The Strategy of Internationalization of Muhammadiyah Higher Education Institution: A Case Study at Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta

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Abstract. This study sought to investigate the strategy of internationalization of Muhammadiyah higher education institutions at Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) to pursue the status of a world-class university. Qualitative method approach, empirical research was used to explore the internationalization strategy. A case study was used to achieve deep understanding to build institutional policy and practices of internationalization. People who were directly involved in the internationalization process served as key informants. In-depth interviews, participation, and document studies were used to collect the data, and an interactive model was used to analyze the data. The results of this research show that internationalization at home and internationalization of cross-border education were the strategy used, and the summer course was the main program at UMY.

Keywords: strategy, internationalization, higher education, Muhammadiyah

INTRODUCTION

Globalization is a social phenomenon that has a long history [1], replacing postmodernism as a theory and framework of social sciences [2], increasing world economic integration [3], related to the victory of liberal capitalism as the dominant economic model [4], encouraging higher education institutions (HEI) towards greater global involvement [5], supporting the idea of competition and perceptions of international excellence, and supporting new approaches in teaching, research and service [1]. The relationship between higher education (HE) and globalization has four trends, including: 1) the creation of demands and a significant new urgency on HEI as a center of knowledge; 2) the increase of demands for HEIs throughout the world; 3) elimination of national regulations and policies, and 4) the emergence of an unlimited HE market [6].

Internationalization is one of the strategies of a country or HEI in responding to globalization and increasing competitiveness towards world-class universities (WCU) [7,8] and being a key for HEI and the government to prepare itself to be a strong and effective actor in a global platform [1]. Internationalization of HEI has the following characteristics: 1) an internal commitment to the internationalization process, and 2) the existence of an apparent positive attitude to understand culture and society better [9].

Some of the reasons for an HEI internationalization include: 1) preparing graduates to have an international dimension in entering the global labor market; 2) encouraging research activities as a form of contribution in solving global problems based on the idea that global issues require international cooperation between academics, HEI, business, and government, and 3) playing an educational role in promoting international values based on the idea that HEI must prepare graduates to become global citizens who understand cultural differences [10]. The four main reasons for the internationalization of HEI in developed countries include: 1) political reasons, as a tool for implementing foreign policy, especially in relation to national security, political interests and cooperation in peace between nations; 2) economic reasons, utilization of international cooperation to find alternative funding for the development of HEs and expanding market share abroad, especially developing countries; 3) academic reasons, the means to obtain international quality recognition for teaching and research, and 4) social and cultural reasons, to promote culture and national identity from developed countries as an effort to introduce cultural diversity between ethnic groups or nations [11].

The University of Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta proactively responded to the opportunities and challenges of globalization and internationalization by trying to improve their international competitiveness towards world-class universities. UMY has made adjustments in many aspects such as curriculum, human resources, public service, leadership, cooperation, quality assurance, quality of students, quality of graduates, and international certification qualifications. The purpose is to increase the number of international students and staff, improved academic quality with international culture, increase the international mobility of students and staff, and create positive experiences for international students. Based on the reasons above, it is crucial to conduct research on the internationalization strategy of private higher education institutions (HEI) at UMY.
**METHOD**

The researchers investigated the internationalization strategy of Muhammadiyah higher education institutions used by Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) to pursue the status of a world-class university. This is qualitative-explorative research in which empirical evidence was used to explore the internationalization strategy. Besides, a case study was used to achieve a deep understanding of the institutional policy and practices related to the internationalization. People who were directly involved in the internationalization process served as key informants. In-depth interviews, participation, and document studies were used for data collection, and an interactive model was used to analyze the data.

**RESULT**

**Concept of Strategic Planning for Higher Education Institutions**

Strategic planning is a systematic process of imagining and translating the desired future into goals, which are broadly defined and accompanied by a series of steps to achieve them. In contrast to long-term planning (which starts with the current status to meet estimated future needs), strategic planning starts with the desired end and works backward to its current status [12]. Lockwood & Davies [1] define institutional strategic planning as a continuous and collective exercise of honesty in an integrated decision-making process. HEI strategic planning usually shows where, when and what is desired (goals and values); what to do (auditing and analysis, e.g., SWOT); and how to do it (the plan of action and development activities). To consider strategic planning in HEI, it is necessary to define its objectives. According to Barnett [14], there are four intrinsic goals that all HEIs must fulfill: 1) Developing student autonomy, critical abilities, and academic competition; 2) Creating an autonomous institution, in that it is responsible for and maintains its standards and develops them in the future. Internal academic life will promote an independent academic community and independent learning; 3) Building an institution where research is essential in the sense of “a culture of critical discourse” or a systematic critical inquiry, and 4) Making a form of higher education (one of the critical investigations) available to all parties who can benefit from it and who wish to have access to it. Strategic planning in HEI has the following functions: 1) to fulfill the needs of funders; 2) to assist in internal communication (understanding the framework, participation, corporate identity); 3) to control the future; 4) to determine the allocation of resources; 5) to provide for external stakeholders, and 6) to increase responsibility. The structure of HEI's strategic planning must be cost-effective; on time (according to opportunity, environment); participatory (opportunities to contribute); successful; transparent, and trustworthy. Strategic planning is a policy development process, which is described in the following cycle (Figure 1).

**Internationalization Strategic of Private Higher Education Institution**

The results showed that the internationalization of private Higher Education Institution (HEI) at UMY with an extensive international connections had intellectual coherence, explicit internationalization missions and was followed up by specific policies and procedural support so that the approach taken by UMY in internationalization occupied Quadrant D (Systematic-Central) in the internationalization approach of the Davies Model (1995)[16] (see Figure 3).
By looking at the internationalization programs of UMY carried out inside and outside the institution, it can be said that the strategy used is internationalization at home and internationalization of cross-border education (see Tables 1). This is in accordance with the study of Abdullahi et al. [17] which stated that there are two (2) dimensions of internationalization, namely internationalization at home and internationalization of cross-border education. Internationalization in a purely domestic manner is the same as the international and intercultural curriculum dimensions, teaching, and research that help students improve international and intercultural abilities without leaving the country. Based on what and who crosses the boundary, cross education can be divided into three forms: 1) person mobility; 2) program mobility and 3) institution mobility (institutions that invest abroad with educational institutions). The rapid development of internationalized HEI activities took place in 1990, such as sending students and collaborating between continental education programs [18]. This has led to the modification of structures in the world HEI system [19], most of HEI follows an internationalization strategy, such as increasing the number of international students, providing international scholarships, increasing comparative studies to universities on other continents, and conducting conferences to support collaborative research [20,21].

CONCLUSION

The internationalization strategies implemented by UMY include internationalization at home and outside (internationalization of cross-border education) which include student mobility, lecturer development, curriculum innovation, and organizational change. UMY is prominent in the Summer Course program and the collaboration between Muhammadiyah Universities and foreign universities.

REFERENCES


