Research Article

Improving Education Quality for Higher Education Institutions in Eastern Indonesia: Approaches for Internationalisation Activities

Elni Jeini Usoh[1*], Damir Boras[2], Milos Judas[3]

[1]*Faculty of Language and Arts/Postgraduate Studies, Education Management Study Program, Universitas Negeri Manado, Jl. Kampus Unima, Sulawesi Utara, 95618, Indonesia.*

[2] *Rector University of Zagreb (2014-2022), Trg Republike Hrvatske 14, Zagreb, HR-10000 Croatia*

[3] *School of Medicine, University of Zagreb, Trg Republike Hrvatske 14, Zagreb, HR-10000, Croatia*

* Corresponding author: Elni Jeini Usoh, elni.usoh@unima.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Internationalisation plays a substantial role in the development of higher education. In order to anticipate all the globalisation challenges, higher education becomes a main source in producing university graduates who not only possess academic and professional capacities but also must be equipped with multilingual competence and intercultural understanding. This paper aims to explore the approaches for Internationalisation for higher education in Eastern Indonesia to improve the education quality. The study describes the level and approaches of internationalisation that can be adapted to prepare the university to fulfil some indicators of world-class University which lead to education quality improvement. This qualitative study used data from interviews, literature and relevant documents to insert the internationalisation elements in university strategic planning, to design Strategic Internationalisation Plan in higher education and to create a model of internationalisation approaches. Internationalisation needs to be implemented in the strategic focus plan of the university. The internationalisation awareness and commitments in higher education should be supported not only from government but also from upper management level and must be conducted in holistic way from all the components in higher education institution. The study provides a model of internationalisation approaches that could be adapted in higher education in Eastern Indonesia.

Keywords: Internationalisation; Higher education; Eastern Indonesia

1. Introduction

The topic of internationalisation in higher education is becoming a popular issue in academic environment. Internationalisation is not only a main goal for higher education institutions but also a tool to improve the quality of education.

Internationalisation plays a substantial role in the development of higher education. In order to anticipate all the globalisation challenges, higher education becomes a main source in producing university graduates who not only possess academic and professional capacities but also must be equipped with multilingual competence and intercultural understanding. It is an urgent need for Indonesian higher

education institutions to produce graduates with international qualifications who can confidently compete with graduates of overseas universities. Furthermore, they are expected to be able to actively participate in improving the country's productivity and competitiveness.

The Directorate General of Higher Education (DGHE) of Indonesia is highly concerned with efforts and initiatives to support higher education institutions in Indonesia to achieve international standards. Although those institutions have reached different levels in their efforts toward internationalisation, DGHE believes that all institutions share the same visions and interests. DGHE is continually trying to empower Indonesian higher education institutions to produce high quality level of education and uniqueness in order to compete at the international level.

However, the higher education institutions in eastern Indonesia are struggling hard to speed up their quality in order to boost up their national ranking, as well as their international ranking. It would probably take a long and sustained effort to reach the international standard. There are many challenges and obstacles to be resolved in order to make these institutions competitive at the international level.

Furthermore, the improvement of education quality in Indonesia shows a slow progress. There are only several universities in Indonesia which are included in top 500 universities in the world according to QS, Times Higher Education and Academic Ranking of World Universities. This suggests that higher education institutions in Indonesia still have relatively poor academic standards, as well as a low quantity and quality of academic research. Most studies confirmed that it is due to insufficient funding, the shortage of human resources, and poor incentive structure and management[19].

The Boston Consulting Group conducted a study in 2013 which predicted that Indonesia companies would be left behind due to the lack of quality and talent and that by 2020 Indonesia workforce in upper management level, would not possesses global knowledge and leadership skills to sustain the competitiveness in national and global competition[20].

However, higher education institutions in Indonesia still have the opportunities to overcome the internationalisation challenges. In the middle of the struggling to reach world-class university status, Indonesian higher education may focus their internationalisation activities according to their opportunities. A strategy to be applied for example reach the "low hanging fruit", it is to focus on the internationalisation activities that can be high potentially implemented. The key is to counter every challenge with creating opportunity.

In term of low academic quality standards, the opportunity that can be done is to improve competitiveness and quality, to focus on improving quality across staffing, programs teaching, and research in international level to effectively compete globally. The challenge of international accreditation status or certification for study program, the university can find the opportunity to develop research capabilities, international collaboration and try to meet the criteria in international accreditation/certification. The challenge of limited research and international journal publication, the university may take action to expand the international collaboration and scientific progression. The challenge of unemployment graduates, the university should diversify curriculum, and designing educational programs that align with workforce skill requirements.

Therefore, it is crucial to set the direction and to increase initial efforts to approach internationalisation. Moreover, the existing research and literature on internationalisation of higher education in Indonesia is very limited, particularly when it comes to the focus on the approach of implementation in Eastern part of Indonesian higher education.

This paper attempts to describe substantial approaches that could be done by higher education institutions in Eastern Indonesia by considering their culture and condition. The purpose of the study is to explore the initial approaches of higher education internationalisation in the eastern part of Indonesia towards internationalisation to improve education quality.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of Internationalisation

Definitions of internationalisation differ with respect to different approaches. Sometimes, the internationalisation is taken as more or less equal to globalisation. Internationalisation and globalisation are different, but they rely on closely related processes. Globalisation plays a significant role in triggering the higher education internationalisation process[11]. Thus, globalisation can be considered as the catalyst and the internationalisation represents a response[13].

As a concept, internationalisation came into the higher education vocabulary during the early 1970s. It was aimed to ensure that students and staff should spend at least some time working abroad, as a necessary requirement for their degree qualification and preparation procedure. On the other hand, the globalisation puts the emphasis on knowledge, technology, resources, individual thoughts and culture amongst nations of the world[12].

