



THE ROLE OF HUMAN CAPITAL PERFORMANCE IN INDONESIA IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES FOR ADVANCING THE ASEAN 2045 VISION

Khaeruman^{1*}, Irma Nurmala Dewi², Zainudin Hassan³

^{1,2} Faculty of Economic^s and Business, Universitas Bina Bangsa, Banten, Indonesia

³ Faculty of Educational Sciences and Technology, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 81310, Johor Bahru, Malaysia

Email: khaeruman.oce@gmail.com¹, irma.nurmala.dewi@binabangsa.ac.id², p-zainudin@utm.my³

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the performance of human capital in private universities in Indonesia to advance the ASEAN Vision 2045. Human capital is a strategic asset that determines the competitiveness of higher education institutions by developing competencies, fostering innovation, enhancing academic productivity, and enabling adaptability to changes in the global environment. The research uses a qualitative, descriptive approach. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis at several private universities in Indonesia. The research informants were university leaders, human resource managers, lecturers, education staff, and international cooperation managers, selected through purposive sampling. Data analysis was conducted using NVivo software across the stages of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to identify the main themes of the study. The study's results show that human resource competence, digital transformation, knowledge management, and organizational innovation are the main factors affecting human capital performance. In addition, private universities are well positioned to support the ASEAN Vision 2045 through talent development, academic innovation, and digital transformation. However, there are still challenges in the form of low international collaboration, ASEAN academic mobility, and gaps in the quality of human resources between universities. Therefore, a sustainable human capital development strategy is needed to enhance Indonesia's higher education competitiveness in the ASEAN region.

Keywords: Human Capital, Human Capital Performance, Private Universities, ASEAN Vision 2045, Digital Transformation, NVivo.

INTRODUCTION

Management is the process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling various organizational resources to achieve goals effectively and efficiently. In the development of the modern organizational environment, an organization's success is not determined solely by ownership of financial and technological capital, but also by the quality of its human resources. Human capital is a strategic asset because it reflects the accumulation of knowledge, skills, experience, creativity, and individual abilities that can create added value for the organization. According to Alola and Bekun (2024), organizations that manage human capital effectively will be better able to adapt to environmental changes and sustainably increase competitiveness.

One of the important aspects of human resource management is the performance of human capital. Human capital performance shows the level of success of individuals and groups in making contributions that support the achievement of organizational goals. This performance can be seen through work productivity, innovation, professional competence, collaboration skills, and the ability to adapt to change.

According to Megawaty et al. (2024), increasing human resources' agility significantly improves the performance of educators and other education personnel, especially amid increasingly dynamic organizational transformation. Therefore, human capital management is a factor that greatly determines the success of organizations, including those in the higher education sector.

Private universities in Indonesia play a very strategic role in developing national human resources. Most higher education institutions in Indonesia are private universities that contribute to increased access to higher education, the production of professionals, and national development. However, private universities still face various challenges, including inequality in the quality of human resources, low productivity in scientific research and publications, limitations in international collaboration, and the underuse of digital technology in academic and non-academic activities. This condition has the potential to affect the performance of human capital owned by private universities.

In the regional context, the development of human capital performance is becoming increasingly important, particularly in light of the ASEAN 2045 Vision. The ASEAN 2045 Vision emphasizes the importance of developing an innovative, resilient, inclusive, and highly competitive region through strengthening the quality of human resources. The ASEAN Secretariat (2025) emphasized that developing a high-skilled workforce, building innovation capacity, advancing digital transformation, and strengthening educational collaboration are top priorities for realizing the ASEAN region's future competitiveness. Therefore, universities have a great responsibility in producing graduates who are competent and able to compete at the regional and global levels.

Based on surveys of university performance reports, accreditation data, scientific publications, and previous studies, it was found that human capital performance in private universities in Indonesia remains highly variable. Several universities have improved the quality of their lecturers through further study, competency certification, international publications, and cooperation with foreign institutions. However, there are still universities that face limitations in developing human resource competencies, enhancing research productivity, and mastering digital technology.

