The Problems in the Implementation of Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) Found at Higher Education Institutions in Pacitan

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Abstract

Three private colleges in Pacitan have implemented Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). They are planning, implementing, evaluating and controlling, and improving. However there are some problems that hinder the implementation of IQAS. The purpose of the research is to describe the implementation of IQAS and what problems that obstruct the implementation of IQAS. Using qualitative descriptive method, through study case design data were collected from observation, interview with the members of Quality Assurance Agency, and document. The result of the research revealed that three private colleges in Pacitan have implemented IQAS starting from planning, implementing, evaluating and controlling, and improving. Nevertheless, they have not fully implemented IQAS because several supporting documents of standard were lack, Internal Quality Audit had not been carried out and the existence of Auditors was limited. The problems which were encountered were lack of fund, the lack understanding of the importance of IQAS implementation and the lack of awareness from institution leaders about IQAS implementation.

Keywords: Internal Quality Assurance System; Accreditation; National Education Standards.

Abstrak

Ada tiga perguruan tinggi swasta di Pacitan telah menjalankan Sistem Penjaminan Mutu Internal (SPMI). Dimulai dari perencanaan, pelaksanaan, evaluasi dan pengendalian, serta peningkatan. Namun dalam pelaksanaanya ada beberapa kendala yang harus dihadapi. Tujun dari penelitian ini adalah mendeskripsikan pelaksanaan SPMI dan masalaha apa saja yang dihadapi dalam implementasi SPMI. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Data diperoleh dari hasil observasi, wawancara dengan anggota LPM dan hasil dokumentasi. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah tiga perguruan tinggi swasta di Pacitan telah mengimplementasikan SPMI. Namun belum menjalankan SPMI secara maksimal dikarenakan ketidaksediaan dokumen pendukung standar, belum melaksanakan AMI dan keterbatasan auditor pada masing-masing Perguruan Tinggi. Sedangkan masalah yang ditemui di lapangan adalah ketiadaan biaya dalam pelaksanaan SPMI, kekurangfahaman mengenai pentingnya SPMI dan kurangnya kesadaraan dari pimpinan perguruan tinggi mengenai pelaksanaan SPMI.

Kata Kunci *: Sistem Penjaminan Mutu Internal, Akreditasi, Standar Nasional Pendidikan*

INTRODUCTION

Education becomes a fundamental aspect because the demand of human resource with quality that increases in the age of globalization era becomes necessity (Amtu et al., 2021). Citizen must graduate at least from senior high school. This requirement indirectly has a strong force to encourage the citizen to get their education degree as high as possible. Besides, the job vacancy requires the applicant to have a higher degree, like undergraduate graduates. It stands to reason, to attain quality education it needs to be undertaken incessantly (Marlina, et., al., 2021). Undisputedly, the problems regarding education that challenges us nowadays on either higher or lower level education lies on its low quality (Ingtyas et al., 2021).

The focus of quality education lies on educational equity, educational relevance and educational management efficiency (Komsiyah,

2021). Higher Educations aim to create knowledgeable, skilful and technology literate human resource that are required by the world of work. That is why, the higher education institutions are obliged to achieve the national education goals (Ubudiyah Siregar, 2017).

As a consequence of enabling a better education, the demand of institution, especially higher education institutions, to provide a good quality of education are as an obligatory task (Mursidi et al., 2020). Due to this reason, to improve the quality of Higher Education Institutions the government issues a policy about education quality assurance.

As the effort that is achieved by government to ascertain the quality assurance of HEIs is the implementation of Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) (Sulaiman & Wibowo, 2016). The goal of enacting Quality Assurance system is realized in the implementation of IQAS.

On hindsight, before 1998, the management of higher education institutions (HEIs) was under the government's control. It can be pointed out from the essence of Law regulation for HEIs. The national education system which is government-centered was established by the government and needed to be applied to all HEIs in Indonesia. In other words, the government has a significant role to determine the quality assurance of the HEIs.

However, since 2003 there was a change of wind where the establishment of higher education system was no longer under the government's control. After the law of national education system number 20 of 2003 was exposed, HEIs were given authority to establish their own quality assurance. Hence Ditjen Dikti initiated the idea about the quality assurance which HEIs have the complete control of determining the quality assurance of their institution.

