

# Study on Academic Quality Assurance Standards at the Faculty of Social Sciences Manado State University

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**Abstract**— Using a qualitative approach, this study aims to conduct a study of academic quality assurance standards at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Manado State University. From the research it was concluded that: Some of the seminars and examinations conducted at the Faculty of Social Sciences were not in accordance with the existing Internal Quality Assurance Standards, thus affecting the academic quality at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

**Keywords**— *Academic Quality Assurance Standards, Higher Education, Manado State University.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

After World War II, many newly independent countries, including Indonesia, began to pay attention to advance public welfare and educate the nation's life through education. In Indonesia, the government and the community have gradually made efforts to improve education. These efforts cross the boundaries of social segregation, class, ethnicity, race, religion and gender. This is different from the previous colonial era, where modern education became exclusive, elitist, and not open to the wider community. Community participation in entering schools and colleges continues to increase significantly from year to year. Drastic improvement occurred especially after the issuance of 6-year compulsory education policy (1984) which was later increased to 9-year compulsory education (1994). The government and the private sector are required to accommodate the needs of the community. Because of this, many schools were established, from elementary to secondary levels. Likewise many universities, such as universities, institutes, high schools, polytechnics and academies, both public and private, were established. However, the various efforts carried out that the results were also inadequate due to poor education management and limited budget allocation.

Another problem faced is the choice of a dilemma between prioritizing expanding participation into educational institutions, or improving the quality of education. The dilemma choice was finally resolved. The government prioritizes the expansion of participation and accommodation of education capacity, without forgetting (although it must prioritize) quality improvement. This policy is running until

now. This policy has succeeded in increasing the number of student participation and the number of universities, both public and private. Various faculties, departments, study programs and specialized areas were opened, from diploma, undergraduate, or postgraduate level. The tertiary institution experienced a booming degree and produced graduates in various fields of science. The problem is, who or what institution can guarantee the quality of its graduates? Do the graduates meet the quality standards of real expertise? From this question arises the demand for "public accountability" and the need for institutions to guarantee their quality.

Based on the background stated above, this research will focus on "What are the quality assurance standards at Faculty of Social Sciences Manado State University"

Starting from the research focus above, the problems to be answered in this study are as follows: What are the academic quality assurance standards at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Manado State University?

The purpose of this study is to evaluate: Conducting studies on academic quality assurance standards at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Manado State University

## II. METHODS

Since the nature of the research problem to uncover a phenomenon is the basis for determining the approach to be used in a study, this research uses a qualitative phenomenological approach [1].

The qualitative approach was chosen because this research took the form of the actions or activities of a person or a number of people regarding academic quality management and the object of research was natural. Data revealed in the form of words, sentences, paragraphs, documents and not in the form of numbers. The research object was not given special treatment or manipulated by researchers so that the data obtained remained in natural conditions as one of the qualitative research criteria. Data obtained through observation techniques, interviews and documentation studies, then analyzed inductively. Based on these techniques, this research is more appropriate to use a qualitative approach.

This is consistent with the opinion that the qualitative method as a research procedure produces descriptive data in the form of written or oral words from the people and behaviors observed [1]

In describing phenomena naturally, descriptive and inductive procedures will be used by presenting researchers as the main instrument of data collection as one of the characteristics of qualitative research. If it is associated with the purpose of qualitative research, which is to seek and to uncover the meaning behind an event or phenomenon by providing a basis for understanding or understanding based on reasoning that can be accepted by common sense (logic). Strictly speaking, qualitative research aims at gaining an ideographic understanding (case studies) rather than the phenomenon of human behavior and actions.

Qualitative research is a continuum or cycle from special to general (inductive logic) from the conceptualization, categorization and description stages developed on the basis of events obtained when fieldwork takes place [2]. On that basis, researchers determined to use a qualitative approach.

Since this research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, it will certainly have implications for the use of research methods that are relevant to it.

First, the constant comparative method. This constant comparative method is intended to be a series of stages that take place simultaneously and the analysis always turns to the data collection stage. This method emphasizes more on the process of data collection and data analysis that can take place simultaneously like a cycle.

Second, modified analytic induction. This modified analytical induction is intended as a method used to develop and test theories. This method emphasizes more on the discovery of new theories on the one hand and tests as well as developing theories that have been formed so far. By using a modified analytical induction method, it means that the data collection activities are carried out by the researcher repeatedly and continuously, then analyzed and the results are used to modify temporary theories generated through previous data collection, and in turn produce increasingly broad theories.

