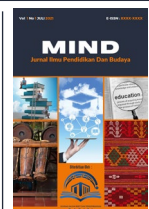




MIND
JURNAL ILMU PENDIDIKAN DAN KEBUDAYAAN
E-ISSN : 2809-5022
Tersedia Secara Online Pada Website : <https://jurnal.radisi.or.id/index.php/JurnalMIND>



Accreditation For the Quality Of Higher Education Graduates

FITRI RIZKI^{1*}

Program Studi Sistem Informasi
STIKOM Tunas Bangsa Pematang
Siantar
fitri_rizki@stikomtb.ac.id

RIZKY KHAIRUNNISA SORMIN²

Program Studi Sistem Informasi
STIKOM Tunas Bangsa Pematang Siantar
rizkykhairunnisasormin@amiktunasbangsa.ac.id

SUSIANI³

Program Studi Manajemen
Informatika
STIKOM Tunas Bangsa Pematang
Siantar
susianiatb1@gmail.com

 [https://doi.org/ 10.55266/jurnalmind.v4i2.400](https://doi.org/10.55266/jurnalmind.v4i2.400)

ABSTRACT

Higher Education institutions are mostly work-force providers to Industries, private-owned and state-owned and even Government Departments. Due to the fact, the quality of Higher Education Degree should be in compliance with the requirement of these organizations. To achieve the needs, the country has conducted an accreditation that suggests three tools to the institutions to make sure that the higher education institutions have the quality-improving tools to gain the quality of the degrees, that the organizations need. to the recruit as needed by the organizations themselves. Institutions' understanding the link between quality improvement and profits will improve customers' satisfaction, competitiveness and financial performance.

Article History:

Received : 12/06/2024

Revised : -

Approved : 03/07/2024

Corresponding Author:

fitri_rizki@stikomtb.ac.id
(Fitri Rizki)

Keywords : Accreditation, Higher Education, Quality Assurance, National Standards, Graduate Competitiveness.

A. INTRODUCTION

Quality is about passion and pride (Peters and Austin, 1985). This is the reality. Once people talk about quality and successfully achieve it, they will surely be filled with passion and pride. They will feel that they are among the luckiest people in the world. Whatever one is ambitious to have, they will ensure that it possesses the quality they dream of. With the quality of the item they own, they will be filled with passion, pride, and satisfaction. As a human being, this leads to full self-confidence in using it, especially in the eyes of others. For the quality one is ambitious to possess, the price becomes irrelevant.

Who then deserves the fortune when the quality of their products meets the requirements of worldwide consumers? For the consumer-required quality of the products, the name of the manufacturing company stays in the minds of everyone. Consequently, product quality positively influences market share and price (Jacobson and Aaker, 1987). An investigation of 65 companies in the furniture industry found



that quality, defined as conformance to satisfaction, is significantly related to sales growth and the return achieved on sales growth (Forker et al., 1996).

The next task for companies achieving this growth is to ensure that the quality of their products continues to meet consumer requirements. To achieve this, companies must be very selective in their recruitment processes. High-quality employees capable of conducting customer needs analysis are needed to ensure that product quality meets customers' year-on-year requirements. To respond to this need, higher education institutions must take responsibility for providing industries with high-quality workers.

Schools being responsible for supplying the required human resource should do their best to produce the degrees. For this purpose, the schools have to keep on conducting needs analysis to establish the "what" and the "how" of a course should be developed, and this is followed by curriculum design, material selections (that are in compliance with the qualification needed by the industries.), methodology, assessment and evaluation. However these stages should never be separated from one another, but seen as human's hand-fingers, which are of mutual service. (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998).

Companies and organizations may be thankful to have the certification of ISO9000 accreditation standards that provide them with guidance and tools to ensure that the quality of their products and services consistently meet customer's requirements. Fortunately, education institutions have the same bodies to trust. In Indonesia, Accreditation for the institution is administered by BAN-PT (National Accreditation Body for Higher Learning Institution) and for the Study Programs is by the Discipline-based Accreditation Agency (Lembaga Akreditasi Mandiri (BN-PT 2017)). When a school has already been accredited, it is already trusted to have had particular requirements in relation with the conformity assessment bodies and that the schools have possessed the competence to perform their presence in pedagogy. That the schools are trusted to have the qualifications of producing the degrees whose quality meets with the requirements of industries. Due to the fact, schools very seriously do their best to pursue this prestigious status.

