

Talent Management Strategy of Employee Engagement

I Made Budiana, Yetti Supriyati, Wibowo

Abstract - The objective of this research is to analyze the talent management strategies in order to increase employee engagement for employees from the talent pool. The research method is qualitative approach which is conducted through observation, interviews, focus group discussions, and documentation. The total participants are 22 people at one of the general insurance companies in Indonesia. The research results indicated a two-stage monitoring strategy model to increase employee engagement for employees from the talent pool. Each stage includes strategies for talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention. The first stage of talent management is obtained when the employee has a 1.5-year work period, while the second stage is obtained when the employee has a 2.5-year work period. Theoretically, the results of this study can be used to reinforce the findings of talent management strategies, especially its influence towards employee engagement. Practically, the results of this study are useful for human resources practitioners to obtain guidance in increasing employee engagement for employees from the talent pool. This paper is a part of the dissertation.

Keywords: employee engagement, talent management, talent pool

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of a company will highly depend on the productivity owned by the workforces. Indonesian insurance statistics record that the average growth of general insurance workforces' productivity in the last three years, from 2013 to 2015, amounted to 9.62 percent per year (Financial Services Authority of Indonesia (OJK), 2015) [1]. Meanwhile, the average level of growth in workforces' productivity at PT. Asia Citra Insurance (PT. ACI) is 5 percent [2]. It indicates the weakness of the company's human resource capabilities in producing premium products compared to other general insurance industries.

Therefore, human resources at PT. ACI need to work harder and make it as the base thing of being an organization so that the productivity can be increased. However, the management of human resources in this phase of revolution industry 4.0 is not easy; there are many standards and competency's qualities, both *soft skills* and *hard skills*, which must be met. Companies throughout the world must be prepared to accept, create and retain talented individuals for the sake of organizational performance. This also applies to the general insurance industries, including PT. ACI, which are very vulnerable in 'seizing' talents.

Public perception, that the prospect of working in the field of insurance is still considered as a 'low' force, that

will only earn an *income* when they have the ability to sell the insurance products, is also a challenge in obtaining the potential talents in the labor market. Sugiharsono (2016) stated that the rate of talent turnover within the insurance industries reached 18 percent, the highest one, exceeding the turnover within the banking sector which occupies the second highest rate [3]. Moreover, not a few insurance talents will prefer to choose non-insurance companies to pursue a career. This is reinforced as the results of ASEAN insurance conference in 2016 that an important issue in insurance industry is human resources, in addition to the lack of financial literacy levels.

The impact of low public awareness to pursue a career in the insurance industry leads to the low talent availability, not to mention the regulators' inconsistency in making decision within human resources management in the insurance industry. The talent seizure will continue as it is exacerbated by the emergence of regulations that do not complement each other in encouraging the talent availability, especially for marketing and insurance technical force.

Specific facts found at PT. Asia Citra Insurance show that the turnover rate of marketing staff is ranked first, reaching 37 percent, compared to other forces, which on average reach 16 to 30 percent [2]. On the other hand, the interest of prospective employees to pursue a career in marketing is very low. Observations conducted at PT. ACI in 2016 by the researchers showed that only 13 percent of 15 prospective workers from talent pools who were interested in pursuing careers in marketing.

In addition to marketing forces, technical forces in insurance (underwriting and claim) are functions that are also in a vulnerable state to move to other companies. It is caused by the competencies possessed by those functions that are very specific at PT. ACI. An underwriter is the risk manager insured by the customer, while the claim officer is a very significant function to provide satisfaction to the insured and objectively maintain the insurance agreement to fit the applicable terms and conditions.

It appears that marketing and insurance technical forces (underwriting and claims), who have been prepared from the beginning through the talent pool's program, will be very vulnerable to leave the organization. The early results of the researchers' observations show that they tend to be less focus on the jobs under their responsibilities, lack of discipline in working, relatively having a poor sense of belonging to the company, and tend to be less enthusiastic in carrying out their roles.