In research that uses a qualitative approach that is the main tool is human (human tools), meaning that it involves the researcher himself as an instrument by observing the ability of researchers in terms of asking, tracking, observing, understanding and abstracting as important tools that cannot be replaced by other means. In qualitative research researchers must be present in the field, because researchers act as the main instrument of data collection. In detail in qualitative research, researchers function as planners, data collectors, analysts, interpreters, and reporters of research results. Thus, in collecting data, researchers do it seriously, which is characterized by a selective, objective and cautious attitude based on factual conditions in the field.

The researcher as the main instrument enters the research setting in order to be able to deal directly with informants, to be able to naturally understand the reality that is in the

research setting, trying to overcome various problems that occur in the field. Researchers try to interact with research informants fairly and respond to all changes that occur in the field, trying to adjust to the situation and conditions of the three study sites. The good relationship created between researchers and research informants while in the field is the main key to the success of data collection.

Qualitative research approaches provide guidance for researchers about the type of data planned to be collected. Furthermore, researchers try to examine the forms and types of data that are relevant to the research approach used. Data collection is closely related to primary data sources obtained directly from the first hand which are often referred to as research subjects, or informants. The principle of determining qualitative research informants is carried out through a process of inductive-logical-abstractive reasoning and building theory, where the informant is considered as a unity of the phenomenon itself by using the principle of "theoretical purposive sampling". In the field implementation the number of informants to be observed and interviewed can vary in number. Can be large in number (for example by snowball technique) or small (for example by grounded technique) according to the information needed to the point of observation is saturated.

Someone who is made a key informant should have the knowledge and information that is the focus of research. Determination of research informants is done through snowball techniques (snowball sampling). Basically, the snowball sampling process is done by asking the first informant interviewed to provide advice to the next informant.

The procedure of collecting research data is done through techniques commonly used in qualitative research according to [3] are observation, interviews and documentation studies. These techniques are grouped into being, namely techniques that are interactive consisting of participatory observation and interviews, while non-technical techniques interactive includes non-participatory observation and study of documentation or official notes. In line with this, that the data in qualitative research is obtained through interactions between researchers and informants through in-depth interviews and investigations, direct observation and documentation studies on issues related to research focus. interviews and documents, observations, photography / recording. However, the most important thing for researchers is to make details of the above mentioned technical efforts that are designed creatively.

Data collection and data analysis activities can take place simultaneously or simultaneously. In qualitative research, the researcher feels that he does not know from what he does not know, thus giving birth to new questions and interpretations as a result of interpretation based on the emic perspective category (the meaning given by the actor) and the ethical perspective category (the meaning of the interpretation of the researcher). Data analysis in qualitative research was carried out from the beginning when the process of collecting data in the field, and after the data was collected entirely even throughout the research process took place.

In qualitative research checking the validity of the findings is one important step. In qualitative research the validity and trust benchmarks are determined by a number of criteria. There are four criteria that are used as the basis for convincing findings, as follows: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The education quality policy began to be appreciated after the 1993 GBHN gave priority to the development of human resources and the development of science and technology. The strategic policy did not get adequate approval. In fact, in practice in the field the improvement and improvement of the quality of education was displaced by the priority ranking of opportunities to obtain education. The government was preoccupied by activities to improve access and implementation of the 9-year compulsory education program. In 1996 the improvement was more serious. Efforts to improve the quality and relevance of tertiary institutions have come under special pressure in the Long-Term Higher Education Development Strategy (SPPT-JP, 1996-2005). Attempts to improve the quality of education have not been carried out actively and thoroughly, Indonesia since 1997 has been hit by the most severe economic crisis.

The impact of this economic crisis has also impacted our education world. Indonesian tertiary institutions are faced with three serious problems, namely, first, the economic and financial crisis whose impact has also affected various sectors of life, including the decline in the state budget subsector in the field of education. Second, reforming the national order, both political, legal, economic, social, and cultural towards the realization of a democratic civil society has led to a variety of structural changes. Higher education as one of the national subsystems is also urged to change and adapt to new situations. Third, the impact of globalization in various aspects of life has helped to internationalize various forms of higher education activities, including internationalization of quality standards, quality assurance systems, evaluation and accreditation systems.

This condition encourages universities throughout the world, especially in developed countries to improve more performance effective and develop competitiveness to achieve world-recognized quality standards. This is also done by universities in developing countries, although faced with complicated problems due to poor management, low quality human resources, and economic and financial difficulties [4].

