INTERNATIONALIZATION OF INDONESIA HIGHER EDUCATION: DOES GOVERNMENT SUPPORT?

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ABSTRACT

Higher education becomes an important factor to produce individuals with the skills and knowledge that needed to build a country in the global competition. Currently, countries around the world are competing to improve the quality of higher education with internationalization. Internationalization is the process of integrating the international component in the academic field. Internationalization makes a standard that can be accepted by countries around the world so as to create a ranking of universities in the world with various versions. The Indonesian government also do not miss to follow the trend of internationalization. Hoping to improve the nation's competitiveness, the Indonesian Government targets that universities in Indonesia can become World Class University (WCU) by penetrating the world's top 500 rankings. This article discusses the national policies and government support regarding the internationalization of higher education. This research is a qualitative descriptive study. Data collection techniques used in-depth interviews toward Person in Charge of the International office unit at University in Solo. The data were analyzed using open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The research results show that the government has commitment and a huge influence in encouraging the internationalization of higher education in Indonesia.

KEYWORDS: internationalization, policy, quality, education, world-class university

INTRODUCTION

Education becomes a social elevator to improve the welfare of individuals in the future (Requena, 2016). Coupled with global competition, education including tertiary education must also compete to produce graduates who can compete at the international level (Taylor & Steve, 2010). Besides, higher education can also provide greater opportunities for individuals to work as professional workers, avoid unemployment and improve individual social classes or maintain individuals in their social classes so that welfare is more secure (Requena, 2016). Higher education is also a tool for a country's economic growth (Fosket, 2010; Maringe & Nick, 2010; Arkadani et al, 2011; Mohsin & Zaman 2014; Shih 2014). Higher education is an important factor for producing individuals with the skills and knowledge needed in developing countries in the era of global competition (Arkadani, et al, 2011; Astuti, 2016). Education is an important investment to produce individuals who can compete in the era of globalization. At present countries around the world are racing to improve the quality of higher education by internationalization (Neale et al, 2018).

Internationalization is the process of integrating international components in the academic field so that it is no longer only national but rather international boundaries (Knight, 2004). Internationalization makes a standard that can be accepted by countries around the world because it is considered capable of improving the quality of human resources, solving global problems with the results of research, cultural mediators and contributing not only to universities but also to countries through the resulting economy (Fielden, 2006). Thus, the ranking of universities in the world is created with various versions to measure or assess the internationalization of higher education.

Internationalization has long been carried out by various universities in the world, especially in Europe and the United States (Knight, 2004). Nowadays, internationalization is a necessity because it can increase the nation's competitiveness. One of the pillars of the nation's competitiveness lies in the research and innovation produced by universities. Internationalization is considered to be a tool to achieve this.

Although it appears that internationalization has more positive impacts, the implementation of internationalization is not without challenges. Internationalization faces various challenges such as lack of commitment from individuals within the institution so that it inhibits the achievement of internationalization targets in organizations, strategic planning in managing human resources (Mohsin & Zaman, 2014), lack of academic community competencies such as conservative staff, monistic dialogue, and motivation who are lacking to do research and take a scholarship (Yerafdekar & Tiwari, 2014; Aleixo & Azeiteiro, 2018; Pepescu & Marjon, 2017; Foskett, 2010).

Despite challenges, Indonesia is not behind in implementing the internationalization of higher education. The government is trying to incorporate international elements or dimensions into education in tertiary institutions. This has been started since 2012 wherein law number 12 of 2012 concerning higher education, in article 50 paragraph 1 there are rules of international cooperation that can be carried out by universities. International cooperation involves incorporating an international dimension into education, teaching, and service without forgetting the values of the Indonesian people. This regulation becomes the basis for internationalization in Indonesian universities. The government itself through the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education in 2015-2019 also targets universities in Indonesia to become World Class University, which is marked by the inclusion of Indonesia's tertiary ranking to become the world's top 500.

Other countries whose governments have responded to the internationalization of universities such as Korea and Japan. In Korea, the Korean government created and implemented a policy of internationalization of tertiary institutions with the main objective of bringing Korea as an academic center in East Asia; a place where top scholars around the world research and teach (Palmer, 2013; Gress & Ilon, 2009; McNeil, 2008; Mok et al. 2003). Palmer (2013) explains that in 2005, to improve the ranking of Korean tertiary institutions, a former member of the National Assembly and the current Chief Minister of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) made

policies. These policies are (1) increasing the number of professors and foreign students, (2) increasing the number of English-Medium Instruction (EMI) classes, (3) putting pressure on professors to publish in leading scholarly journals in English, (4) building physical infrastructure to attract foreigners, and (5) concern about budgetting issues. The policy was made to meet the target of ten of the world's top 200 tertiary institutions, rank 9 in the world of articles published in ISI-indexed journals, and increase the number of faculties and foreign students by 10,000 and 150,000.