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I Made Budiana, Student PhD State University of Jakarta-Indonesia (imadebudiana_im16S3@mahasiswa.unj.ac.id)

Yetti Supriyati, State University of Jakarta-Indonesia (yetti.supriyati@unj.ac.id)

Wibowo, State University of Jakarta-Indonesia (wibowo303@yahoo.co.id)

Companies need to concern about the level of loyalty, dedication, and seriousness in working for marketing and insurance technical forces. PT. Asia Citra Insurance need to be more focus on the human resources strategy of internal reinforcement in improving organizational performances, especially for marketers and engineering officers who are the core functions in the field of general insurance. It is an important thing to do in order to make the employees feel the *engagement* with the company. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a research related to employee engagement towards the employees from the talent pool, which will be divided into two subfocus studies, that is: (a) the overview of *employee engagement* on employees from the talent pool, and (b) strategies to maintain or increase the employee engagement on employees from the talent pool.

The study of the term engagement was first stated by William Kahn [4]. Kahn linked this term with employees working in an organization. Afterwards, in his research, Kahn mentioned two terms, those are personal engagement and personal disengagement. Kahn called personal engagement as a worker who uses one's physically, cognitively, and emotionally in showing one's performance. As the opposite, personal disengagement is the worker's withdrawal from the organization by not being involved physically, cognitively and emotionally in showing one's performance [4]. Thus, there will exist engaged employees when they are able to express themselves in doing their jobs.

Furthermore, according to Kahn, employee engagement is a condition that is related to the role of the employee's job where the employees express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally while running roles in realizing their performances [4]. Kahn described employee engagement as a step of employee involvement in their job, where they will be fully involved physically, cognitively, and emotionally in running their work roles.

Macey and Schneider [5] stated that the *engagement* is manifested as the energy, involvement and effort focused on achieving organizational goals. Schaufeli, Salanova, Bakker, and Alez-rom (2002) stated, although having a slightly different perspective, there are core similarities between Kahn and Schaufeli regarding conceptualization and steps of engagement [6]. Schaufeli et al., (2002) record that engagement refers to the aspects of physical-energetic (spirit), emotional (dedication), and cognitive (absorption) [6].

Federman (2009) stated that employee engagement is the level to which individuals commit to the organization and its influence to organizational performance throughout the role they carry out [7]. Meanwhile, Imperatori (2017) sees *engagement* as a very interesting concept, a positive one, not a negative relation among *passion, commitment, involvement, energy, dedication* and *pleasantness* [8].

At the time employees being engaged, according to Maslach et al. [8], they will do their job in a state of mind set with *energy, involvement, efficacy, attention* and *absorption*. However, this concept is often associated with the other work attitudes and behaviors such as job satisfaction, commitment, voluntary roles carried out, and involvement.

Garry Tomlinson [9] stated that *employee engagement* is a condition of "emotional connection" with employees so

that they are passionate and "alive." Further stated, *employee engagement* consists of three parts, that are: faith (mental), feeling of brand arousing, (emotion) and most importantly, is the behavior shown.

Schaufeli et al., [6] stated that the engagement is a positive feeling in the mindset of people in organizations related to the job carried out which is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption. Vigor is a characteristic of high energy and mental resilience when working. Dedication places more emphasis on the power involved in one job and a sense of experience that is very important, enthusiastic, inspiring, prideful and challenging. Absorption is a characteristic of being highly focused and happy.

Whereas, Albrecht, Simon L; Bakker, Arnold B; Gruman and Macey [10] stated that engagement is a positive condition in relation to psychological (which is reflected in terms that are enthusiastic, energetic, passionate, and vigorous) and that engagement is also a motivation reflected in a genuine willingness to focus on efforts to achieve the goals of the organization. Thus, the concept of engagement contains two important things i.e. a positive and energetic thing in working related to motivation, and a genuine willingness to contribute in carrying out its role for the success of the organization. In general, Albrecht, et. al [10] defined an employee engagement as a positive work-related psychological state characterized by a genuine willingness to contribute to organizational success.

From the various definitions mentioned, what is meant by employee engagement in this study is a positive condition, which includes cognitive, emotional and physical aspects regarding the engagement of employees in carrying out roles in the company which are characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach, as the researchers saw a social phenomenon of employee engagement that occurs to employees from talent pool that is not absolute, but is complex, occurs naturally and meaningfully, so it is impossible for obtaining data in that kind of social situations by quantitative research methods. This is reinforced by JW Creswell [11] that the qualitative approach adheres to the philosophy of constructivism, where researchers try to give meaning or interpret the meanings of others through understanding, so that these meanings can be constructed.

