Strategy for Improving the Quality of Universities

by Asrop Safi'i

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ABSTRACT: Universities is an educational unit that organizes higher education, whose institutions can be in the form of academies, polytechnics, high schools, institutes or universities. While higher education is a level after secondary education which includes diploma, bachelor, master, specialist and doctoral education programs organized by higher education based on Indonesian culture. Is an educational unit that organizes higher education, whose institutions can be in the form of academies, polytechnics, high schools, institutes or universities. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, and Law No. 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education and Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture. Various strategies is need an effort to improve higher education. There are three dimensions of universities; Education-Research-Community Service.

Keyword: *Strategy, Improving, Quality of Universities*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia as an ASEAN country has entered the free market and cooperation between ASEAN countries has entered a very meaningful stage, where since December 15, 2008, ASEAN became a regional organization and was formed as a *legal personality* with the motto *one vision, one identity, one caring and sharing* by initiating the *ASEAN Economic Community* (AEC). The main concept of the ASEAN Economic Community is to create ASEAN as a single market and unified production base where there is *free flow* of goods, services, factors of production, investment and capital as well as the elimination of tariffs for trade between ASEAN countries which is then expected to reduce poverty and economic inequality between countries. member countries through a number of mutually beneficial cooperation. The ASEAN Economic Community that has been held certainly has an impact on the education sector in Indonesia. With the AEC, there is an opportunity for foreign universities to enter and establish universities in the territory of Indonesia. This is legally possible in accordance with Article 90 of Law no. 12 of 2012 concerning higher education which states that universities of other countries can provide

higher education in the territory of Indonesia in collaboration with universities in Indonesia and with the permission of the government. Cooperation can be carried out between universities in ASEAN such as only those that have been formed in the Asean University Network AUN and several other universities have collaborated with universities in the ASEAN region and with other countries in Europe.

The challenges and competition of universities are so tight that Indonesian universities must prepare themselves and improve themselves. The portrait of the quality of higher education in Indonesia still does not show uniform quality. The quality of Indonesian universities is reflected in their graduates who are not ready to use, low collaboration skills, low innovation capabilities, low creativity and lead to low graduate competitiveness.[1] Common problems in education problems in Indonesia that always arise are: 1) the low level of equity in obtaining education, 2) the weak management of education and 3) the low quality and relevance of education.[2]

The condition of higher education in Indonesia must be improved immediately, this is based on the findings of Nugroho 2006, showing that the competitiveness of universities in Indonesia is very low. Very few universities are able to enter the top 20 category in the Asian region. Of the 82 state universities with 3051 study programs and 2561 private universities with 10287 study programs, very few quality study programs. There are still many universities in Indonesia that target the number of students, opening new study programs, opening remote classes, employee classes, *week-end classes,* or executive classes. The college offers diplomas by taking these classes without emphasizing quality. Other causes of the low quality are the operational management of Indonesian universities is still weak, financial health, and the health of the academic climate on campus.[3]

Improving the quality of higher education has become a necessity and is a need for a nation that wants to progress because of a belief that quality education can support development in all fields. This quality improvement must be the concern of all parties so as not to experience being left behind in the field of science and technology which is absolutely necessary for the acceleration of development.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Dimensions of the Meaning of Higher Education

The terms Higher Education and Higher Education are often twisted around because they are considered to have the same meaning. However, the two terms have different emphases. In article 19 paragraph (1) Law no. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Higher Education System, it is stated that higher education is a level of

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[1] Dedi Mulyasana, *Quality and Competitive Education* (Bandung: PT. Rosdakarya, 2012).
[2] Ibid.
[3] Nugroho, "Considering the Competitiveness of Higher Education," 2006.

education after secondary education which includes diploma, bachelor, master, specialist and doctoral education programs organized by universities. Higher education is an educational unit that organizes higher education, whose institutions can be in the form of academies, polytechnics, high schools, institutes or universities.[4]

While in Law no. 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education, it is stated that higher education is a level after secondary education which includes diploma, bachelor, master, specialist and doctoral education programs organized by higher education based on Indonesian culture. Higher education is a forum for the campus community and one of the centers of knowledge. All disciplines are studied, studied, explored and developed in order to have a positive impact on the development of life and bind the standard of human life. In this issue, Seriana Wiyatno said, there are at least five dimensions of the meaning of higher education that must always be considered in the education process in higher education, including:

The Ethical Dimension
Higher education is a center for creativity and a center for the dissemination of knowledge in order to improve and develop the welfare of mankind. All learning activities in higher education are directed to the search for truth, so that they can move people to act properly and serve humanity well.