There are several identified reasons that direct the university institutions to the perspectives of internationalisation, such as: high tuition fees for international students; diversified academic staff and students with international experience; inclusion of an international dimension in teaching and research; increasing the status and international reputation of the institution; improving the quality of education and student experience; preparing graduates for global careers; maintaining international security and peaceful relations; exchange of educational products and services; and achieving the international standards[16].

Internationalisation of higher education can be described as the process of integrating an international/intercultural element into the teaching, research and service function[14]. Another definition of internationalisation states that internationalisation is a response of a nation to the effect of globalisation and it is "any systematic, sustained efforts aimed at making higher education responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalisation of societies, economy and labour markets"[18].

2.2. Higher Education Internationalisation in Indonesia

Internationalisation has now become unavoidable for higher education institutions to improve their quality and competitiveness. Scholars have argued that internationalisation bestows great contribution both for institutions and for government.

The Indonesian government has emphasised the need for internationalisation for universities through the 2003-2010 Higher Education Long Term Strategy which declared that universities in Indonesia were expected to significantly improve their competitiveness and quality so that they could compete globally[4]. There are several national programs of internationalisation employed by the Ministry of Higher Education Research and Technology to stimulate universities in Indonesia to establish their internationalisation programs. However, these initiatives are progressing quite slowly; at present, only nine Indonesian universities are designated as world-class university namely the Universitas Indonesia (UI) Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), Universitas Gajah Mada (UGM), Universitas Padjajaran, Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB), Universitas Airlangga, Universitas Diponegoro, Institut Teknologi Sepuluh November, Universitas Brawijaya[7]. There are no universities in the Eastern Indonesia region that have reached international level for university ranking.

The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in 2014 issued the Decree No. 14, on international cooperation in higher education. It has supported universities in conducting international research collaboration. The government has a budget allocated for university faculty members with competitive research grants for international research collaboration. In regards to the globalisation of education, the Ministry of Education and Culture has stimulated universities to propose joint degrees, double degrees, transfer/credit earning, joint publications, and joint seminars in institutions and collaborate with world-class universities. It has also supported the ASEAN International Mobility for Students programmes[10].

However, higher education institutions (HEI) in Eastern Indonesia are struggling hard to fulfil the indicators for national and international university ranking. It is an urgent need for Indonesian HEI to produce graduates with international qualifications.

2.3. Concept of Internationalisation Approach Model in Higher Education

Higher education institutions in Indonesia are in need to have the model of internationalisation approach. Internationalisation is a relatively new activity, particularly for higher education in the Eastern part of Indonesia. Many universities are willing to get involved in the internationalisation process, but at the same time they are not able to set the right direction and starting point to initiate and implement the process in a holistic way. That is the reason why the internationalisation progress is quite slow and has, as a consequence, a low ranking of university. This has been also noted by Sutrisno, 2019[20] who stated that the slow progress of internationalisation can be attributed to national and organisational issues. Indonesia has no integrated policy on internationalisation. The government has urged the universities to upgrade the status for world-class university but did not complement it with the clear road map.

The discourse in internationalisation shows that internationalisation in higher education is an exceptionally dynamic framework[23]. The theoretical frameworks by Zhou (2016)[23] present a distinctive approach structure to manage the internationalisation system. Internationalisation of higher education could be implemented in five levels from global level to personal level. These frameworks are interconnected and independent, it requires a good coordination and consistency to operate the system[24].

The model of Internationalisation approach designed by Zhou, 2016[23] (see **Figure 1**) can be adopted to higher education in Indonesia. This model can be used to assist in measuring and guiding the internationalisation activities. The internationalisation approach model from Zhou, 2016[23] can be classified into five levels, on the top level is Global Level, for the context of internationalisation across the countries in terms of economic development, students skill to compete globally, or technology, the second level is National Level, it represents the internationalisation which is in accordance with nation's cultures and values, the internationalisation activities could be implemented in the form of student mobility and cultural exchange program, the third level is Institutional Level as individual institutions, such as the mission of university which involve internationalisation program at home. The fourth level is the Program Level, it represents the specific requirement of internationalisation in various disciplines. The last level is the Personal Level, it focuses on personal activities and skills of internationalisation, such as; staff courses and training, curriculum and extracurricular activities, or professional development on internationalisation issues for academic staff.
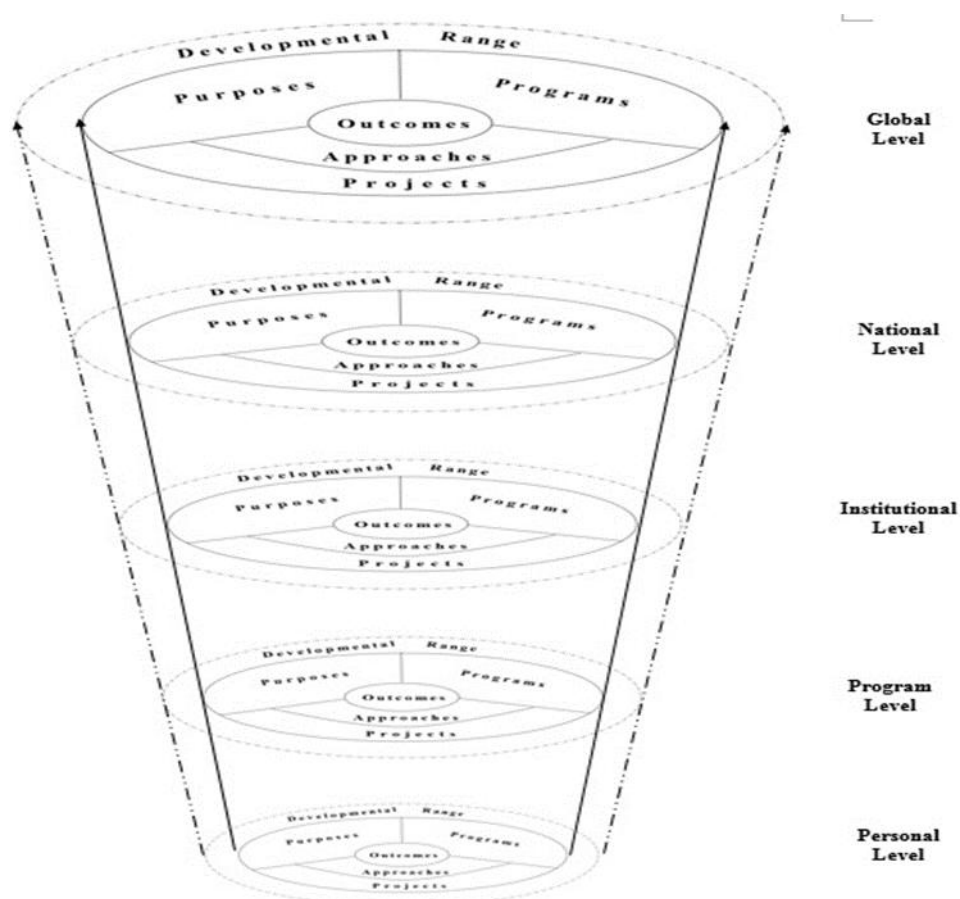
Figure 1. A dynamic framework of internationalisation of higher education. A systematic approach model in internationalisation of higher education. (Adapted from Zhou, 2016)[23].

