

# Collaboration on Institutional Strengthening at the University of North Sumatra Towards a World Class University

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**Abstract:** This research raises, describes and analyzes; Collaboration on Institutional Strengthening at the University of North Sumatra towards a World Class University. The point of the problem that has occurred so far is the challenges as well as opportunities faced by the University of North Sumatra as an educational institution after the change in status from a State University to a State-Owned Legal Entity (BHMN) university which is always required to be able to compete not only in national scope but also international so that it encourages the University of North Sumatra to be able to become a university that is prepared to enter the ranks of world-class universities. The question in this study is how to collaborate in institutional strengthening at the University of North Sumatra in the context of superior accreditation and international recognition. The data analysis technique in this research is through data reduction activities, data display, and drawing conclusions. The results of this study are Good University Governance, Innovative Research and University Academic Culture. In conclusion, to realize the University of North Sumatra into a world-class university, it is necessary to build collaboration between stakeholders (stakeholders) between students, faculty and staff, partner companies, government and the community. In addition, in the education pillar, this achievement is marked by the implementation of world-class learning rooted in improved local excellence, on the research pillar, the implementation of research and writing on the results of international collaborations, as well as the acquisition of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in various countries, as well as on the pillars of devotion is marked by the internalization of a culture of empathy and community service.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The history of world civilization cannot be separated from the history of university development. The university which was initially only an academic community and thinkers gradually developed to produce manpower to meet the needs in the fields of government, education and health (Williams, 1995). Industrial needs be it factories, banking to entrepreneurs. Various researches, innovations and breakthroughs in thinking are routinely carried out by universities following the changing times.

This is also a challenge for the University of North Sumatra (USU) as a higher education institution. Geographically, University of North Sumatra which

is located in North Sumatra Province has a very strategic position because it is territorially located in the Malacca Strait which is directly connected to neighboring countries such as Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore. Natural wealth, whether it's extensive forests, mining, seas and coastlines along the west and east coasts of Sumatra, makes North Sumatra Province in Indonesia have tremendous potential. Not only that, Lake Toba, which was territorially located in North Sumatra in 2015, was determined by the government to be one of 10 tourism destinations in Indonesia. Moreover, demographically, North Sumatra is the province with the 4th largest population after West Java, East Java and Central Java with 15,136,522 inhabitants (Central Bureau of

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Statistics, 2021), thus outside Java, North Sumatra is the most populous province in Indonesia. This means that the existence of the University of North Sumatra (USU) has a very strategic position not only in the national scope and in the ASEAN region, but also in the international order. This position must also consciously encourage the University of North Sumatra, both morally, responsibly and with the aim of being able to increase competitiveness in the context of competitive competition in the era of global competition, through higher education and training.

Because, at the same time, the University of North Sumatra which has 16 faculties with details of undergraduate programs (S1) with details of 47 majors, 15 majors in diploma programs (D3), 42 majors in master's programs (S2), 23 majors in Doctoral (S3) are faced with opportunities and challenges at the same time. as a higher education institution that is required to contribute to the implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education such as teaching, research and community service.

This will be achieved by the University of North Sumatra with the entrepreneurial spirit, innovation, appropriate use of technology, and producing breakthrough ideas that are packaged in the form of scientific research that can be applied in community service. The goal is that the research produced is tested academically to gain the trust of the stakeholders. Like; central and local governments, entrepreneurs, industry players (entrepreneurs), Community Social Institutions (NGOs) and the wider community.

This is because the progress of a university which is upstream of science cannot be separated from the roles of these stakeholders as downstream in the process of scientific grounding (implementation) of science. Thus, University of North Sumatra must always build scientific communication with stakeholders.

Moreover, the University of North Sumatra also requires physical infrastructure in the form of lecture buildings, administration buildings, library buildings, laboratories, and other facilities. The goal is to support the performance of lecturers, staff and student learning motivation. Good infrastructure for scientific activities is necessary to promote research. This is because lecturers and students must have space to share the results of their research. Moreover, designing new research to regenerate it so it doesn't just settle.

The development of good physical infrastructure certainly cannot be separated from the role of

stakeholders. This is because a budget is needed to build, both from the State Budget, Regional Revenue Budget and unfortunately grants obtained from the central government, regional governments and entrepreneurs. Not only that, in the development process, NGOs and students play a role in the supervision process.