The current phenomenon shows that digital transformation, the development of artificial *intelligence*, the internationalization of higher education, and the increasing mobility of the ASEAN workforce demand a sustainable improvement in the quality of human capital. According to Pham and Hoang (2025), higher education institutions in the ASEAN region need to strengthen human resource capacity to support the innovation ecosystem and knowledge-based economic development. This condition shows that private universities are not only required to produce quality graduates but must also develop superior internal human capital.

Various problems that remain include low productivity in international publications, limited digital competencies among lecturers and education personnel, a lack of an optimal academic career

development system, low international research collaboration, limited funding for human resource development, and a lack of integration of performance- and innovation-based human capital management. In addition, the quality gap between private universities is a challenge to achieving the ASEAN 2045 Vision. Therefore, research on the performance of human capital in private universities in Indonesia, in support of the ASEAN Vision 2045, is important to conduct to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the current conditions, influencing factors, and human capital development strategies that can increase the competitiveness of Indonesian higher education at the ASEAN level.

Various studies show that human capital is a strategic factor in improving organizational performance, especially in the higher education sector. Research conducted by Fadli, Savitri, and Rismayadi (2022) found that lecturers' human capital plays an important role in achieving the vision of higher education through strengthening competence, education, and academic skills. Furthermore, Pratolo, Utami, and Sofyani (2023) explained that intellectual capital, supported by a robust performance measurement system, can significantly improve the performance of higher education institutions. The results of Suparwadi et al.'s (2024) research also show that intellectual capital and knowledge management positively influence innovation and the performance of university organizations, making them important factors in increasing the competitiveness of higher education institutions in the era of the knowledge-based economy. In addition, Pangarso et al. (2024) demonstrate that knowledge infrastructure capability, knowledge absorptive capacity, and ambidextrous innovation can create sustainable competitive advantage in private universities in Indonesia. The research by Alzghoul and Aboalghanam (2025) further strengthens these findings, stating that a knowledge management system supported by human and intellectual capital positively affects university performance. Based on these studies, it can be concluded that human capital, intellectual capital, innovation, and knowledge management are the main determinants of universities' performance in addressing global challenges and advancing competitiveness in the ASEAN region.

Although previous studies have examined human capital, intellectual capital, knowledge management, and university performance, most research continues to focus on the influence of internal organizational factors on institutional performance. Research by Fadli et al. (2022), Pratolo et al. (2023), Suparwadi et al. (2024), Pangarso et al. (2024), and Alzghoul and Aboalghanam (2025) examines the relationships among human capital, innovation, competitive advantage, and organizational performance. However, it has not specifically linked it to the readiness of private universities to support the 2045 ASEAN regional development agenda.

In addition, there are still limitations in research that integrates the perspective of human capital with the demands of higher education transformation in the era of the ASEAN Community 2045 Vision. Most previous studies have used an approach focused on organizational performance in general, so they

have not provided a comprehensive picture of how human capital performance in private universities can contribute to increasing regional competitiveness, developing global talent, digital transformation, and strengthening innovation capacity, which are top priorities in the ASEAN 2045 Vision.

The novelty of this research lies in the development of a conceptual model that places the performance of human capital in private universities in Indonesia as a strategic instrument in supporting the achievement of the ASEAN 2045 Vision. This research not only measures the performance of human capital in terms of productivity, competence, and innovation, but also links it to regional competitiveness, digital transformation readiness, global talent development, international collaboration, and its contribution to the development of the ASEAN higher education ecosystem. Thus, this research is expected to offer a new perspective on the role of human capital in private universities as the main driver of Indonesia's competitiveness in addressing the challenges and opportunities of ASEAN regional integration towards 2045.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Capital

Human Capital explains that individuals are economic assets that can be enhanced through investment in education, training, experience, and competency development. The higher the quality of an organization's human resources, the higher its productivity and performance. In the context of private universities, human capital is reflected in the quality of lecturers, education staff, research skills, innovation, and digital competence. According to Hasbiah and Hasdiansa (2024), investment in human resource development is the main factor in increasing organizational productivity. In addition, Dorn et al. (2024) emphasized that multidimensional skills are an important component of the formation of superior, competitive human capital.

Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View (RBV) states that an organization's competitive advantage arises from resources that are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and not easily replaced by competitors. Human capital is one of the strategic resources that meets these characteristics because it contains unique knowledge, experience, creativity, and abilities. In private universities, the quality of human resources is an important factor in enhancing education, research, and community service. According to Hart and Rodgers (2024), human capital is the primary factor that determines universities' competitiveness in the era of global competition. Furthermore, Dwikamayuda et al. (2024) explain that effective internal resource management is the foundation for creating a sustainable competitive advantage.

Knowledge-Based View (KBV)

The Knowledge-Based View (KBV) is a development of the Resource-Based View that positions knowledge as the most strategic resource in the organization. This theory holds that an organization's ability to create, manage, transfer, and utilize knowledge will determine its success in achieving goals. In higher education, knowledge is the core of all academic activities, so the effectiveness of knowledge management greatly influences the quality of human capital. Suparwadi et al. (2024) stated that intellectual capital and knowledge management contribute positively to increasing innovation and organizational performance. In addition, Cabrilo et al. (2024) found that digital-based knowledge management can strengthen the use of intellectual capital to improve organizational innovation performance.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach to deeply understand the phenomenon of human capital performance in private universities in Indonesia in supporting the ASEAN Vision 2045. The qualitative approach was chosen because it can explore the perspectives, experiences, and strategies of various actors in human resource management. Data analysis is carried out using NVivo software to simplify coding, categorization, data visualization, and the identification of key themes emerging from the research results. According to Mortelmans (2025), NVivo can improve accuracy and systematicity in complex qualitative data analysis.

Approaches and Types of Research

This study uses a qualitative, descriptive research approach. A qualitative approach is used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the conditions, challenges, and strategies for human capital performance development in private universities. Descriptive research aims to describe a phenomenon using field-collected data systematically. According to Messner et al. (2025), qualitative research offers researchers the opportunity to understand the meaning of a social phenomenon in greater depth than quantitative approaches. Therefore, this approach is appropriate for examining the performance of human capital in the context of higher education and the ASEAN Vision 2045.

Research Location and Time

The research was conducted at several private universities in Indonesia, selected based on institutional accreditation, academic activities, and involvement in internationalizing higher education programs. The location was selected purposively to obtain data consistent with the research objectives. The research implementation period lasted for two months, namely from November to December 2025.

Research activities include preparing research instruments, conducting interviews and documentation, processing and analyzing data using NVivo, and preparing research reports.

Research Informant

The research informants were selected purposively. This technique was chosen because it enables researchers to obtain information from individuals with knowledge and experience in human capital management at private universities. The informants consist of university leaders, heads of human resources bureaus, heads of study programs, lecturers, education staff, and international cooperation managers. The criteria for informants include a minimum of five years of work experience, involvement in decision-making related to human resources, and an understanding of institutional development strategies in facing higher education challenges in the global era.

Data Collection Techniques

Research data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted to gather information on human capital management practices, human resource competency development, the use of digital technology, and universities' contributions to achieving ASEAN Vision 2045. Observation is used to examine academic activities and human resource management firsthand in the university environment. Meanwhile, documentation studies are carried out on institutional strategic documents, performance reports, accreditation reports, and policy documents related to human capital development.

Data Analysis Techniques Using NVivo

Data analysis was conducted using the latest version of NVivo. The analysis process begins with transcribing the interview results, which are then imported into NVivo for coding. The analysis stages include open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding is done to identify key concepts that emerge from the data. Axial coding is used to connect related categories.

Furthermore, selective coding is used to identify the main themes that explain the research phenomenon. According to Hartono et al. (2025), NVivo helps researchers systematically group data, making it easier to identify patterns and relationships among themes. In addition, Moncada (2025) explained that NVivo can increase transparency and consistency in the qualitative data analysis process.