This approach model may be considered as a systematic system which consist of the required elements in internationalisation implementation. It is noticeable that the model could be an essential instrument to guide the activities of internationalisation implementation in a comprehensive way.

2.4. Internationalisation Activities in relation to Quality Improvement of Higher Education in Indonesia

Internationalisation activities in higher education may lead the education institutions to good reputation particularly in international level. To be globally recognised Indonesian higher education should improve their qualities especially for universities envisioned as a world-class university.

The position of world-class university bestows many benefits and prestigious image. However, there are so many requirements that needs to be conducted. Indonesian higher education institutions need to be holistically improved their qualities and reform the pivotal sectors such as funding, policy, academic and access to increase rankings in regional and global levels[8].

Internationalisation activities bring impact on university's global recognition and position as well as support the university existence to function as education institutions. As the results of internationalisation university will have staff with global standard qualifications, research publications in peer-reviewed journals, international collaboration in research, student and staff mobility, teaching and learning with international exposure, and international students' enrolment[15].

There are several factors that affect the quality of higher education institutions such as governance, community service, curriculum, learning process, human resources, academic atmosphere, research, student affairs, and finance[1,3]. According to OECD[17] the other supporting factors to optimise the education quality are; education policy, facilities, information and communication technology, affordable tuition fee, education management, human resources and stakeholders.

Therefore, to improve education quality in higher education institutions, they must have the strategies to combine all the influential factors of quality with internationalisation activities.

2.5. The Necessity to Enhance Higher Education Quality through Internationalisation Strategies

Indonesian higher education institutions are in urgent situation to enhance their education quality. The current education institution standard demands a university to have a good quality, good image, higher world ranking and excellent reputation. Most government encourage universities to enhance their internationalisation program through international collaboration and technology exchange.

In comparison to other ASEAN countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and The Philippines, Indonesia higher education institutions were incapable to boost up their internationalisation activities. In Malaysia for example, the government had a national plan to attract foreign universities, staff and international students, developing international collaboration, created university corridor hubs such as Kuala Lumpur Education City and set the investments in joint industry, university research hubs and facilities[5].

The Indonesian government has failed to integrate the national and extensive policy program to support internationalisation in higher education system. In contrast, the government ambitiously declared to establish world-class universities in Indonesia but it does not come with the guideline of the details how to achieve the goals and objectives. Moreover, the university leaders lack of managerial skills and proven track to manage the advance and sophisticated internationalisation activities program[20].

Internationalisation strategies are critically needed for every Indonesian higher education institution to improve education quality. Through internationalisation higher education institution may increase its quality to global level. The quality improvement will lead the university to better position, higher university ranking, good reputation and developed to be internationally recognised.

Internationalisation of higher education is not only an option but a requirement in the modern and competitive world. It delivers great impact and positive outcomes to entire higher education stakeholders, enhanced academic quality, improved reputation, and the development of a more capable human resources that is equipped to navigate the complexities of a globalised society.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Questions

Based on the above discussion, there are four interrelated research questions for this study. These are (1) What are the challenges for higher education internationalisation implementation in Eastern Indonesia? (2) What are the potential activities for internationalisation approaches from the five-levels perspective (Global, National, Institutional, Program and Personal) (3) What are the strategies and policies which can drive the internationalisation process? (4) What are the expected outcomes of the Internationalisation program?

3.2. Qualitative Method

This research has been performed by using the exploratory qualitative research method. We conducted in-depth interviews and explored the documents and literature related to the university's internationalisation

program. From the literature analysis, several key issues and themes were identified linked to the internationalisation of universities, to inform the interviews.

Table 1. Key Topics for Interview.

		Key Themes in Interview
1	Challenges	Government and institution funding
		International collaboration
		Facilities and infrastructure
		Qualified human resources
2	Approaches	Global level
		National level
		Institutional level
		Program level
		Personal level
3	Strategies	University Strategic planning
		Strategic Internationalisation Plan
4	Outcomes	University ranking
		World class university status
		Continuity of internationalisation program

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten respondents who held a position as heads of international office and secretary of international office, with at least two years of experience in their duties. They were involved in international office activities.

The heads and secretaries of international office are also having position as academic staff. The International Office is led by the Head of International Office who responsible to the University Rector. The Head in daily basis is assisted by secretary of international office. This department is responsible for designing the annual international office work plan. The overall tasks as Head of International Office and Secretary are as follows:

-Coordinating the internationalisation program in faculties and study programs such as initiating the international class, visiting lecturer and guest lecturer,

-Coordinating the visit to foreign countries in the context of developing collaboration

-Disseminating information about international scholarship, workshop, short courses, training for academic staff and students

-Ensuring the international collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding mechanism and followed by implementation starting with a Memorandum of Agreement, and a Memorandum of Implementation,

-Responsible the database of MoU and MoA and its update

-Initiating the collaboration with international stakeholders such as universities, companies/industries and NGO.