Growth of Industries in Indonesia badly needs relevant quality of university graduates. Higher institutions are forced to elevate their potentials for their academic capability to produce higher quality graduates in order to facilitate the requirement of the growing industries. In which, without the wanted quality, the graduates are of no value and this fact will lead to disappointment of industries for not having the chance of employing the higher quality graduates.

Growth of Industries are in line with the state income, the better the industries, the better the income to the state. So, the state is also responsible for making sure that higher quality university graduates are available to support the demand for human resources in industries, And if this thing can be fulfilled, the growth will lead to the people's prosperity.

To guarantee quality achievement, the state has taken steps by establishing accreditation bodies, such as "BAN-PT" and "LAM." According to BAN-PT Regulation Number 1, 2020, the accreditation statuses awarded are "Unggul" (Exceptional), "Baik Sekali" (Very Good), and "Baik" (Good), or "Tidak terakreditasi" (Unaccredited), while the former statuses were: A, B, and C. The writers then identify the limitations of the problem:

1. What is the relationship between Accreditation Status and the Quality of the graduates of Higher Education Institutions?
2. Which target status is to be achieved: Unggul (Exceptional), Baik Sekali (Very Good), or Baik (Good)?

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The term methodology refers to how problems are approached and how solutions are sought. In social language, it is known as a term that applies to how research is conducted (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984).

To ensure the success of the research, the writers employed a “data-mining” strategy, selecting a library study as their primary method. In addition to the books available on their bookshelves, Google Scholar was chosen as a specific resource. Google Scholar provides access to a vast array of scholarly literature encompassing many disciplines and sources, including articles, theses, books, abstracts, and court opinions from academic publishers, professional societies, online repositories, universities, and other websites.

The writers gathered as much relevant information as possible by reading numerous sources, many of which are listed in the bibliography. Information on accreditation, whether for companies worldwide or for schools both overseas and within our national regions, has been included to enrich the supporting data and focus their research target.

C. RESULT OF RESEARCH

The process of accreditation for global companies applied by ISO 9000 has had a significant impact on sales and profitability for manufacturers. By the year 2000, the number of registrations to the ISO 9000 quality management system standard had demonstrated a rapid increase to over 409,000 registrations in 158 countries, reflecting a rise of 50 percent in just two years (ISO, 2001). This suggests a widespread trust in the commercial role of ISO 9000. It is often inferred that ISO accreditation leads to higher levels of product performance, which impressively gains the attention of current and prospective customers (Heras et al., 2002). Companies that achieve ISO accreditation are perceived as more reliable and capable of producing high-quality products, thus enhancing their competitive edge in the market.

In higher education, the concept of customers is more complex compared to manufacturing or general services. In this context, customers include a diverse group such as learners, employers, school staff, government, and families, each with their own specific requirements and expectations (Crawford, 1991). These varied stakeholders play a crucial role in shaping the goals and standards of educational institutions.

In Indonesia, the National Accreditation System for Higher Education (SAN-Dikti) is established by BAN-PT (National Accreditation Agency for Higher Learning Institutions) as mandated by the Indonesian Republic Constitution No. 12 of 2012 on Higher Education and the Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education No. 32 of 2016 on the Accreditation of Study Programs and Higher Education Institutions. The primary objective of this accreditation process is to assess and determine the feasibility and quality of study programs or higher education institutions, based on criteria that comply with the Higher Education National Standard. Accreditation aims to ensure that students receive an excellent quality of

higher education and to protect the public from non-accredited institutions, thereby maintaining high educational standards nationwide (BAN-PT, 2017).

D. DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH

The stringent accreditation criteria mean that no institution wants to be left behind. Every educational institution competes to gain the best possible accreditation status, knowing that the better they fulfill the required qualifications, the better assessment they will achieve. Meeting and exceeding these standards not only elevates the institution's prestige but also makes it more attractive to prospective students. This visibility and trust will encourage more hardworking students to enroll, leading to the production of more high-quality graduates.

According to Article 55 of the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia No.12/2012 about Higher Education, the assessment of accreditation is directed towards outcome-based accreditation, with a focus on improving competitive potential and international outlook. The assessment and accreditation instruments are designed to measure the quality of educational outcomes and their impact on graduates and society. This includes evaluating how well graduates are prepared to contribute to their communities and the broader economy. Additionally, the instruments assess input-quality performance, including human resources (lecturers and educational staff), students, curriculum, infrastructure, and funding.

Encouraged by these constitutional guidelines, all higher learning institutions in Indonesia strive to achieve the highest possible assessment from the Accreditation Agency. Compliance with these standards is crucial, as failure to do so can result in lower accreditation statuses such as "Exceptional" (Unggul), "Very Good" (Baik Sekali), or even "Good" (Baik). A lower assessment not only diminishes the institution's reputation but also results in producing lower-quality graduates who may struggle to compete in the job market.

Employers are among the most significant consumers of higher education graduates. Government agencies and private companies often base their hiring decisions on the accreditation status of educational institutions. For instance, state-owned companies in Indonesia have been known to reject applicants graduating from institutions with a C accreditation status. This precedent set by state employers influences private companies, which are also likely to avoid hiring graduates from lower-accredited institutions. Therefore, higher education institutions have no choice but to meet and exceed the accreditation requirements to produce graduates that meet employer expectations and market demands.

The quality of graduates is the ultimate product of higher education institutions, and this quality is heavily influenced by the institution's adherence to accreditation standards. Graduates from highly accredited institutions are perceived as more competent and better prepared to meet the challenges of the workforce. This not only benefits the graduates themselves but also enhances the institution's reputation and attractiveness to prospective students. In conclusion, the pursuit of high accreditation standards is essential for higher education institutions to maintain their competitive

edge, ensure student success, and contribute positively to society (Bartel and Sichertman, 1998).

E. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that accreditation plays a crucial role in determining the quality and success of higher education institutions. ISO 9000 accreditation has been shown to improve sales and profitability for manufacturing companies, indicating widespread trust in its commercial role. Similarly, in the context of higher education, good accreditation can enhance an institution's reputation, attract prospective students, and produce high-quality graduates who meet market demands.

In Indonesia, the national accreditation system managed by BAN-PT aims to ensure that study programs and higher education institutions meet stringent national standards. This accreditation not only ensures the quality of higher education services but also protects the public from non-accredited institutions. High accreditation results, such as "Exceptional," "Very Good," or "Good," significantly influence public perception and the trust of prospective students and employers.

Higher education institutions that achieve high accreditation status can produce graduates who are better prepared and more competitive in the job market. Conversely, institutions with low accreditation status tend to produce graduates who are less attractive to employers, both in the public and private sectors. Therefore, meeting and exceeding accreditation standards is essential for higher education institutions to ensure their long-term success and that of their graduates.

To enhance the quality of higher education and achieve better accreditation status, higher education institutions should focus on continuous internal quality improvement, including human resources, curriculum, infrastructure, and funding. BAN-PT and related bodies should continuously update and improve the accreditation process to remain relevant with the evolving educational landscape and market needs.

Furthermore, institutions should foster close cooperation with industries to ensure that their curricula and programs align with market requirements, thereby enhancing the employability of their graduates. Developing training programs for teaching and administrative staff to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet accreditation standards is also vital.

Institutions should implement ongoing monitoring and evaluation systems to regularly assess their performance and make necessary improvements to maintain accreditation standards. Increasing public awareness about the importance of accreditation in choosing quality higher education institutions is also crucial.

By following these recommendations, it is hoped that higher education institutions in Indonesia can continuously improve their quality, achieve higher accreditation status, and produce graduates who are competitive in the global job market.

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