In the Indonesian government, there is a strong desire to improve the quality of higher education so that it is better known to the world. In the strategic plan of the Ministry of Education and Culture there is a priority program known as the World Class University (WCU) program. The purpose of this WCU program is to encourage universities in Indonesia to improve their academic reputation at the international level. The measured parameter that is used as a benchmark is the Quality and Success (QS) World University Ranking (WUR). The target to be achieved by this Priority Program is to include 11 Indonesian universities in the 500 QS WUR ranking and more and more Indonesian universities to be included in the top 200 of the QS AUR (Asia University Ranking) (USU, 2020).

The University of North Sumatra is one of the largest universities in Indonesia, and is included in the 16 State Universities of the Legal Agency (Kompas, 2021). The University of North Sumatra (USU) was designated as a Legal Entity State University based on Law Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education Article 97 letter c dated August 10, 2012. Furthermore, the Statute of the University of North Sumatra was stipulated based on Government Regulation Number 16 of 2014 dated February 28, 2014. This determination provides flexibility for USU to face increasingly competitive challenges, which need to be circumvented and overcome with a visionary perspective and supported by the ability to formulate strategic steps. Since being designated as a PTN BH, The University of North Sumatra (USU) has prepared a long-term planning document for 25 years called the USU Long Term Plan (RJP) 2015-2039. USU's 2015-2039 RJP is divided into 5 stages of the Five-year Strategic Plan (USU, 2020).

Since 2020, the University of North Sumatra has been included as a university that is prepared to enter the ranks of world-class universities to enter 500 QS WUR or 200 QS AUR. As one of the universities that has received guidance, University of North Sumatra (USU) will receive special funds to encourage the improvement of USU's reputation at the international level.

The facts above show that there is an alignment between the demands of the USU Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and the World Class University ministry's

strategic program. The World Class University Program Assistance provided by the Ministry will be used as initiator funds to carry out several programs that have been formulated in the 2020-2024 USU Strategic Plan that are directly related to improving USU's academic reputation. The university also added the use of Non-PNBP funds as support for the implementation of World Class University activities. Based on the descriptions above, the researchers are interested in conducting research on how USU's Strategy as a Legal Agency State University is to become a World Class University.

Therefore, in order to strengthen the institutions of the University of North Sumatra (USU) towards a world-class university. The researcher is interested in writing a paper entitled: "Collaboration on Institutional Strengthening at the University of North Sumatra Towards a World Class University".

## 2 RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a qualitative research with a positivist paradigm (Creswell, 2016). Where researchers collect data from international journals, national journals, as primary data. Then, documents derived from data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and the media as secondary data related to the institutional role of the University of North Sumatra towards a Second Class University. Research data collection is also carried out through a process of reviewing documents or reports related to the research focus (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). The reviewed report will go through a process of obtaining approval from the competent authority at the research location, namely the University of North Sumatra. It should be stated that it is very possible that there are many reports available, but reports that are relevant to the process of analyzing this research data will later go through a process of initial consideration from the experts and those in authority. In connection with the process of implementing the research data analysis above, it is explained that operationally the data analysis process will follow the qualitative data analysis scheme in accordance with the title, objectives, benefits and methods of this research.

## 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 University Governance

This change is certainly a new challenge for the University of North Sumatra on how to obtain productive funding sources, financial management, academic curriculum and accountability for higher education management. Furthermore, this change requires USU to increase partnerships and collaborations with stakeholders who have close links with the university. Moreover, these stakeholders have a significant role in the educational process to produce excellent graduates who are ready to compete.

This means that the concept needed by the University of North Sumatra as a higher education institution is Good University Governance. Moreover, the status of the University of North Sumatra which is a state university. Literally the concept of Good University Governance is a derivative of the concept of good governance. As the concept of good governance which puts forward the way of implementing campus political, economic and administrative authority in the management of administrative affairs. University governance must also involve accountability issues at the University of North Sumatra (USU).

According to Leach and Percy-Smith (2001) government implies that the government regulates, provides services and implements policies while the community is a passive recipient (Giovanna, 2013). Changes in university governance involving the rectorate, trustees, deans and departments in the USU area. This means that after the change in status, the new USU management model must have academic staff who are ready to understand the university's academic visions and missions and how to achieve them. This model should automatically work with the principles and practices of management by universities that are accountable to predefined stakeholders. Like; students, faculty and staff, partner companies, the government and the wider community by considering the extent to which USU synergizes with these stakeholders.