Dimensions of Science
Higher education as a center for the development of science that has the freedom to examine, criticize and develop a particular discipline. Through a process of learning, research and community service, campus people are required to continue to improve their scientific competencies in order to be able to contribute to the development of the disciplines they practice.

Dimensions of Education
Students as students in higher education are prepared to become educated people who continuously learn regardless of time. For the campus community, they do not know limited knowledge, for them knowledge will continue to develop along with the development of human life.

Social Dimension

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[4] Directorate General of Higher Education Ministry of National Education, *Guidelines for the Implementation of the Higher Education Quality Assurance System (SPM-PT) for Academic Sector*, 2006.

Higher education provides educational services for the community. The form of this service is science which is the main product of higher education which is expected to improve people's lives.[5]

The five dimensions of higher education are important things to be considered by universities. If one of these dimensions is forgotten, the learning process will not run optimally which leads to a decrease in the quality of education. Therefore, the five dimensions must be able to be translated well in education governance in higher education.

A very difficult task for universities as implementers of higher education must provide Human Resources (HR) who are ready to become *trouble shooters* (problem solvers) and *agents of change* in people's lives, as well as being able to answer all forms of challenges that are in line with the interests of society in general. . As for the concept and implementation and the role of universities, they must continue to depart from the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, which includes three important pillars, namely education, research and community service.[6]

Government Strategy in Improving the Quality of Higher Education

Before discussing the quality improvement strategy, it is very necessary to talk about quality. Talking about quality is not a simple thing because quality is something abstract and cannot be sensed. Edward Sallis explained that quality is a "standard" to show the superior quality of something.[7]

Higher education is considered qualified if it has been able to meet the needs of the community, its graduates can make a positive contribution to the development of life, (*social needs*), are able to give birth to the people needed by the world of work; moreover, it can give birth to a person who is productive in opening up job opportunities, and is able to give birth to people who are professional in improving and developing knowledge.[8]

Universities act as development agents (*agents of development*) whose task is to prepare quality and adequate human resources to improve the welfare of the community. Therefore, there are universities that are able to produce quality graduates according to the conditions and circumstances they face. So that he has the skills and professionalism in accordance with the needs of the times.

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[5] Muahaimin, *Implementation of the Quality Assurance System of UIN Malang* (Malang: UIN Malang , 2007).

[6] Muhammad Thoyib, "Internationalization of Education and 'Modernization' Strategy for PTAI's Development in Indonesia," *Academic Journal, Vol.16.No.1.2011* (2011).

[7] Edward Sallis, *Total Quality Management in Education: Education Quality Management* (Jogjakarta: Ircisod, 2012).

[8] Muahaimin, *Implementation of the Quality Assurance System of UIN Malang*.

Various efforts to improve the quality of higher education have been carried out by the government. This is based on a belief that the existence of quality higher education institutions will be able to improve the quality of people's lives, so that in the future they will become a nation of dignity and character. Among them with the issuance of Law no. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System which regulates the minimum standards of the national education process which include graduate standards, competency standards, content standards, process standards, assessment standards, education and education personnel standards, facilities and infrastructure standards, management standards and financing standards. Law No. 20 of 2003.

The government has also implemented Law no. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers which confirms that lecturers who have the right to teach at tertiary institutions have at least passed the master's program (Law no. 14 of 2005). The existence of this regulation is intended to improve the competence of education personnel in higher education so that they are able to provide optimal learning.