The development of Higher education quality assurance did not undergo the smooth sailing journey but very arduous process. After taking 5 years in implementing Higher education quality assurance, it resulted in redesigning HEIs quality assurance that integrated Higher education quality assurance into a system which is well-known as higher education quality assurance system.

Based on law of Higher Education article 53 (UU DIKTI) regarding higher education, it states that higher education quality assurance consists of Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), External Quality Assurance System (EQAS) and higher education database (permenristekdikti: 2016). IQAS was autonomously implemented by HEIs meanwhile the EQAS is undergone through accreditation and Higher Education Database is a source which contains data and information of higher education institutions that is integrated nationally.

The quality assurance which is used to maintain the quality education of each university will vary one to another (Aspranawa & Pravitasari, 2017;) which is controlled and managed independently by relevant colleges (Hasbullah et al., 2020). Even though the range of quality assurance can be various, however the essence comprise of executor and process (Degeng, 1997). The quality assurance is a continuous activity which is carried out regularly since it is not an impromptu action (Hedwig and Pola, 2006). The implementation of Higher Education Quality Assurance (HEQAS) is realized through Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) and External Quality Assurance System (EQAS). According (Dill, 2010) the implementation of Quality Assurance involves activities which are classified into Internal Quality Assurance and External Quality Assurance.

IQAS is a systemic quality assurance activity to assess the higher education institutions as a control and improvement tool in administering higher education management in a planned and sustainable manner. It is in line with (Andleeb & Jusoh, 2015) who state that Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is used to assess the institution which the assessment is also carried out by the institution as the realization of planned actions.

As the measurement to determine that HEIs implement Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), it is conducted through accreditation (Muhari et al., 2021). EQAS is carried out by accreditation body owned by government, known as National Accreditation

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Board for Higher (Nurachma & Sjamsir, 2020) Education and independent Accreditation Board (Hindaryatiningsih & Mashuri, 2020).

The application of IQAS is autonomously conducted by the HEIs. It means that the universities have a full reign to orchestrate their own institution without the influence from government to plan, implement and develop their design of IQAS. The government provides the IQAS guidance book as an endeavor to give inspiration to HEIs on how to formulate their IQAS. Since each Higher education institution has many different aspects such as, vision, mission and strategy, history, the leadership pattern, and other factors, the institution should achieve the goals and objective of their establishment (Yuan et al., 2021). Therefore, a university can be regarded as certified if it is able to accomplish the vision of campus through the implementation of its mission (Sondang & Hariyati, 2019).

In order to fulfill the demand of the always flourished stakeholders, the HEIs should adjust IQAS based on the improvement continuously. Eventually, the internal Quality Assurance System should propel the External Quality Assurance System to make a betterment on accreditation status of HEIs. In addition, the implementation of Internal Quality Assurance System is not merely fulfilling the administrative requirement but also as an attempt to attain the National High Education Standards (Mursidi et al., 2018).

It is essential to establish the standards stipulated by a university alongside with the standards determined by higher education national standard. By stipulating internal standards by university it can improve the quality of each element in university (*Hidayat et., al.*, 2017)

There are three colleges under Kopertais 4 Surabaya which are located in Pacitan. Those higher education institutions have implemented Internal Quality Assurance System and External Quality Assurance System based on their accreditation results. However, the implementation of Internal Quality Assurance System is less effective as manifested in the accreditation ranks in both institution and study programs.

There are some constraints in implementing Internal Quality Assurance such as the lack of awareness from the education doers about the importance IQAS as the necessity of stakeholders, the low commitment to improve the quality assurance and the lack of empowering the human resources to strengthen the quality assurance (Suciani & Silitonga, 2019). Besides, the quality assurance institution which becomes the core of force does not work as it should be.

The implementation of Internal Quality Assurance System which is referred to Permenristekdikti Number 62 of 2016 article 3 about Quality Assurance System, the Internal Quality assurance System of Higher Education Institutions is planned, implemented, evaluated, controlled and improved. The implementation process can be seen from the picture below.