-Arranging cooperation meetings with international partners/potential partners.

-Be a spokesperson between universities and cooperation partners at the faculty and university level and prepare the collaboration documents.

- Coordinating and facilitating services for foreign students, and immigration process.

Based on the job description above, the Head and Secretary of International Office are the most capable respondents to be interviewed. They are the key persons to implement the internationalisation activities in university.

The interview duration was 45 minutes to one hour. After the interviews, the respondents had the opportunity to read the interview transcript and provide feedback, if necessary, before the researcher concludes the interview results.

The location of the study were five major public universities in Eastern Indonesia. These universities were chosen due to the similarity of their characteristics as public universities in the eastern part of Indonesia. The age range of the staff were 40-55 years old, males and females.

The results from this study can be applied to other similar institutions, particularly for higher education institution in pursuing of internationalisation.

4. Results and Findings

4.1. Challenges for Internationalisation Implementation in Eastern Indonesian Higher Education

It is evident that higher education institutions in Indonesia particularly in eastern part faced many challenges in implementing their internationalisation program. Internationalisation implementation is also relatively a new program for Eastern Indonesian higher education. The main challenges are most likely due to insufficient government and institution fund, lack of international collaboration and its implementation, poor facilities and infrastructure, and shortage of qualified human resources.

The implementation of internationalisation activities such as joint degree or double degree program, students and academic staff mobility, and research collaboration is facing difficulties due to financial constraints. In addition, some universities not only have a limited number of international collaboration but also no implementation from MoU documents. Almost all the MoU documents were signed by two or more universities but ended up, i.e., expired without any implementation. The lack of facilities and infrastructure is also becoming the main challenge hindering the internationalisation progress. The existing facilities and infrastructure are inadequate and not compatible with academic requirements for international standards.

The most significant challenge to internationalisation is in the sphere of human resources. Most of the academic staff has limited international experience and lack of professional capability in comparison to their foreign counterparts. In addition, English language barrier of academic staff and students is the most common issue that slows the progress of internationalisation. The lack of competence in English makes it hard for lecturers and students to engage in the internationalisation activities, for example in publishing in the international journal, research collaboration with foreign universities, and activities for teaching and learning in international class.

In fact, poor English literacy of academic staff and students is still a major constraint to implement internationalisation activities. As Indonesian is a mother tongue and national language and used in daily basis communication, it become a difficulty for most Indonesian people to speak English fluently. The education system is delivered in Bahasa Indonesia except for exclusive international school or international class in university which is very expensive and unaffordable for low and middle-income community. It needs a big effort and persistency to master English for every student. This lacks English proficiency factor leads to low international exposure both for academic staff and students.

Most of academic staff pursued their higher education in Indonesia, only limited amount who graduated from foreign universities or from world class universities. This situation makes it harder for the university to

have international qualification of academic staff who have international exposure and global experience. It also difficult for them to encourage their students to have multiculture experience, improve their English competency, and apply the international students exchange program.

Those challenges are confirmed by the respondents as follows:

"I think, the challenges of internationalisation are the lack of motivation from institutional leaders, incapability of human resources to find ideas, seek partners for collaboration and language barrier. On top of that, the lack of internationalisation funding is still a problem, that's why our infrastructure and facilities are still below the international standard".

Moreover, collaboration with international partners must be equal, but who wants to collaborate with the big gap differences of facilities and infrastructure? The internationalisation progress sometimes just at the stage of ideas and on the paper of MoU, only few of them come to realisation. Therefore, we need sufficient fund to increase collaboration, prepare the appropriate infrastructure and facilities and certainly to upgrade the capability of human resources to ready for internationalisation". (Respondent 2 University B).

"In my opinion, the challenges are first coming from the term of "internationalisation" as a relatively recent concept for us. As a result, implementation has been delayed, particularly for small campuses situated in Eastern Indonesia and/or outside of Java Island. Universities, particularly those that have been established for a long period of time and are situated in Java, "internationalisation" is no longer a novel concept for them since it has been successfully implemented".

The greatest obstacle to internationalization at my university is the low quality of human resources, which includes lecturers and administrators. Additionally, the facilities that fall short of international standards is a problem….and the challenge of obtaining funds to carry out improvements in accordance with international standards must also be addressed". (Respondent 4, University C).

"I believe that these constraints are inextricably tied to budgeting. The limited amount of available budgets and the difficulties in accessing them add another layer of complexity. Infrastructure development that needs a substantial budget must be planned long in advance, taking into account the period necessary for budget payment. The same can be said true for collaborative program implementation. Usually, collaborative program with partners outside Indonesia need a reasonably large budget, experience and expertise of academic staff and hence require approval from the institution's leader. This is often the most significant problem; the budget might not be approved due to the large amount. Improving the quality of human resources works in the same way". (Respondent 5, University C).

"I consider that Internationalisation process costs too much money particularly to develop the capabilities and quality of human resources. This funding will be utilised for their education and other expenses associated with their professional field of study. Therefore, there are several issues that must be addressed in order to fully resolve all of the current issues, but the most pressure one is the support of

policymakers for any and all activities that have the potential to strengthen the internationalisation process. The determination of this policy must begin at the most basic level, at the institutional level, and work its way up to the highest level, which is at the ministry level". (Respondent 1, University A).

Referring to the above statements, it is noticeable that internationalisation process is not an easy task for educational leaders in Eastern Indonesia. They have to strive and put much effort to overcome these challenges. However, all of the issues mentioned above need to be addressed immediately in a comprehensive way from the bottom to top layer of educational leaders.