The main key to solving the above public problems is public policy. The policy needed to solve public problems is an effective policy that is able to improve performance and can solve problems as optimal as possible [5]. In this regard, the quality policy (quality policy) in Indonesia is always faced with internal problems, such as the guarantee system, evaluation and accreditation systems. Quality policy in Indonesia is also faced with problems in the format and design of quality organizations, management and governance, effective

organizational performance, and so on. Efforts to improve quality, guarantee and accreditation, cannot be separated from the broader context of public policy, especially the politics of education, the development of science and technology, resource capacity and allocation of available financial resources [6]. Often efforts to improve the quality of education in Indonesia clash with the assumption of some officials, that the system is well established, standards have been made standard and regulations are good, only implementation in the field is not optimal. However, in reality the assumption is not entirely true. Many policies are factors that cause ineffective implementation, inefficient program implementation and slow response to improvement due to rigid and unresponsive bureaucratic behavior.

In accordance with the research objectives stated in the previous section, this study aims to evaluate the implementation of academic quality at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Manado State University. In line with these objectives, researchers focus on the implementation of one academic activity, namely the implementation of the test, both the proposal exam, and the final exam.

This research will focus on the procedure for conducting the exam, both the proposal exam and the final exam as follows:

In the 2018 academic manual of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Manado State University Chapter II article 2.19 regarding undergraduate examinations explained that, the undergraduate examination is carried out by a commission of examiners consisting of four examiner lecturers and one supervisor appointed by the Chancellor based on the proposal of the Dean and Department Leaders / Study program. The Chair of the Examining Commission is the head of the supervising team and the secretary of the examining commission is a member of the Supervising Team [7].

While in Article 2.19.1 For Students, it is stated in it:

- a) Students can take the undergraduate examination after passing all the courses required for their study program.
- b) Undergraduate examinations can be taken by students if they have completed all administrative requirements set by the Faculty.
- c) The exam material has been submitted no later than 3 (three) days before the exam takes place to the examining team.
- d) Dress neatly, men wear suits [7].

Article 2.19.2 For lecturers, it is stated

All examiners must be present during the exam

- a) If the chairman of the supervising commission / chairman of the examining commission is not present, then the exam cannot take place.
- b) If one of the supervisory commissions is unable to attend, then the continuity of the test is determined by the chair of the supervising commission / chair of the exam commission.
- c) If one member of the exam commission cannot attend, the exam continues, the absence of the person concerned is recorded in the minutes of the exam.

d) Dress neatly, men wear ties or PSL suits [7].

From the description above, the researcher tried to observe the process of conducting the exam at the Social Sciences Faculty of Manado State University. The researcher found that there were several exam implementation processes that were not in accordance with the academic manuals. These things include:

On the Student's side,

a) Examination material submitted less than three days before the test.

b) Male students do not wear suits when conducting exams.

On the part of the lecturer,

a) The head of the supervising commission is not in the examination room, but the exam continues.

b) There is one member of the exam commission who is not present at the exam, the exam continues, but the absence of the member of the exam commission is not recorded in the official report.

c) In conducting the examination, male examiner members do not use a tie suit or PSL.

Examination which is not in accordance with this manual even though it looks trivial, but can result in administrative disorder, decreased quality of exams carried out, to the legal consequences, where the examination can be considered invalid because it violates the provisions. For example, on several occasions researchers experienced themselves, students meet researchers to submit invitation invitations to be held the next day. Because of the researcher's busy schedule, several invitations had to be rejected, because there was no time to read the thesis that was to be tested. Even if the writer accepts the invitation and does not have the chance to read the student's thesis, this results in quality and criticality that decreases considerably because he did not have time to carefully examine the thesis. Likewise, the absence of the head supervisor / examiner, but the test is still carried out. In the observations of researchers, this happened several times due to the busy schedule of the chief supervisor / examiner. It is feared that this could be exploited by certain parties to challenge the validity of an examination process, because in the Faculty's academic guidelines, it was clearly stated that if the chair of the supervisory commission / chair of the commission of examiners was absent, the exam could not take place.

From the description of the findings above, it shows that some tests are not in accordance with the Academic Guidelines of the Faculty of Social Sciences. Because the Faculty Academic Guidelines can be said to be the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) or Standards for Internal Quality Assurance (SPMI) in conducting academic activities in all sections of the Faculty of Social Sciences, this means that the implementation of the Faculty of Social Sciences examination is not in accordance with the Internal Quality Assurance Standards of the Faculty of Science Social State University of Manado. Examination that is not in accordance with Internal Quality Assurance Standards (SPMI) will definitely affect Total Quality Management (TQM) or reduce the quality of academic services provided by the Faculty of Social Sciences to students as customers.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

From the research conducted it was concluded that: Some of the seminars and examinations conducted at the Faculty of Social Sciences were not in accordance with the existing Quality Assurance Standards so that they affected the academic quality of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

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