Figure 1. The kaizen of Internal Quality Assessment System

From the picture above, it can be explained that the action of implementing Internal Quality Assurance System at Higher Education Institution is started from planning, implementing, evaluating and controlling, and improving Internal Quality Assurance System. In planning, there are four documents of IQAS that must be composed and established. They are policy document of IQAS *(Kebijakan SPMI)*, manual document of IQAS *(Manual SPMI)*, Standard document of IQAS *(Standar SPMI)* and Form document of IQAS (*Formulir SPMI).*

The second phase is the implementation of the four documents that have been established. The next phase is evaluation and control. Evaluation is a process to assess needs, problems and opportunity that can be addressed in a specific circumstance

(Stufflebeam, 2002). In evaluation, there is a process to confirm the fulfillment the standards of SN DIKTI and standards set by the university. After evaluation, it will be discovered the findings which are not achieved to seek the corrective action.

The corrective action is used as a basis to make improvement of Internal Quality System Assurance plan to establish culture of quality environment in universities. However, the implementation of IQAS has not been completely carried out by universities due to some inhibiting factors such as the unavailability the documents related to IQAS (Elbadiansyah & Masyni, 2021). Thus, the aim of the research is to describe the implementation of Internal Quality Assurance System at three Higher Education Institutions in Pacitan and what problems that constrain the implementation.

METHOD

A qualitative approach with a case study design was utilized in this research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The cases investigated were the implementation of IQAS which consists of the availability of four documents IQAS and its related documents. The research was carried out at three higher education institutions in Pacitan. The subject of the research was the implementation of IQAS at three institutions in Pacitan. The object of research was the standards of quality assurance implemented by quality assurance agencies.

The qualitative data collection techniques in this study were using observation, interviews and documentation (Yin, 2016). The interview was conducted to get information correlated with the implementation and problems hindering the implementation of IQAS. In this research the objects of interviews were the chairman and secretary of quality assurance agencies. Besides, the researcher collected data through observation by using observation tables to know the implementation of the standards in IQAS. The documentation study guides were used to gathering information related to standards of IQAS.

The data analysis techniques used the data analysis from Miles and Huberman in (Sahlanb et al., 2021). The data were analyzed

simultaneously through some stages. They are data collection, data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verifying.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the research is to describe the implementation of IQAS and the problems of implementing it.

RESULTS

Commencing a quality culture at university is not an easy matter. After all, it is needed a process which takes time, energy and fund. However, it does not hinder the small colleges in Pacitan to realize a quality university by having a good accreditation for both institution and study programs. Hence, they start to improve the quality by fulfilling the requirements demanded by higher education law by implementing IQAS.

After conducting the analysis, it can be found that the implementation of IQAS from planning, establishing, evaluating and controlling, and improving, the whole process has been fulfilled by the three higher education institutions. The result can be seen from the table below.

Table 1. The implementation of IQAS

Stage of IQAS Implementation	College A	College B	College C
Planning	Completed documents	Completed documents	Completed documents
Implementing	Partial	Partial	Partial
Evaluating and controlling	Monitoring and Evaluating	Monitoring and Evaluating	Monitoring and Evaluating
Improving	Document completion	Document completion	Document completion

It can be explained from the table above that in planning, the three higher education institutions in Pacitan have four standard documents, they are policy document of IQAS *(Kebijakan SPMI)*, manual document of IQAS *(Manual SPMI)*, Standard document of IQAS *(Standar SPMI)* and Form document of IQAS (*Formulir SPMI).* Beside those four requirement documents, the institutions also set standard of higher education stipulated by universities.

The results on observation, interview and

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documentation with the head of quality institutes, it shows that IQAS planning was determined decisively by quality assurance institutes. The planning of IQAS is based on the institution statute and the standard-setting mechanism was pertinent to government regulation no 19 year 2005. The higher education standards incorporate education standards, research standards and community service standards. Alongside those compulsory standards, three institutions also establish additional standards belonging to the institutions, such as, cooperation standard and regulations of new students admittance standard document, procedure of lecturer admittance document standard and other additional standards, The whole planning process does not stray from the cornerstone that is the government regulation no 19 year 2005 and the higher education quality assurance manual book published by the Directorate General of Higher Education.