This means that the achievement of Good University Governance towards a world-class university at USU is strongly influenced by the collaboration of partnerships with stakeholders with internal supervision. Thus, the participation of faculties to departments (departments) at the University of North Sumatra in decision-making has a very important role because they have better information. Not only that, with the concept of Good

University Governance, increasing protection for stakeholders works better as an independent part of the university structure (Muljo, Wicaksono & Riantono, 2016).

In this section, good university governance at the University of North Sumatra in the future will be a reflection of success in producing quality alumni and ready to compete not only nationally but USU alumni are also ready to be used in the wider industry in the global world.

It is undeniable that achieving Good University Governance at USU requires hard work and high discipline in educating, conducting research and building public trust in the form of community service by maintaining local cultural values and international publications.

In the end, the University of North Sumatra must improve the quality of the qualifications of lecturers who have superior competence and high research productivity. In addition, the University of North Sumatra must also be able to raise funds by collaborating with business partners in developing business units that are managed independently with stakeholders.

Furthermore, higher education management mechanisms and organizations if you want to implement Good University Governance must adjust the Higher Education Statute policy, which is recorded in Law no. 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education, Government Regulation no. 4 of 2014 concerning the Implementation of Higher Education and Management of Higher Education, Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 49 of 2014 concerning National Standards for Higher Education (Kompas, 2017).

The University of North Sumatra was able to evaluate and complete the entire Strategic Plan process, the results of which were included in the 2015-2039 Long Term Plan (RJP) and the 2020-2024 USU Strategic Plan. The document describes all the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges that have been faced by USU accompanied by analysis to formulate further policies. The 2015-2039 Long Term Plan (RJP) document outlines the work program in five stages of the Strategic Plan. At the end of the RJP stage, it is hoped that the University of North Sumatra can further establish itself as a university that has advantages and becomes a global barometer in the field of competitive advantage TALENTA which covers seven fields, namely Tropical Science and Medicine, Agroindustry, Local Wisdom, Energy (sustainable), Natural Resources (biodiversity, forest, marine, mine, tourism), Technology (appropriate) and Arts (ethnic).

The 2020-2024 Strategic Plan contains the vision, mission, goals and objectives and outlines the second five-year work program which will serve as a guide for University leaders and administrators in implementing all plans that have been prepared based on input from the stakeholders of the University of North Sumatra to become a leading national university. with the highest accreditation and pioneering international recognition.

Discussions about strategy implementation have become increasingly popular in the last decade as there is a growing awareness that strategy implementation is far more important than strategy formulation. (Kaplan & Norton, 2008) shows the awareness of top management, practitioners and researchers that it is easier for organizations to formulate strategies, but it is still difficult to ensure strategies become real actions. According to (Okumus, 2003) this is because the literature has placed too much emphasis on the importance of formulating strategies and paid less attention to the problems of strategy implementation. (Nohria, N., Joyce, W. and Roberson, B. & Waberson, 2019) further proves that no single management concept can be considered the most successful method of improving organizational performance. It does not matter if the choice of organizational strategy, which is far more important is the effectiveness of strategy implementation as a more decisive factor. Practical gaps arise due to the lack of understanding of improving the quality of strategy implementation by practitioners and company management.

According to, Pella et al (2013) to analyze the implementation of the strategy can be done with an approach that is analyzing the stages of strategy implementation and analysis of the capabilities of supporting the implementation of the strategy (Pella, Sumarwan, Daryanto, & Kirbrandoko, 2013). The latest strategic management model emphasizes the relationship between performance measurement and strategy development (strategy development), strategy deployment (strategy deployment), and strategic control (strategy control) as a dynamic unitary model (Simon, 2000).

The success of strategy implementation is defined as the success of implementing the process to implement certain policies, programs, and actions that have been decided by management throughout the organization (Kendal & Harrington, 2006). Measurement uses indicators of the extent to which all parties contribute to the success of strategy implementation and the impact of strategy implementation on achieving organizational targets (Mittelman, 2018).

The strategy is carried out through an evaluation approach to internal and external factors that are used as the basis for strategy formulation. Strategy evaluation is also carried out by looking at organizational performance, namely by looking at the success of achieving the Key Performance Indicators that have been set in the Strategic Plan of the University of North Sumatra 2020-2024. Performance. The achievement of these Key Performance Indicators will be linked to the indicators in the QR World Class University criteria. In this context, the Chancellor of the University of North Sumatra, Dr. Muryanto Amin, M.Si, stated that: *“University of North Sumatra has been eyed by university ranking agencies to be included in the ranks of world campuses. We are currently in 1201+ position for the first time in ranking by QS Ranking. This is certainly good, but we must not stop here,”* Muryanto Amin set a high target by making the University of North Sumatra included in the ranks of the 1000 best campuses according to the QS Ranking in 2023. Furthermore, he targets that in his fifth year as Chancellor, USU will be in a circle. Top 500 campuses in the world (USU, 2021). From the results of this performance analysis, improvements are made to the 10 strategies that have been set and the University of North Sumatra Strategic Plan 2020-2024.