Besides, there is Japan where the government provides strong support and priority to promote the internationalization of university education in Japan with 4 (four) programs to support the internationalization of tertiary institutions in Japan. The four programs are the Top Global University Project in the form of financial assistance provided to universities in Japan to increase competition between universities, The Re-Inventing Japan Project is a funding project aimed at encouraging human resources to become active globally by forming collaborative programs with universities in countries such as Asia and the US, The Project for Promotion of Global Human Resources is a funding project aimed at overcoming "trends in" the younger generation of Japan and to growing human resources who can positively meet challenges and succeed in the global field, as a basis for enhancing the competitiveness of Japanese society and enhancing relations between countries, and The Global 30 Project is a funding project aimed at promoting the internationalization of the academic environment of Japanese universities and the acceptance of excellent international students studying in Japan.

Through regulation and program support, the government can create an environment where universities can achieve higher education internationalization (Patanakul & Pinto, 2014). Of course, it is not easy to shape the environment. Especially universities must add standards not only to national standards but also to international standards. Continued effort and support is needed so that the internationalization of higher education is not only as a goal but to improve the quality of education (Jibeen & Masha, 2015).

Internationalization is one way to improve the quality of education. The quality of education must have an acceptable standard so that national and international qualifications must be considered. According to Jibeen & Masha (2015), some countries do not have a good monitoring system for the internationalization of tertiary institutions so that there is an unknown and illegitimate accreditation. The accreditation seems to be an international accreditation but it is not. With accreditation, it can be seen how the quality of the tertiary institution does meet the specified standards. Why is it important? because of the quality of higher education institutions is vital because it can produce social reproduction (Bigalke & Deane, 2009). This is why there is government interference so that there are recognized and legitimate standards. Therefore, this study aims to look at national policies and the support of the Indonesian government regarding the internationalization of higher education.

METHOD

This research uses descriptive qualitative. Data in this study were collected by in-depth interviews with the Person In Charge (PIC) International Office at the university in Solo. Besides, this study also uses documentation in the form of laws and regulations such as Law number 12 of 2012 and the strategic plan of the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education (Kemenristekdikti) for 2015-2019. The selection of PICs as informants was because they were responsible and were front liners in coordinating international policy between universities and faculties.

Data analysis with open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Neuman, 2013). Axial coding is the initial stage in a qualitative analysis that summarizes the actual data and determines the initial category or code analysis of the data obtained. Axial coding is the second stage in which to determine the main categories or codes of concepts and relate them to concepts. At this stage, focus on the main categories or codes rather than the data obtained. The last step is selective coding, which is checking the code or category of open coding to be identified and chosen to fit the category of the concept (axial coding). Selective coding begins after the concept is well developed (Neuman, 2013).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The internationalization of Higher Education in Indonesia does not yet have specific regulations. However, internationalization continues to be encouraged by the government through the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education to be implemented. Kemenristekdikti has been very active in encouraging the internationalization of tertiary institutions in Indonesia since 2015. The internationalization of tertiary education is in the form of World Class University (WCU) where universities are asked to raise their ranks to enter the ranks of the world's top 500 universities.

Although internationalization does not yet have specific rules, the regulatory basis that can be used for the policy of internationalizing higher education in Indonesia is Law number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education and Strategic Plans of the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education in 2015-2019. In-Law number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education, it is not found explicitly regarding the internationalization of higher education but, in that law, it is regulated regarding international cooperation in higher education. Article 50 states that international higher education cooperation is a process of interaction to integrate the international dimension into academic activities including education, research, and community service. The purpose of this international cooperation is so that universities in Indonesia can play a role in international relations without losing Indonesian values. This is following the definition of internationalization of higher education according to de Wit (2018) namely the process of integrating international processes, intercultural, and global dimensions in the function of education. Despite incorporating elements of internationalization into education, a country must still maintain its characteristics (Knight, 2003). The operationalization of this article is then stipulated in Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia number 14 of 2014 concerning Higher Education Cooperation. At this time, the internationalization of higher education has not yet become the top priority of the government and universities.