Through this approach, the researcher will describe and provide interpretations (descriptive interpretative) of the employee engagement phenomenon that occurs in employees from the talent pool. Therefore, the process of describing and providing interpretations will be carried out by various methods. Observation, in-depth interview, documentation and group discussion are methods chosen by the researchers to describe employee engagement, as it is in line with the focus of this study.

Based on the qualitative research design by JW Creswell [11] and case study by Yin [12], the researchers conducted this study through: (1) research preparation; (2) research

focus (research scope) determination; (3) theoretical studies; (4) data collection; (5) data analysis; (6) findings and discussions; and (7) presentation of the research reports.

Research preparation is done through observations of social symptoms occurred at PT. Asia Citra Insurance, location determination and verification related to the conducted research, connections of the phenomena obtained with scientific studies, and discussions with professional colleagues, lecturers, and even human resources practitioners to deepen the exploration of the happening phenomena.

Research focus determination is carried out through deepening scientific studies and empirical studies in the field. Scientific studies are carried out through exploring articles in scientific journals, books relating to human resources and industrial and organizational psychology, insurance statistics, and supporting documents that are within the research focus. At this stage, discussions were also held with colleagues in the same discipline, professionals in human resources in business organizations, including several directors from general insurance companies.

Theoretical study is conducted through literacy studies by deepening scientific studies that have been carried out at the research preparation stage. The researchers focus on scientific studies through articles in international scientific journals. Though qualitative research does not use theoretical background in formulating hypotheses, as the theory used is temporary and will develop in accordance with the facts in the field, but by studying various perspective theories can strengthen researchers as "human instruments". Through the foregoing, researchers are able to carry out general exploration of the object of the study, establish focus, establish data sources, collect and analyze data qualitatively from the literacy studies that the researchers do. In addition, the study of literacy is very useful for the researchers to compile interview guidelines and observations in this study.

Data collection is carried out since the early survey of the study. At that time, the researchers had obtained the dynamics data of the employees of the company where the research was conducted, the distribution of the early questionnaires, and the collection of names of research sources even though they were still incomplete. Data collection techniques were carried out by triangulation, i.e. through observation, in-depth interviews with 14 resource persons, group discussions involving 8 resource persons, and documentation studies or a combination of these techniques. Meanwhile, the determination of the resource person is done purposively, that is, the data is selected from the speakers who are considered to be most aware of the phenomenon of employee engagement from employees who come from the talent pool.

Data analysis. The data analysis stage is mostly done at the time the researchers conduct research data collection. Researchers process data reduction, coding, display and verification. At this stage, the focus of the research activities is to conduct an analysis based on the qualitative data found. With this activity, researchers acknowledge the types of data that can explore research findings.

Research findings. After analyzing the qualitative data, so that the complete data is obtained, then the researchers present all data obtained from the study. The description of the data presentation is based on the focus of the research, which the researcher then discusses the data obtained. Thus, the results of the study become scientific, in accordance with the research objectives and become useful.

Research reports. The research reports are made rationally, systematically so that readers can understand all research activities that have been carried out, including the results of the research. At the end of the research report, the researchers give a conclusion based on the formulation of the problem that has been made.

III. RESEARCH RESULTS

Based on various methods of data collection conducted, the researchers found that the level of employee engagement on employees from the talent pool tend to decrease or stay in the low level. Apparently, it is mainly due to the lack of material rewards necessities fulfilment. This is a vulnerable state or condition after the official bond ends, which is after working for three years, an employee can be being appointed as a permanent employee, as it is stated by HR02 and HR03:

"...Millennials at present time are not engaged enough, since money is their motivation to work, and they feel like they won't have a chance to build up their career..." (TM.1.1.1-HR02)

"...recently, Sir, it is indeed decreased. After a 3-year of official bond, even before it ends, they have started to look for another job outside. The main factor is, their low level of engagement... the matter of allowance it is..." (TM.1.1.1-HR03)

Therefore, before accepting the talent pool participants, it is necessary to prepare the tools for talent management, such as policies that will be implemented, the team that will manage, selection criteria, candidate sources, and remuneration management. This has to be done so when they become employees, they will enjoy working in the company. Whereas, in the terms of conducting participant recruitment, most of the speakers revealed that the strategy to recruit talent pool participants is good enough for now, but it needs to maximize the sources of candidates from the regional or branch of PT. ACI, schools, and candidates who are passionate about insurance. Likewise, at the time of selection, to give more emphasis on passion.