The indicator of education quality to improve the knowledge and skill of human resources should be done without delaying. The academic staff improvement and students' mobility must be put in official regulation and policy from the top university leader and supported by the central government.

The internationalisation strategy to overcome these challenges should be prioritized. The academic staff should be encouraged to pursue their education in world class university in foreign countries to be experienced the international academic atmosphere. Additionally, they can have short-term exchange research program, international workshops and trainings. This can lead to their international networking to collaborate with international academic and world-class researcher for their joint research and international publications. The top students should apply for students exchange program and have their intensive English class to overcome their lack English proficiency.

This is aligned to the study of Lambey, et.al (2024)[15] which stated that internationalisation plan requires key stakeholders along the process. The key stakeholders are the central and regional governments; universities; and industry. Central government must provide internationalisation incentives. This requires objectives, programs, and engagement. At the central level, world-class universities can be invited and supported to establish regional campuses and partnerships, including international research, establish the investment agreements. In terms of quality improvement of academic staff inside the university; academic staff/professor from foreign country can be funded for short-term appointments, and local staff can be funded to attend international universities to have post-graduate qualifications. Therefore, internationalisation can be created into collaboration, funding agreement and quality assurance models governing universities.

4.2. Approaches in Internationalisation

Internationalisation may benefit the institutions to elevate the national and international recognition, strengthen the strategic partnership, expand the academic networking, generate intellectual resources, boost learning outcomes of student experience, and enhance research groups. While for governments, internationalisation may contribute to develop the higher education system to global framework, produce competitive graduates with global mind set and multicultural competencies, utilise education funds to boost up higher education institutions participation in global economy, and generate benefit in education service[9]. Hence, the robust approaches should be initiated both from government and higher education institutions.

Approaches in internationalisation should be complemented with commitment and strong leadership. Higher education institutions leaders have a duty to include the whole important elements into the internationalisation program and have to be brave enough to execute the program. The approaches must involve the participation of stakeholders such as university leaders, lecturers, administration staff, students, university partners and community.

Reflecting from the internationalisation approaches model from Zhou (2016)[23], the internationalisation approaches can be divided into five levels. The detail of the approaches can be seen in **Table 2** which reveals

the possible activities with five levels of internationalisation. The components of projects and activities can be combined by referring to other scholars' discourses about activities to engage with internationalisation. Another concept about activities components that can be adopted and inserted in internationalisation approach is from Hawawini (2011)[6]. It has a description about clusters and modes of internationalisation engagement. The chosen activities (see **Table 2**) are considered potential to be implemented in higher education institution in Indonesia, particularly in Eastern part.

Table 2. Internationalisation Approach Activities.

Levels	Approaches	Projects and Activities	Outcomes	General Outcomes
Global	Transnational Engagement	Project: International collaboration and Mobility Initiatives Activities: -Collaboration and partnerships with foreign institutions -Dual, double, and joint degrees -Multi-site joint degrees -Articulation agreements, twinning, franchising -Research intensive partnerships -Strategic alliances -Exchange and mobility programs -Study abroad programs, internships, service learning -Research projects and prácticums	-Joint Degrees program -Double Degrees program -International Class	
National	Network Building	Project: Networking and Campus Culture Activities: -Academic and scholarly networks -Consortia -Alumni networks -Recognising and understanding International culture, international ethos -Engaged leadership	International Academic Networking	-University ranking -World class university status -Continuity of internationalisation program
Institutional Program	Management of Institutional Demography	Project: Internationalisation at home Activities: -International Students recruitment -International lecturers recruitment -Visiting lecturers and researchers -Visiting delegations -International short courses, conferences, seminars -Summer extension program -Language acquisition program -EMI (English as Medium Instruction) training for lecturers	Internationalisation Academic Atmosphere	
	Curricular and Pedagogical Change	Project: Internationalisation in Academic and non-Academic Activities: -Incremental curricular change -Foreign language and culture	Improve Students and academic staff engagement in internationalisation	

Table 2. (*Continued*)

Levels	Approaches	Projects and Activities	Outcomes	General Outcomes
		-Cross-culture communication and inter-culture competency -New pedagogical and learning technologies -Extra-curricular and student-initiated activities		
Personal	Faculty Initiatives	Project: Academic Staff Professional Development Activities: -Academic program leadership -Teaching and curriculum development -Research Collaboration -International journal publications -Extra-curricular activities -Curricular and extracurricular activities on internationalisation issues	Human Resources improvement	

Most of the respondents explicitly commented on the components required in internationalisation activities. The responses regarding the approach activities are as follows:

> "I believe that, internationalisation of higher education is a term that refers to the process of advancing the implementation of quality standards from local and/or regional to international levels. The process of "internationalising" an institution of higher education entails and refers to the acceptance of globally recognised university services. Two indications are the percentage of international students and the incorporation of international programs at an institution". (Respondent 1, University A).

> "I assume, there are no significant ripples in the trend of internationalisation on a wide scale at this time on my university. The growth in academic papers has been considered as the most noticeable aspect of the internationalisation process. The university has allocated a budget that is much higher than in past years in order to encourage more lecturers' publications in reputable international journals. As a result, it is linked to the personal objectives of each lecturer. In accomplishing that goal might accelerate the path to professorship. In other words, a rapid increase in the number of professors has an impact on both the quality of the institutions and the Indonesia as a whole. According to expectations, the overall quality of education in Indonesia will improve because of this undertaking". (Respondent 4, University C).