The implementation of education in higher education must always be improved and to maintain the progressiveness of these universities the government has established the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT) which aims to oversee and supervise the management of higher education based on Law no. 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education and Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 59 of 2012 concerning the National Accreditation Board. One of the tasks of the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT) is to conduct accreditation for each study program carried out by universities. This accreditation process is a form of legality for a university in providing education. In other words, unaccredited study programs are not allowed to graduate students and issue diplomas. This is based on Law no. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system and Government Regulation no. 19 of 2005 article 86 paragraph 1 and article 89 point 5.[9]

Improving the quality of higher education is also described in the Strategic Plan of the Directorate General of Science and Technology and Higher Education for the period 2015 – 2019, in improving the quality of higher education, several things can be done, including: in the top 500 in the world according to *QS World* and increasing the number of university accreditations with an A (very good) accreditation score. Apart from that, other policy instruments currently being implemented by the Directorate General of Science and Technology and Higher Education Institutions in the context of improving the quality of higher education are, among others, the regulation of the process of establishing higher education institutions, accelerating

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[9] *Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System,* (Jakarta: Sinar Graphic, 2011).

private higher education empowerment programs, providing incentives to universities to enter *world class universities* , formulate guidelines and rules to force university administrators to raise minimum academic quality standards and so on. [10]

The Ministry of Education and Culture in 2011 has made an instrument for evaluating the internal quality of higher education called the Higher Education Internal Quality Evaluation (EMI-PT). EMI-PT is a higher education quality assurance tool and is an instrument used to measure the operational performance of higher education institutions in producing graduates, and to guarantee the quality of graduates, research results, community service and collaboration. [11]

The substance of EMI-PT, its components, indicators, objectives, methods for its preparation and methods of implementation are described in (Ministry of Education and Culture). And the implementation of EMI-PT is carried out every year in the context of continuous quality improvement.

Quality Improvement Strategies Offered by Experts

According to Muhaimin, the quality of higher education can be seen in two perspectives, namely: 1, *Quality in Fact* , namely the actual quality as a result of the learning process in accordance with the classification of educational goals and basic competencies possessed by graduates as stated in the profile institution graduates. 2. *Quality in Perception*, namely the quality of graduates as measured by customer satisfaction and increasing external customer interest in graduates. [12]

In improving the quality of higher education, experts offer strategies that can improve the quality of higher education. Strategies include:

Fandy Tjiptono and Anastasia:

Efforts to improve the quality of higher education can be achieved by using principles that focus on improving the quality of students, through improving the quality of the learning process involving all components based on the wishes, needs and expectations of good education users. internal and external. This improvement concept requires Plan, Do, Check, Action (PDCA) which is continuously monitored so that a continuous quality improvement cycle occurs.[13]

Edward Deming

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[10] Muhammad Thoyib, "Internationalization of Education and 'Modernization' Strategy for PTAI's Development in Indonesia."

[11] Fandi Tjiptono, *Total Quality Management* (Yogyakarta: CV. Andi, 2003).

[12] Muahaimin, *Implementation of the Quality Assurance System of UIN Malang.*

[13] Fandi Tjiptono, *Total Quality Management*.

As quoted by *Pearce* as described by Dedi Mulyasana explained that there are several important steps that need to be considered in quality improvement, including:

a. Creating sustainable goals
b. Implementing a new philosophy
c. Removing dependence on mass inspections to create high quality
d. Improving production and service systems
e. Developing training in the workplace and institutionalize leadership
f. Eliminate fear and promote unity
g. Improve skills and involve multiple parties in bringing about transformation. [14]

Muhammad Thoyib.