"...as in the selection phase, it is all still okay, but maybe when we meet them, we have to ensure them whether they are truly passionate in the field of insurance. They have to show some interest, or even the slightest willing to be curious about insurance. At least, their motivation is not only about getting a free scholarship..." (TM.2.1.2-HR01)



The strategy of development that influences the engagement of employees from talent pool is carried out starting from the development at the time they are still being the participants of the program, until they are being appointed as the employees. The strategies of development that can be implemented are: learning and training as the participants of talent pool program, training as an employee, personal or self-development, and performance assessment.

The results of the interviews indicate that the strategy of learning and training towards talent pool participants, that have been conducted so far, had been good enough but still needed to be improved so that the learning and training system really focused on educating. Meanwhile, after they are becoming employees, training of soft skills is necessary.

"...in my opinion, what HRD are doing now has been good enough... mostly the job given are the simple one, like copying, filing, being told to do this and that. I believe that deep inside they are hoping to be able to learn some skills, though actually I've told them that they still can learn from whatever they're doing, they just have to take the positive side of it. (TM.3.1.1-NM07)

At the time of doing the development, especially self-development, the strategy that can be done is monitoring through a mentoring system, so there are adjustments to compensation. Moreover, the strategy of development through mentoring also appeared during group discussion.

"..... in that case, they can still be saved, if only there is mentoring system, which means there is availability to share their minds so that we can advise and give some guidance about what to do and not to do... I don't know... I just imagine there might be something we can still do after the placement. Or, maybe it is okay to create such a special talent for them..." (TM.3.3.1-NM06)

"...seeing from the development side, it might not be in a maximum state yet. Now we're trying to approach those programs in talent pools, but still it has to give us positive results. For instance, what they will get if they succeed to pass the programs, or, if there is no chance available, what the compensation will be given to them..." (TM.3.3.1,2-HR04).

From interviews and group discussions with sources, the performance appraisal strategy that needs to be done so that employees from the talent pool can improve their performance, is a fairer performance assessment with clear criteria and targets to be achieved (Key Performance Indicator or KPI). Also, the assessment's results need to be correlated significantly with the compensation achieved by the employees.

"...in my opinion, the assessment for work performance is very good, but yet, back again at the time when adjustments are not being correlated. It's just reviewing, limited in a room, and then what? There is no reward at all... If, there is KPI with the clarity of

criteria to achieve, then there will be a fix amount of reward we can get, so it will leads to a consistency in determining the standards..." (TM.3.4.1,2-NM03).

The strategy of retention, carried out in order to increase the employee engagement, can be done through two programs, i.e. short-term and long-term programs. Short-term programs that can be done to increase the employee engagement is by giving rewards, career, and such. Whereas, the long-term programs are more likely as support, attention, team and solidness; including sports, outing, dancing, and sharing and caring programs.

In addition to the mentioned findings, the interviewees also give some recommendations to increase the engagement of the employees from the talent pools. Steps to be carried out are: mentoring through implementing the mentor system, implementing remuneration policies and providing the appropriate material rewards, and also implementing the career path policies.

"... monitoring the career development. Yes, okay. Even they are fully under the responsibility of users, but still they have to be monitored. Even when they're stuck, we'll show them the other way. There is even a boss who is insecure about being surpassed by his own men..." (TM.4.2.1-NM01)

"...probably, challenges followed by benefits. Means, there is a challenge exists, to cure the engagement... hmm, both is okay I think. Rewards and challenges. Commonly, it is reward and the clarity of career path. HR need support [chuckling]..." (TM.4.2.2,3-HR02)

IV. DISCUSSIONS

A. The Overview of Employee Engagement

Regarding to the various methods of data collection conducted, the researchers found that the engagement of the employees from talent pools tend to decrease or stay in a low level, which is mainly due to the lack of material rewards fulfilment. This condition becomes vulnerable at the times when the official bond ends. Anggraini, Astuti, and Prasetya [13] stated that a reward has a positive and significant influence towards the employee engagement. Meanwhile, Bhatnagar [14] stated that in the entry stages of career, the employees tend to have a low level of engagement and so do sixteen months of work. In the middle stages, the level of employee engagement will be higher, and this indicates the employees' high loyalty but only in a limited period of time.