> "International activities in my university mostly obtain from the total number of citations in the international journals authored by university's lecturers. It is expected that as the number of citations rises, the name of our university will become more well-known. This, of course, has the potential to improve the internationalisation of university in educational field. With any luck, the progressive growth in internationalization will expand to other fields as a result of this resolution". (Respondent 5, University C).
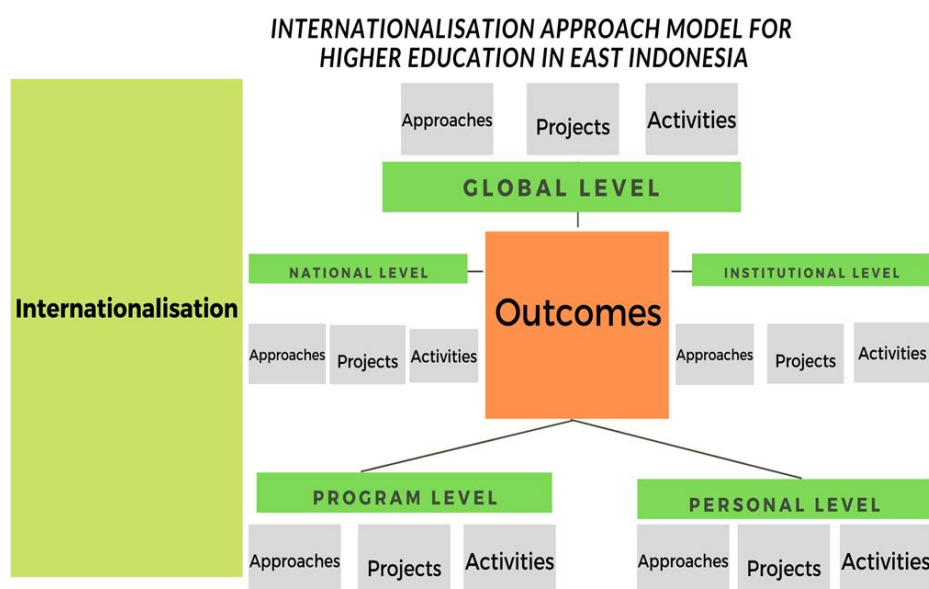
4.3. Internationalisation Approach Model for Higher Education in East Indonesia

Concerning the internationalisation approach, higher education institution needs to select the appropriate model which identifying all the important approaches, projects and activities to support the internationalisation implementation. Internationalisation process requires innovative, transformative and creative activities to support the progress of internationalisation. The approach model could assist to define targets and set timelines and to measure the outcomes.

Inspiring by the approach internationalisation model postulated by Zhou (2016)[23], the modified model of internationalisation of higher education in East Indonesia could be seen at **Figure 2**. The model from Zhou (2016), has been simplified to be more applicable and suitable for higher education in Indonesia particularly in its Eastern part. Each level in internationalisation has three components namely approaches, projects, activities. All of the implementations of the components will lead to the outcomes of internationalisation.

The approach model for the university was adapted from Zhou, 2016[23]. There are no significant different due to this model is considered can be easily implemented. This internationalisation model can be intertwined with all the aspect of internationalisation level. It embraces the wholistic activities that can be applied within those five levels of internationalisation program.

This model is suitable with the higher education condition, particularly in Eastern Indonesia; where the internationalisation activities are relatively new things for the internationalisation office compare to the universities in Western Indonesia. Through this adapted model, the international office may be guided to have their own strategies and action plan. All the internationalisation activities can be clustered into five different levels. It encourages every part of university to be actively involved in internationalisation activities. The steps that can be done are clear which every activity may have their own approach of internationalisation initiation. The next part, they can design the project that fit to their department. The third step is determining the activities, which each related department can take action to execute their internationalisation activities.

Figure 2. Internationalisation Approach Model for Higher Education in East Indonesia

Some of the key activities in approach model of internationalisation are confirmed by the participants as important aspects to boost internationalisation progress. Below are the sample statements of the respondents regarding to this issue:

> "I think the main activities for internationalisation approach can be varied in many universities, in my university I can say….from global level it can be the promotion of our university profile to international stakeholders. For example, the first step is to approach world-class university to collaborate with us then we can proceed to set the related project of internationalisation and breakdown the activities. In national level first we can work together with the national institution and escalate the activities with internationalisation aspect, for example we build collaboration within three parties, which is university, local government and foreign university, and the activities could be conducted in the shape of research, workshop, training and consultation. In institutional level we can do internationalisation activities in the form of curriculum, encourage EMI English as Medium Instruction therefore we should evaluate the proper partner to collaborate with. Meanwhile, at the program level the activities could be various internationalisation program in many disciplines of studies, in these activities we can choose the right program to be explored, and for the personal level I think it could be the internationalisation program for individual student and academic staff professional development. It is also an important level so we can prepare the capable person to participate in internationalisation process". (Respondent 3, University B).

> "It is important to put in mind that all the activities of University Internationalisation should have SOP, standard operating procedure in all levels. It should be well prepared documented. The digitalisation system is crucial to record all the international activities which may lead the University for global recognition". (Respondent 9, University E).

It seems the participants have no clear clue about what should be the appropriate approach model of internationalisation, however the answers to the interview question about the approach model can be related to the component activities in internationalisation approach and should be well documented and using digitalisation.

Therefore, this approach model could be adopted by institutional leaders particularly for higher education in East Indonesia. The model may assist international office of universities to have a clear approaches and strategies to improve the internationalisation practice in higher education.

4.4. Strategies for Internationalisation: Integrating Internationalisation in Strategic Planning

The main purpose of strategic planning in higher education is to guide the institution and develop strategies with measurable goals to reach universities' missions and visions. Each institution's strategic planning document is a vital document in higher education. Strategic planning should not only be a compulsory document but also must represent an image of the university's excellence in the future, with realistic targets to be achieved. The noticeable indicator of whether strategic planning can be successfully implemented is the ability to select the right strategic targets and provide adequate resources to fulfil the targets. This condition leads to the improvement of organisational performance[21].

The goal of Indonesian higher education strategic planning is to compete at the national level by 2015 and at the international level by 2020. Nevertheless, international recognition for higher education

institutions in Indonesia particularly in Eastern part are still left far behind from South-East neighbourhood countries such as Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Philippines.