There are several things that can be done in improving the quality of higher education, *first,* improving the quality management of the higher education system must be carried out simultaneously and continuously. *Second*, the application of quality management must be supported by *good academic atmosphere* so that academic quality improvement can run more quickly and effectively. *Third*, establish cooperation in developing and improving the creativity of students, so that university graduates can be easily absorbed by the world of work.[15]

Abd. Warist

In developing and improving the quality of higher education, there are at least several things that need to be done, including: a) increasing human resources for educators (lecturers), b) completing learning process facilities, c) improving academic administrative services, d) establishing academic support institutions, e) establish cooperation, f) accreditation of study programs and agencies.[16]

Jalal and Supardi

Strategies to improve the quality of education at harasu tertiary institutions must be in accordance with the relevance of education which includes four aspects, namely: a) curriculum, b) providers, c) education experts and infrastructure, d) leadership of the education unit.

Strategic Steps to Improve the Quality of Higher Education
Higher education can be carried out by universities by referring to the components in EMI-PT which include:

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[14] Dedi Mulyasana, *Quality and Competitive Education*.

[15] Warits Abd, "Proceedings of the National Seminar & Scientific Meeting of the IAI Darussalam Researcher Network Blokagung Banyuwangi," 2017.

[16] Ibid.

1. Process Standards: it is possible to develop the quality of learning by establishing a unit of assessment and development of systems and quality of learning including monetoring, evaluation and its use which encourages students to think critically, explore, express, experiment using various sources, the results of which are utilized by institutions.

   Integrating research activities and community service into the learning process. Determine the concept of education, teaching and learning strategies as well as student character development. The application *of student-centered learning* increasing the integration of program implementation and academic activities in the implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education. Increasing experts//experts as speakers in seminars/trainings, guest speakers from outside the university itself. Properly regulate academic freedom, freedom of academic pulpit and scientific autonomy, as well as the consistency of its implementation, development of a conducive academic atmosphere for students, arts and culture center for students.

2. Standards for infrastructure facilities: Increasing the availability of educational infrastructure by means of sufficient library collections, accessibility including availability and ease of access *e-liberaries* for each library material, utilization of practicum places, workshops/studios, simulation rooms, hospitals, green hauses, agricultural land, space multipurpose room, student association room, clinic, worship room, etc. Increase the availability of information systems and ICT facilities and blue prints.

3. Assessment standards: improve and improve the learning outcomes evaluation system with the specified graduate competence domain, the right measurement model. The suitability of the question indicators with the learning outcomes specified in the learning and syllabus. Conduct a review of exam questions by the exam commission. Improve the mechanics and guidelines of the TA exam (final assignment/ thesis/ thesis/ dissertation) and the mechanism/guideline for improving grades.

4. Research standards: motivate lecturers to conduct quality research, which is beneficial to society, increase research costs, and appreciate lecturers, conduct workshops, sell research, collaborate with producers to conduct research that is beneficial to society.

5. Community service standards: increasing the cost of community service, designing community services that are beneficial to the community.

6. Cooperation standards: increase cooperation to advance higher education, its outputs and outcomes.

Improving the quality of higher education is a necessity that must be pursued by each component of higher education. Improvements must be carried out comprehensively on each university quality standard.

CONCLUSION

The following is conclusion from the exposure that has been done:

1. Universities is an educational unit that organizes higher education, whose institutions can be in the form of academies, polytechnics, high schools, institutes or universities. While higher education is a level after secondary education which includes diploma, bachelor, master, specialist and doctoral education programs organized by higher education based on Indonesian culture.

2. In improving the quality of higher education, the government has issued Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning National Education System, Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, and Law No. 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education and Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 59 of 2012 concerning the National Accreditation Board.

3. Experts offer various strategies for improving the quality of higher education as stated by Fandy Tjiptono and Anastasia, Edward Daming, Muhammad Thoyib, Abd. Warits and Jalal and Supardi, all of whom presented various strategies in an effort to improve higher education. There are three dimensions of universities; Education-Research-Community Service. The following below is quality Standards Education

    1. Competencies Graduates Competency
    2. Standards
    3. Process
    4. Educators and education personnel
    5. Facilities and infrastructure
    6. Management of
    7. Financing
    8. Assessment of Internal Quality Audits (Auditors—respective institutions)
    9. External Quality Audits (Assessors – from outside BANPT)
    10. LAMEMBA

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