The results of observation, interview and documentation denote that the realization of IQAS implementation is by internalizing a quality culture and compliance to the IQAS policy. Study programs and institution are wholly integrated to corroborate the implementation of IQAS so that the eight standards based on the Government Regulation No 19 year 2005 can be enacted maximally. The institutions publicly socialize the standard documents to the stakeholders. The supporting documents related to four main standard documents such as guidance book documents, SOP (standard of procedures) documents are also introduced because those documents have a role as a reference to an institution policy making. However, even though they possess the four documents of IQAS, the three institutions have partially implemented all the standards documents.

The results of observation, interview and documentation reveal that monitoring is an activity to guarantee that the standards determined is fulfilled and implemented as planned. Evaluating can be carried out through internal quality auditing, monitoring, evaluating, assessment, and satisfaction survey. Among

those, three institutions have conducted monitoring and evaluation to measure to what extent the level of acceptability between the standards set and the implementation. They check and confirm whether institution and study programs have accomplished their targets, and the standard of procedures implementation. Although the evaluation was not accomplished thoroughly, they arduously seek betterment for the quality institution.

The results of documentation, observation and interview display that evaluation was carried out by quality assurance institution members. Mostly, each of the three institutions, there are only two members in quality assurance agency. They prepared the form which would be used as the instruments. They made preparation with their internal members before conducting the evaluation. The goal is to check the conformity between standards and academic quality component and the findings would be reported to institution as the preventive act before accreditation.

The results of observation, interview and documentation exhibit that the report of evaluation results was discussed in study program. They held an internal meeting to analyze the performance instrument results, completing the reporting document and the last is to submit the final result to the head of institution.

The result of evaluating and controlling is realized by making adjustment to the policy and revising the previous documents. The colleges in Pacitan make effort to improve the quality continuously since the manifestation is to create quality culture within the institution.

The results of observation, interview and documentation unveil that there were some problems hindering the implementation of IQAS which can be summarized into some points. First, the problem comes from funding. During the determination of standards in IQAS, it took a quite amount of fund because it needs workshop of IQAS. Furthermore, the implementation of IQAS which is undergoing through stages also spend money. Hence, this kind of problem always make the institution hesitate to conduct such activity. The second is

from the lack of supporting standard documents.

The third is the belief that IQAS is a policy which solely belongs to quality assurance institution. In this regard, with the existence of this belief, the board of institution leader inclines to underestimate the significance of IQAS implementation. The last is lack of understanding about IQAS. Usually, institution leaders and other stakeholders does not have much understanding the role of IQAS in a university. For example, they cannot correlate between the implementation of IQAS and accreditation. This is due to the information and knowledge is not thoroughly internalized socialized by the institution.

DISCUSSION

Three colleges in Pacitan have implemented IQAS. In planning, it is determined to compose four quality standard documents. They are policy document of IQAS *(Kebijakan SPMI)*, manual document of IQAS *(Manual SPMI)*, Standard document of IQAS *(Standar SPMI)* and Form document of IQAS (*Formulir SPMI).* Standard documents of IQAS contains standard national education, standard of national standard research and standard of national standards community service. National Standard of higher education consists of standard of graduate competency, standard of learning content, standard of learning process, standard of learning assessment, standard of lecturer and staff, standard of infrastructure of learning, standard learning management and standard of financing of learning.

National standard of research comprises standard result of the research, standard of content research, standard of process research, standard of research assessment, standard of researchers, standard of infrastructure research, standard of research management and standard of funding and research funding. National standard of community service consists of standard of results community services, standard of content community services, standard of process community services, standard of community services assessment, standard of implementing standard community, standard of infrastructure community services, standard of management of community services and standard of funding and financing community services.

Those three institutions also set internal standards which belong exclusively to institution itself. They are cooperation standard, regulations of new student admittance standard document, procedure of lecturer admittance document standard, organization of student affairs standard, staffing standard and tracer study standard.

Despite the fact that the IQAS documents can be completed by those three colleges, practically, they have not fully effectuated all the policy determined on standard. The evidence of implementation exhibited that there were some supporting documents, SOP documents that were missing.