This findings prove that employees from talent pools have relatively low level of engagement, especially in recent times as it is expressed during the group discussion. The spirit to work, that employees from talent pools have, shows the tendency of being a necessity to be increased. Dedication tends to be influenced by some external factors like the provision of material rewards (salary or bonus), lack of self-drive and passion to improve their roles within the organization.



It seems that this tendency of relatively low engagement level occurs right after their official bond ends, or, after being appointed as permanent employees. The possibility of this happening is because they feel like they already have sufficient competence in carrying out their roles. They want to try new challenges in other companies. They compare the rewards that are earned to the contributions they give to the organization, or compare what they have with other organizations offer.

The expectations that employees have at this time, are not in accordance with the reality received. Employees will feel that there is a discrepancy between what is expected and what they should get.

According to Robbins [15], if there is a discrepancy between expectations and reality, then employees will feel dissatisfied. This dissatisfaction is an emotional aspect which is one of the causes, that employees are not engaged in the organization.

B. The Strategy of Talent Management

Considering the overview of employee engagement from the talent pool which tends to be low as described before, it is necessary to do a talent management strategy to improve the employee engagement. This strategy starts from identifying talent, determining talent needs in the future, talent acquisition, talent development, and retaining talent in the organization.

Talent Identification. The moment before the official bond ends, talent identification needs to be done so that talents who truly have the potential and competency that are appropriate to the needs of the organization are obtained. Employees selected at this stage should be the star employees of the talent pool. They have high potential to occupy certain positions in the future and also have superior performance in their work units. In this identification process, the criteria of engagement became the main factor to be considered.

Future Talent Needs. The main thing that has not been considered is the need for talent in the future. The participants who have graduated from the talent pool program do not have clear and determined direction and goals from the start. The types of jobs and critical positions that they should have acquired or become their career goals have not yet been determined, even the company does not yet have this device. Therefore, it is necessary to determine the talent needs in the future both in quality and quantity. In addition, career paths also need to be prepared by PT. ACI, including other provisions that are integrated with aspects of their attachment as employees. When the vision, the role of the strategy and the individual in the organization are clearly visible, according to Upadhyay and Palo [16], it will bring employees' meaning to their work, and will also increase employee engagement from those who come from the talent pools.

Talent Acquisition. The talent acquisition stage is the process of procuring talent, both talent at the beginning of the talent pool program and after they are appointed as permanent employees. Passion mismatch of employees with their roles is assumed to be the cause of the lack of enthusiasm for employees towards the company. Therefore, the criteria for engagement are the main requirements that

need to be fulfilled when conducting the early selection of talent participants. It is expected that talent candidates who have passion will be easier to engage in organizations. According to Imperatori [8], the 'harmonious' passion is a very important aspect in encouraging work engagement from employees in the organization.

Meanwhile, the talent acquisition process after they are appointed as permanent employees tends to receive less attention. This lack of attention is allegedly caused by the talent who has been appointed as permanent employee has become the responsibility of the superior; and each superior does not have a standard in the development process or even further development is not carried out. In addition, the absence of tools in the talent acquisition process after they were appointed as employees remains the cause of the lack of talent acquisition processes.

Talent Development. The strategy of development that influences the engagement of employees from talent pool is carried out starting from the development when they are still participants in the talent pool program, and after being appointed as permanent employees. The strategy of development at the time of being the talent pool participants include: learning and training, personal or self-development, and performance appraisal. Whereas, after they are appointed as employees, the strategies of development that are generally carried out include: training and annual performance appraisal.

The learning and training strategy for talent pool participants requires criteria or standards of competence that should be mastered in the education and training process. Through this standard, the learning process will be more optimal, including determining success in learning and training programs. The results of the study by Tomlinson [9] can be used as the reference that the strategy to improve the employee engagement at PT. KIA Motor Seoul Korea can be done through the training programs.