### 3.2 Innovative Research

One indicator of the nation's progress is the publication of research in international journals. The number of international publications shows that a country has abundant quality of Human Resources (HR). This is the main capital for carrying out sustainable development in the fields of science, social, culture and economy.

Publication in the international world can also maintain the continuity of knowledge and its benefits can be felt by people all over the world. In fact, the number of Indonesian international publications is still very low. This is because Indonesia is still ranked 4th in ASEAN in terms of publications after Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand in terms of international publications (Dikti, 2015).

This is a challenge for the University of North Sumatra as a higher education institution to continue to produce quality and innovative research. This responsibility must be seen as not only a routine obligation for teachers to continue to produce scientific content in the form of research. But it is also seen as a moral responsibility of USU's lecturers to

maximally conduct research whose benefits can be felt more broadly.

Institutionally when, Good University Governance is carried out by university stakeholders who are also related to research. Like; countries, corporations, universities, or philanthropists often open opportunities for competitive research grants. This means that understanding of research innovation can be seen more broadly in the function of the Tridharma of Higher Education in addition to teaching and community service. Moreover, policies that refer to the Regulation of the Minister for Empowerment of State Apparatus and Bureaucratic Reform (PAN RB), Number 17 of 2013, and Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 92 of 2014, the increase in the level of academic positions of lecturers requires publication in accredited national scientific journals and journals. international reputation in their field is appropriate in accordance with the needs of the wider university.

It's just a matter of how the stakeholders at the University of North Sumatra are able to stimulate every lecturer to be able to implement it in a tangible form and be willing to be tested academically. This is very important to do in order to strengthen the institutions of the University of North Sumatra (USU) towards superior accreditation and international recognition because the impact is very strong. Besides providing a stage for individual USU academics, the University of North Sumatra has also been accredited as an institution and has received recognition as a world-class university.

### 3.3 University Academic Culture

Academic culture is an important point in the progress of higher education. It is widely believed that the honesty and integrity of lecturers and students today are threatened by public pressure, an unsupportive research environment, and other factors that force many cases of plagiarism. Moreover, student motivation needs to be renewed, no longer limited to wanting to graduate quickly without qualified skills (Fanelli, 2015).

This is a challenge for the University of North Sumatra in creating an institutional university academic culture. This can be seen from the academic habits of students at the University of North Sumatra such as reading habits and adding knowledge and insight, writing, scientific discussions, and student organizations.

Because, in this section positive values such as honest, intelligent, caring, tough, responsible, religious and other positive values can be instilled at

the University of North Sumatra (USU). This format will take place naturally if the relationship between students and lecturers is more egalitarian in building campuses, especially in an academic format.

As a facilitator, it is the responsibility of the University of North Sumatra as an institution to provide comfortable spaces for study, adequate laboratories and libraries for students to conduct scientific studies (Finnegan, 2005).

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

The University of North Sumatra as a higher education institution is an integral part of its contribution not only locally but also nationally and internationally. It must be acknowledged that in the aim of strengthening institutions towards superior accreditation and international recognition (Salmi, 2009), it is not easy for the University of North Sumatra. Because it takes challenges that are innovative all the time.

Because the challenges for the University of North Sumatra must always run with idealism, consistency, novelty and academic tradition to meet every industry need to be able to compete optimally because of the challenges that are global in nature. This means that to achieve the target of the University of North Sumatra as a world-class university, it must always be able to read and adapt to the needs of the industrial world with patterns of scientific research whose economic and social benefits can be verified to gain scientific trust. This paper concludes that what the University of North Sumatra needs most is a new scheme for Institutional Strengthening at the University of Sumatra whose initial foundation is the best accreditation of each department and faculty which in the end is used as an indicator in the accreditation of the University of North Sumatra, which is very important in capturing the opportunities that exist which is the goal of the University of North Sumatra. maximizing the publication of international journals by academics at the University of North Sumatra.

Not only that, with this concept in the future, Human Resources (HR) for lecturers and staff who are oriented towards performance, integrity and integration of the academic community will automatically be able to always do something new in improving the quality of the academy towards global competition (Hazelkorn, 2016).

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