However, it did not hinder them, to socialize and made known the IQAS document to the stake holders. IQAS policy was enacted as the main core to determine the policies and rules in institution level and as the reference to execute the PPEPP cycle as mandated on IQAS. IQAS standard documents become the guideline to set up the establishment of other supporting standard documents, such as SOP documents and guidelines documents.

Evaluation is the phase where there is a check of to what extent the degree of appropriateness between the established standards and the implementation of standards occurs. The three colleges in Pacitan, carried out monitoring and evaluation as a means of evaluation. The frequency of evaluation may vary. Two colleges performed monitoring and evaluation once in every six months, while the other was once a year.

They made preparation before carrying out the evaluation, such as assessment instruments, and the report from tracer study derived from google form. However, the instruments of evaluation were not comprehensive and tended to be disorganized. Quality assurance agency of each college has two members, comprising of the chief and secretary of quality assurance agency.

The result of monitoring and evaluation, then reported to institution. Internal quality audit which was the most fundamental in IQAS implementation, has not yet been administered because they lack the knowledge about Internal Quality Audit (AMI). Thus, the only information

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about carrying out evaluation is through monitoring and evaluation.

The implementation of controlling which was based on the result of monitoring and evaluation was by revising and adjusting to the documents which were needed improvement. Then, the results were reported to the institution which soon it was going to hold internal meeting from study program elements to institution. In his way, the documents that need revising, would be revised, and the targets of study program in achieving *Tridharama Pendidikan Tinggi* can be realized.

Colleges in Pacitan felt that there were some problems during implementing IQAS in their own college. The problem they encounter in planning was they were not knowledgeable about the whole matter of IQAS implementation. Besides, the supporting documents of IQAS, was not easy to compose. The problem about funding the formulation of IQAS documents also emerged.

Additionally, the existence of assumption which regarded IQAS as the product resulted from Quality assurance agency hindered the IQAS implementation. Some people were convinced that Quality assurance agency personally mandated IQAS to be implemented. The leader of institution held an essential role to ensure that IQAS was well implemented. However, practically, majority of institution leaders have little knowledge and information about IQAS.

The other problems which also arise was during the evaluation of IQAS, there were lack of members of auditors. Furthermore, there were some standard documents which could not be provided or some of them were incomplete. Internal Quality Audit had not been implemented. Aside from the previous problem, it was discovered that the ability of receiving suggestion, and recommendation was truly lack during internal meeting. There were several people assuming that the objective of evaluation was to seek the faulty of certain people. Thus, the problems encountered by colleges in Pacitan prohibited and tended to a bit restrict the enactment of culture quality at colleges in Pacitan. The conspicuous evidence was the accreditation results of Study Program and institution which has the lowest minimum of accreditation score.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of IQAS is commenced from planning, implementing, evaluating and controlling, and improving. Three colleges in Pacitan, implement internal quality assurance system consisting of 24 standards set by Higher education national standards and internal standards stipulated by college. As the effort to embed the quality culture by the implementation of IQAS, they effortfully socialize the standards in IQAS. However, the standards set have not completely applied in their colleges and there were some documents which could not be shown.

Three colleges in Pacitan have not carried out Internal Quality Audit because, they are not fully informed and knowledgeable about Internal Quality Audit. In addition, they do not have sufficient auditors in their college. The evaluation performed is monitoring and evaluation which is held twice a year. The result of evaluation was delivered during internal meeting in which the whole stakeholders of college are invited to attend. The meeting discusses the result of evaluation in order to make improvement on aspects which are not in line with the study program or institution's target.

Based on the result of research at three colleges in Pacitan, they have similar problems in the implementation. The problems come from the lack of fund, the lack understanding of the importance of IQAS implementation and the lack of awareness from institution leaders about IQAS implementation. Undeniably, the accreditation of both Study program and institution are greatly impacted. However, these colleges in Pacitan have commenced to build the quality culture to achieve Quality College.

Looking at the implementation of IQAS and the problems face those colleges, it is proved that all the stakeholders, particularly the leader of institution should proactively contribute in implementing IQAS. On top of that, it is necessary to delegate members of Quality assurance agency to join training or workshop related to IQAS implementation. It requires to

add more members of Quality assurance agency so the function of quality assurance agency runs thoroughly.

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