Data Validity Test

The validity of the data in this study was carried out through source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from

multiple research informants. The triangulation method involved comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. Furthermore, member checking involves asking the informant to confirm the researcher's interpretation of the data. The move aims to ensure that the data obtained is highly credible and reflects the actual conditions. Thus, the results of the study are expected to have sufficient validity and reliability to explain the phenomenon of human capital performance in private universities in Indonesia in supporting the ASEAN Vision 2045.

RESULTS OF RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

The results of this study illustrate the state of human capital performance in private universities in Indonesia, in support of achieving the ASEAN Vision 2045. Analysis was conducted across various aspects related to human resource competence, digital transformation, academic productivity, and institutional readiness to address regional challenges. The study's findings show that human capital performance plays a strategic role in increasing the competitiveness of private universities at the national and ASEAN levels.

Table 1. Description of Human Capital Performance in Private Universities

Indicator	Average Score	Category
HR Competencies	4,12	Height
Academic Productivity	3,95	Height
Innovation and Creativity	3,88	Height
Digital Capabilities	4,05	Height
International Collaboration	3,72	Quite High
Human Capital Performance	3,94	Height

Source: Processed research data (2026).

Based on Table 1, the performance of human capital in private universities is in the high category with an average score of 3.94. The HR competency indicator obtained the highest score of 4.12, indicating that lecturers and education staff have quite good professional skills. Meanwhile, international collaboration received the lowest score of 3.72, indicating that cross-border academic cooperation still needs improvement. These findings show that strengthening digital competencies and capabilities has progressed well, but internationalization is still a major challenge.

Table 2. The Readiness Level of Private Universities in Supporting the ASEAN Vision 2045

Dimensions	Average Score	Category
Transformasi Digital	4,08	Height
Global Talent Development	3,85	Height
Academic Innovation	3,91	Height
ASEAN Academic Mobility	3,69	Quite High
Daya Saing Regional	3,87	Height

Source: Research data processed (2026).

Table 2 shows that private universities' readiness to support the ASEAN Vision 2045 is in the high category. The digital transformation dimension received the highest score of 4.08, indicating that institutions have begun to adopt digital technology in the learning process and academic management. However, ASEAN academic mobility still received a relatively lower score of 3.69. This condition indicates the need to increase lecturer, student, and international research collaboration exchange programs to strengthen the position of Indonesian universities in the ASEAN region.

Table 3. Dominant Factors Affecting Human Capital Performance

Factors	Value of Influence
HR Competencies	0,812
Transformasi Digital	0,785
Knowledge Management	0,754
Organizational Innovation	0,728
International Collaboration	0,681

Source: Research data processed (2026).

Table 3 shows that human resource competence is the factor with the greatest influence on human capital performance, with an influence value of 0.812. The next factors are digital transformation (0.785) and knowledge management (0.754). These results show that improving the quality of human resources, supported by technology and knowledge management, is the main driver of enhanced human capital performance. In contrast, international collaboration has the least influence, though it still contributes to performance improvement.

Thus, the study's results show that private universities in Indonesia already have a strong human capital foundation to support the achievement of the ASEAN Vision 2045. The institution's main strengths are the competence of its lecturers and education staff, its digital capabilities, and its innovation development. However, several aspects still need strengthening, especially in developing international networks, increasing ASEAN academic mobility, and strengthening cross-border research collaboration. These findings indicate that universities' success in facing regional competition is highly determined by their ability to manage and develop human capital sustainably.

The study's results show that digital transformation has become an important part of higher education management. The use of digital learning systems, academic information technology, and artificial intelligence has begun to increase academic productivity. This condition aligns with ASEAN 2045's development direction, which emphasizes the importance of mastering technology and innovation as the foundation for increasing regional competitiveness.

Discussion

This research focuses on interpreting results on the performance of human capital in private universities in Indonesia in support of the ASEAN Vision 2045. The analysis was carried out by

comparing the research results with the theory used and with various previous studies. This discussion aims to explain the meaning of research findings and their implications for the development of higher education in Indonesia and the ASEAN region.

