several

cases being handled informally outside the established procedures. The capacity of the University Ethics Council and Faculty Ethics Teams also requires strengthening through training, technical guidelines, and adequate institutional support. Technical constraints—such as limited reporting facilities, the absence of a digital monitoring system, and non-integrated case documentation—further weaken ethical oversight. In addition, a permissive academic culture has resulted in some lecturers not yet viewing the code of ethics as a mandatory moral and professional guideline. Based on these findings, strengthening strategies must focus on regulatory revision, institutional enhancement, technological utilization, and the cultivation of academic integrity. Through this comprehensive approach, the implementation of the lecturer code of ethics at the University of Riau is expected to become more effective, equitable, and sustainable in supporting the quality of the university's tridharma and overall governance.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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