Therefore, it needs a huge reformation in designing strategic planning for higher education. The document should emphasise the dimension of internationalisation commitment. The internationalisation of the university is a key element in its strategic plan. It is essential to have an integrated vision and mission of the institution with respect to the internationalisation program. Strategic planning should provide clear goals of the higher education institution with internationalisation program. By inserting the approach of internationalisation, strategic planning can be designed comprehensively which administered the challenges and possible solutions, potential projects/activities for internationalisation program, and expected outcomes.

The main narrative on integrating internationalisation in strategic planning has been revealed by the interviewed as follows:

> "I'm not sure if we already integrate internationalisation in strategic planning, but I believe that one of the strategies done by my university in terms of internationalisation policies is to improve the quality of all sectors of engagement on university by engaging in international accreditation. We hope that by involving at this international accreditation, we can optimise our efforts to catch up with other universities that have already implemented university internationalisation strategies". (Respondent 1, University A).

> "One of the steps our institution takes to enhance university internationalisation is to continuously monitor the implementation of internationalisation-related activities. We put this activity in our strategic plan. This ongoing oversight is intended to ensure that university services adhere to international standards. One of them is constantly updating collaborative activities in the context of academic with international partner universities." (Respondent 6, University D).

> "The university strategic planning in our university put the items of improving institutional programs for internationalisation. One of them is to prepare resources and look for potentials partners. It is also included the strength of university to attract international partners to collaborate with our institution." (Respondent 2, University B).

4.5. Strategic Internationalisation Plan

Governments are increasingly viewing the internationalisation of higher education as important factor in the country's economic development, trade and reputation. Government endeavours to increase the internationalisation progress as can be seen in encouraging students and staff mobility, increasing the existence of foreign branch campuses, and competition for international talents and higher education. National Higher Education Internationalisation Strategy and Plan represents the most practical and direct attempt by the government to play an active and decisive role in the internationalisation, with distinctive approaches, rationales and priorities[2].

Strategic internationalisation plan could be initiated by recognising the actual condition of higher education institutions. The study about world-class University status: Higher Education in Eastern Indonesia confirm that by identifying the significant indicators for world-class university, the institution can organise the strategy mapping. The indicators should be inserted in university strategic planning and the university should endorse the supporting policies to implement the indicators in action plan. The interview results from

previous research suggested that policies to be implemented included: improving the quality human resources, expanding research and international publications, improving teaching performance, improving student's employability, developing infrastructure and facilities, increasing university funding, and expanding national and international collaboration[22]. These indicators for initiating world-class universities could be adopted in designing the strategic internationalisation plan and approach model of internationalisation.

In terms of strategic internationalisation plan for higher education institutions in Eastern Indonesia the participants indicated as follows:

> "I believe, our institution bases its internationalisation efforts on the input from faculty and department heads who are responsible for the implementation and evaluation of teaching and administrative staff performance. Additionally, in designing our strategic internationalisation plan we put highly consideration of the demands of the industrialised sector, which are very competitive, with a focus on the quality of graduates". (Respondent 1, University A).

> "In managing strategic internationalisation plan, our university is keep exploring cooperation with international stakeholders and also developing infrastructure and facilities to support internationalisation, although it still below the expectation but we try to move forward and keep trying to improve the infrastructure and facilities". (Respondent 2, University B).

So far, the key components of strategic internationalisation plan have been identified and shared by the above universities. The important components such as market demands, quality of the graduates, international stakeholders, infrastructure and facilities have been administered into their strategic internationalisation plan.

4.6. Expected outcomes of internationalisation program

The internationalisation program is expected to bestow the advantageous outcomes for higher education institutions. Therefore, the program should be put in the dynamic and integrated system to bring the excellent outcomes. The internationalisation implementation has contributed to enhance the performance and quality of institutions. Although facing many challenges, higher education institutions particularly in the Eastern part in Indonesia maintain their efforts to take part in internationalisation process.

According to the interview themes, the expected outcomes of the internationalisation are the increase of university ranking, enabling the university to achieve the world class university status and the continuity of internationalisation program. The interview results show that the respondents realise those aspects as the expected outcomes of internationalisation implementation, as stated below:

> "To my opinion, the internationalisation program that must be prioritised is the improvement of human resource quality. I think that by focusing first on improving the level of human resources, other programs will be accomplished gradually. This is because the quality of human resources has improved, and they are now capable of considering more internationalisation actions. So, the impact of the competent human resources can lead to the continuity of internationalisation program". (Respondent 1, University A).

> "I believe the outcomes of internationalisation can be achieved in the practice of international academic atmosphere in teaching and learning. To bring that

atmosphere, the implementation program in institution could be in the form of staff mobility for example to work or train in abroad universities. We are in the transformation progress from teaching to a research university. If we can learn from highly reputable university then it will be better for the sustainability of internationalisation program in our university". (Respondent 4, University C).

"We expected is that our institution is known at the international level. The priority in the coming years is to introduce the institution to stakeholders who have not been reached and also to develop resources to be known to the outside world because then the institution can be known at the international level. Thus, the expected outcome of this internationalisation implementation is to be globally recognised and I hope it will effect in the international university ranking. At the long term it will lead us to the status of world-class university". (Respondent 6, University D).

"The obvious expected outcomes that through internationalisation activities, we could increase international academic atmosphere in teaching and learning in a professional, accountable and transparent manner". (Respondent 10, University E).

5. Conclusion

The challenges in internationalisation should be addressed carefully with the right solution. It is crucial for institution to increase budget for internationalisation, design sustainable implementation of collaboration based on MoU's and MoA's documents, upgrading facilities and infrastructure which would match the international standard, and establish programs for professional development of human resources.

The model of internationalisation approaches may become a milestone to generate the internationalisation implementation and to set priorities and expected outcomes of internationalisation program. The approach model may provide a framework to comprehend, evaluate, and facilitate institution to implement internationalisation in a deliberate, efficient, and effective way.