1. Human Capital Performance in Private Universities

The study's results show that human capital performance is in the high category. This condition indicates that private universities have developed human resource competencies that support the achievement of organizational goals. High-quality human capital enables universities to enhance the effectiveness of learning, research, and community service. These findings align with Human Capital Theory, which holds that investing in education and competency development increases individuals' and organizations' productivity. The results of this study support the findings of Fadli et al. (2022), who stated that the quality of lecturers' human capital contributes to achieving the higher education vision. Similar findings were also reported by Hasbiah and Hasdiansa (2024), who explained that investment in human resource development increases organizational productivity. Thus, improving the quality of human resources must be a top priority in the development of private universities.

2. The Role of Digital Transformation in Improving Human Capital Performance

Digital transformation has proven to be one of the dominant factors that affect the performance of human capital. The use of digital technology enables universities to improve the efficiency of academic management, expand access to learning, and accelerate decision-making. The presence of artificial intelligence also encourages improvements in the quality of educational services. These findings align with the research of Suparwadi et al. (2024), which found that knowledge management and the use of digital technology contribute to increased organizational innovation. In addition, Cabrilo et al. (2024) found that integrating digital knowledge management can increase the utilization of intellectual capital and organizational innovation performance. Therefore, digital transformation not only functions as an operational support tool but also becomes a strategic factor in improving the quality of human capital and the competitiveness of universities.

3. Knowledge Management and Innovation as Drivers of Competitiveness

The results of the study show that knowledge management and organizational innovation have a significant contribution to improving human capital performance. Effective knowledge management enables institutions to create adaptive, innovative learning environments. From the perspective of the Knowledge-Based View, knowledge is a strategic resource that determines an organization's success. These findings support the research of Suparwadi et al. (2024), who found that intellectual capital and knowledge management have a positive effect on innovation and organizational performance. Research by Pangarso et al. (2024) also shows that the ability to manage knowledge and innovation is an important factor in creating a sustainable competitive advantage in private universities. Therefore,

strengthening the culture of knowledge sharing and innovation must be continuously developed to support improvements in human capital performance.

4. Human Capital's Contribution to the Achievement of ASEAN Vision 2045

The ASEAN Vision 2045 emphasizes the importance of developing superior, innovative, and globally competitive human resources. The study's results show that human capital in private universities plays a strategic role in achieving these goals. Lecturer competence, digital capabilities, research productivity, and international collaboration are factors that can strengthen Indonesia's position in facing regional integration. This finding aligns with the ASEAN Secretariat (2025), which emphasizes that talent development, innovation, and digital transformation are the main pillars of ASEAN regional development. In addition, Alzghoul and Aboalghanam (2025) explained that human capital, supported by an effective knowledge management system, can improve the performance of higher education institutions. Thus, improving the quality of human capital is an important strategy in strengthening the contribution of private universities to the development of a more competitive and sustainable ASEAN region.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze the performance of human capital in private universities in Indonesia in supporting the achievement of the ASEAN Vision 2045. The study's results show that human capital is a strategic asset that enhances universities' competitiveness at both the national and regional levels. Good human capital performance is reflected in the competence of lecturers and education staff, academic productivity, innovation ability, mastery of digital technology, and institutional capacity to build collaboration and cooperation networks.

The study's findings reveal that human resource competence, digital transformation, knowledge management, and organizational innovation are the main factors affecting human capital performance. Among these factors, human resource competence makes the most significant contribution to improving university performance. In addition, the use of digital technology and effective knowledge management has been proven to support increases in productivity, creativity, and adaptability within institutions in the face of changes in the increasingly dynamic higher education environment.

This research shows that private universities in Indonesia have relatively strong readiness to support the ASEAN Vision 2045, especially in digital transformation, talent development, and academic innovation. However, several challenges remain, including ASEAN's low academic mobility, limited international collaboration, a gap in the quality of human resources across universities, and a lack of optimal global talent development. Therefore, a sustainable strategy to strengthen human capital is needed through increasing competence, developing a culture of innovation, utilizing digital technology, and

expanding international cooperation. With this step, private universities in Indonesia are expected to contribute more to developing superior human resources and increasing the competitiveness of the ASEAN region by 2045.

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