Whereas in the 2015-2019 Kemenristekdikti strategic plan, internationalization of higher education was not explicitly mentioned so that the definition of internationalization of higher education was not available. In the strategic plan, the word that appears is only internationalization. The word internationalization appears as a way to overcome the problems of higher education in Indonesia. In the background of the 2015-2019 Kemenristekdikti Strategic Plan, it is explained that the problem in Indonesia is Indonesia's relatively low competitiveness, ranked 34th according to the 2014-2015 Global Competitive Assessment Report (GCR). The low competitiveness of Indonesia is a motivation for Kemenristekdikti to participate in increasing competitiveness through higher education and training in universities. In Indonesia, universities still have many problems such as the low quality of institutional science and technology, the low competition of Indonesian universities with universities in other countries, the number of scientists that are lacking, and the low number of scientific publications.

To answer this problem, Kemenristekdikti's policy strategy is based on one of them on World Class University (WCU). In the strategic plan, WCU was spelled out as a tertiary institution ranked among the world's top 500 QS World University Rankings. The indicators on QS World University Rankings are academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty/student ratio, citations per faculty, international faculty ratio, and international student ratio. This indicator becomes the basis of Kemenristekdikti to achieve it so that in the planning of its work program it seeks to include activities that can contribute to improving academic reputation and education staff, citation and internationalization. This is then realized by program performance indicators and activities that contribute to internationalization policies such as the number of tertiary institutions established in the world's top 500, the number of international publications, the number of S3 qualified lecturers, cooperation between domestic and foreign universities and scholarships for foreign students.

The government is very concerned about the quality and competitiveness of higher education institutions which are currently measured by international ranking such as Times Higher Education World, Asian University Ranking, QS Star, Webometric, and 4ICU (Komotar, 2018; Ordorika, 2015). The international ranking is considered to have a significant impact on college performance. Each ranking has its indicators, the majority of which use the number of publications to measure tertiary performance (Ordorika, 2015). So, it is not wrong if Kemenristekdikti emphasizes universities to enter the world's top 500 rankings and encourage international publications. The existence of international rankings is also the reason Kemenristekdikti encourages universities to adopt indicators from ranking organizations as a guide in developing work programs (Kemenristekdikti, 2015). This is consistent with the results of interviews with informants who overall say that the government is pushing for higher education to be ranked in the world's top 500. The urge of Kemenristekdikti to universities to adopt ranking indicators as the basis of work programs is also justified by some informants. According to them, universities adopted the indicator because Kemenristekdikti also used it as a measurement tool. Higher education follows the policy at the level above it, in this case, macro (national) policy. Higher education tries to adjust not only the

indicators of ranking organizations but also the measures that have been established by the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education.

From the interviews, the government not only encourages the internationalization of higher education but also provides support in the form of programs that help internationalization run in universities. Some of the supporting programs are State University Operational Assistance (BO-PTN) for research, which from 2013 to 2018 continues to increase. This funding assistance aims to enable researchers to produce more scientific publications, especially indexed internationally. Scientific publication is an important tool in sharing knowledge between academics and demonstrating academic standards. The publication can also show a reputation as an academic (Peh, 2008). Other programs include publication incentives, developing country partnership scholarships, World-Class professors, international cooperation facilitation assistance, and institutional strengthening of international affairs offices.

Some of the results of internationalization from the government program, according to interviews, can be seen in the increasing number of Indonesian international publications. Since the internationalization began to be driven by the government in 2015, the number of Indonesian publications in 2018 amounted to 29,031, finally being able to rank second in ASEAN countries, losing to Malaysia, which amounted to 30,892. In college itself, lecturers have a great opportunity to conduct research. In addition to the government, universities also provide enormous support for lecturers to conduct research. Lecturers are given large funds and incentives for every success of international indexed publications. According to the informant, internationalization is slowly changing the more competitive academic environment. The emergence of WCU as a step to overcome the problems of higher education and internationalization as a tool to realize WCU shows the commitment of the government. The internationalization of higher education is not just followed by emerging trends but is seen as one step in increasing Indonesia's competitiveness.

CONCLUSION

The government is committed to improving the quality of education through the internationalization of higher education. The commitment forms are programs that support the internationalization of higher education institutions. The government nt only issued policies but also created an environment so that universities could carry out internationalization.

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