Afterwards, after the talent participants are appointed as permanent employees, it is necessary to conduct soft skills training. Perhaps, this is due to the demands of more complex work in each work unit. Especially for those who are placed in reinsurance, where English proficiency is a very important requirement. In addition, trainings aimed at internalizing company values are also highly needed, considering the demands of roles and influences from various parties can make their engagement decrease. This is proved by the release of five employees from the talent pool, due to the influence of outside parties.

In the personal or self-development of employees, the strategy that can be done is monitoring through a mentoring system. The results of the development program are also to be correlated with compensation which is a continuous talent management process; not considered completed after they were appointed as permanent employees. When performance is the result of employee development programs in accordance with rewards and incentives, and is administered fairly, employees will perceive organizational justice. This will lead to an increase in employee

engagement and increase contributions to the process of implementing corporate strategy [16].

In addition, through this continuous development process, it is expected that they will not be 'careless' and be tempted by competitors; even the planting of organizational values and affirmation of engagement as employees can be carried out in this ongoing development process. The problems that they get will be handled more quickly and given a solution, as well as their hopes will be more detected. This is supported by the opinion of Men and Baesecke [17] who stated that direct interaction has a positive effect on *employee engagement*.

Performance assessment also must be carried out fairly with clear criteria and targets set to be achieved. Gupta and Kumar [18] stated that there is a positive and significant relationship between distributive and informational justice on the assessment of employee performance on employee engagement as opposed to burnout. Those with superior performance and high potential will get different rewards from them with mediocre potential and performance. Therefore, compensation obtained should be associated with the results of employee performance appraisals that are objective, transparent and in accordance with organizational values.

Talent Retention. The strategy of employee retention, employees originating from the talent pool, still needs to be improved due to not running optimally. Even rewards, which are often regarded as basic needs which should be a top priority, actually seem to be a concern for employees to be repaired immediately. Along with this, long-term internal programs are absolutely necessary.

The reward system that is considered unfair, which is not associated with the work performance significantly, will be a limiting factor for increasing employee engagement. But on the one hand, the performance assessment system also needs to be addressed as in the discussion of employee development aspects, so that it is integrated with the retention function.

In addition, humanist and long-term factors such as attention, support from the company, and the existence of programs to improve employee engagement (that are not directly related to work results) are the main essence in managing employee engagement. Therefore, what is expected is not only to retain employees who tend to be passive, but also to prioritize active and sustainable engagement programs. This strategy is an effort to foster psychological well-being that will lead to the sustainable development of employee engagement. Individuals with a higher level of psychological well-being behave differently in ways that would be expected to lead to a higher level of engagement. This is a broader conception of engagement (referred to as "full engagement"), which includes employees of well-being [19].

V. CONCLUSIONS

Employees from the talent pools tend to have low engagement level, especially at the time before the official bond ends. Employees show that they lack of spirit to work optimal due to their inability to use their abilities to the fullest, even though routine work can be completed completely. The dedication aspect that is shown through

emotion is expressed, closely with the fulfilment of personal interests. This means that, the employees will be dedicated, if their personal interests are met. Psychologically, employees also have not shown 'passion and focus' for the role they are carrying out. They still try to enjoy the role that is being run, even though internal encouragement (intrinsic motivation) and passion are very minimal.

The strategy of *talent management* in increasing employee engagement of those from the talent pool is carried out through a two-stage monitoring engagement strategy model, in which each stage includes strategies for talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention. The first stage of Talent Management is done when the employee has a 1.5 year service period, while the second stage is carried out when the employee has a 2.5 year work period.

Talent acquisition is done by identifying the potential and performance of employees from the talent pool, determining future talent needs, and determining employees who are classified as star employees. Consideration of talent acquisition is the passion that employees have and the willingness to accept the challenge of the job. Talent development stands more emphasis on supports and adjustments between passion and work that will be the responsibility of the employee. At the talent retention stage, companies need to make reward adjustments received by employees in a fair and equitable manner. Meanwhile, growing the psychological well-being of employees is a continuous development program of employee engagement.

A new perspective is generated through this research to accomplish the previous conducted studies. The findings of this research can be used as a reinforcement of the strategy of talent management found, especially its influence towards the employee engagement. However, the results of subsequent studies will be more complete if the researchers are able to conduct the research on an industry; not only cases that occur in a company. The research methods used can also be combined between qualitative and quantitative approaches, so that the deficiencies of each method will be complemented by the other methods.

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