Internationalisation needs to be in strategic focus plan of the university. A strategic plan should be functioning impeccably to execute the strategies. The initiatives for the strategic internationalisation plan must be in line with government's development plan in terms of economic, human resources, education curriculum and labour market demands. A strategic internationalisation plan is a vital tool for guiding, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of internationalisation and at the end lead to education quality improvement.

Thus, the internationalisation awareness and commitments in higher education should be supported not only from government but also from upper management level. It must be conducted in holistic way and orchestrate all related components in higher education institutions.

Acknowledgements

Prof. Milos Judas, PhD as a Vice Rector for Science, Inter-Institutional Cooperation and International Relations, University of Zagreb, Croatia.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

1. Allam, Z. (2018). Students' Perception of Quality in Higher Education: An Empirical Investigation. Management Science Letters, 8(5), 437–444. https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2018.4.002.
2. De Wit. H., Deca. L. 2020. Internationalization of Higher Education, Challenges and Opportunities for the Next Decade. In. A. Curaj et al. (eds.), European Higher Education Area: Challenges for a New Decade. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56316-5_1. Retrieved from: https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2F978-3-030-56316-5_1.pdf.
3. Díez, F., Villa, A., López, A. L., & Iraurgi, I. (2020). Impact of Quality Management Systems in The Performance of Educational Centers: Educational Policies and Management Processes. Heliyon, 6(4). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e03824.
4. DGHE, (2004). Higher Education Long Term Strategy 2003-2010. Jakarta: Indonesian Directorate General Higher Education (DGHE).
5. Grapragasem S, Krishnan A, Mansor A. (2014). Current trends in Malaysian higher education and the effect on education policy and practice: An overview. International Journal of Higher Education. 2014;3(1):85-93.
6. Hawawini, G. (2011). The internationalization of higher education institution: A critical review and a radical proposal (INSEAD Working Paper No. 2011/112/FIN). http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1954697
7. Harususilo, Y. (2018). The best 9 universities in Indonesia. Retrieved from Harian Kompas: https://edukasi.kompas.com/read/2018/06/13/11511331/infografik-ini-dia-9- universitas-terbaik-indonesia-versi-qs-world, June 13, 2018.
8. Hill H, Wie T. (2013). Education in Indonesia. In: Indonesian Universities: Rapid Growth, Major Challenges. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
9. Hénard, F., Diamond, L., & Roseveare, D. (2012). Approaches to Internationalisation and Their Implications for Strategic Management and Institutional Practice: A Guide for Higher Education Institutions. OECD higher Education Programme.
10. Jamil. H., Ling. O.P. 2018. Institutional Policies and Initiatives for the Internationalisation of Higher Education in Southeast Asia. Recommendations from a case study of five Southeast Asian countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN), 2018. Retrieved from: https://headfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/THF-Policy-Brief-No-5.pdf.
11. Knight, J. (2004). Internationalisation remodelled: Definition, approaches, and rationales, Journal of Studies in International Education 8, no. 1, pp. 5-31.
12. Knight, J. (2001), "Monitoring the quality and progress of internationalisation", Journal of Studies in International Education, Vol. 5, pp. 228-43.
13. Knight, J. (1999). Internationalisation in Higher Education, In Quality and Internationalisation in Higher Education. H. de Wit, J. Knight, 1999. Eds. Paris: OECD, pp. 13-28.
14. Knight, J. (1994). Internationalisation: Elements and Checkpoints. Canadian Bureau for International Education, Ottawa, 1994.
15. Lambey, L., Usoh, E.J., Lambey, R., & Burgess, J. (2024). Challenges and Opportunities to Internationalize the Indonesian Higher Education Sector. IntechOpen. doi: 10.5772/intechopen.110658. Retrieved from: https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/86650
16. Maringe, F. and Gibbs, P. (2008). Higher Education Marketing, Sage, London.
17. OECD. (2010). Learning Our Lesson: Review of Quality Teaching in Higher Education. Institutional Management in Higher Education. https://www.oecd.org/education/imhe/44058352.pdf.
18. Qiang, Z. (2003).Internationalization of higher education: Towards a conceptual framework. Policy Futures in Education, 1(2), pp. 248-270, 2003. http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/pfie.2003.1.2.5.
19. Rossier, A. (2018). Improving education quality in Indonesia is no easy task: Indonesia's education problem is a matter of politics and power. The Lowy Institute. Retrieved from:https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/improving-education-quality-indonesia-no-easy-task.

20. Sutrisno, A. (2019). Internationalisation of Indonesian Higher Education: Recent Initiatives and their Problems, International Higher Education no.97, pp. 12-13, Spring 2019.
21. Usoh, E.J., & Preston, G. (2017). Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement for Public Universities in Sulawesi, Indonesia. PEOPLE: International Journal for Social Sciences, 3(3), pp. 174-197.
22. Usoh, E.J. (2020). Challenging Road to World-Class University: Strategy for Higher Education in Eastern Indonesia. Developing the Workforce in an Emerging Economy: The Case of Indonesia. Dayaran, K., Lambey, L., Burgess, J., Afrianty, T.W. (Eds). Routledge Advances in Management and Business Studies. Taylor and rancis. Routledge.   UK. 2020. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/developing-workforce-emerging- economy-kantha-dayaram-linda-lambey-john-burgess-tri-wulida afrianty/e/10.4324/9780429273353.
23. Zhou, J. 2016. A Dynamic Systems Approach to Internationalization of Higher Education. *Journal of International Education and Leadership*. Volume 6 Issue 1 Spring 2016. Retrieved from: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1135214.pdf.
24. Zhou, J. 2017. Assessment of Internationalization of Higher Education: Theoretical Contributions and Practical Implications. NAFSA Research Symposium Series. 2017. Volume 1. Retrieved from: https://scholar.google.com/citations?view_op=view_citation&hl=en&user=2i6JkNoAAAAJ&citation_for_view=2i 6JkNoAAAAJ:UeHWp8X0CEIC.