PROFESSIONALISM AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

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In Southeast Asia, one of the general problems felt is that the mounting pressures and demands for tertiary education as a result of population explosion everywhere, require a serious and systematic study by experts on the subject to arrive at a bold and imaginative concept which, for all purposes, has to be feasible in offering more and better educational services in the growing desire of increasingly sophisticated societies.

In this age of science and technology, it is the moral responsibility of every society to offer every individual the chance to acquire the basic knowledge and intellectual skill he needs to survive socially and economically and to find his vocation. More and better education in response to an increasing population is certainly justified. In Indonesia, in addition to the state universities, there are also private universities or institutes on tertiary education. Its establishment and operation are permitted provided they meet the fulfillment of basic conditions intended to safeguard minimum educational standards. These private institutes are larger in number and play an important role in meeting the expanding demand for admission to tertiary education in Indonesia. There are three types of private institutes, i.e.: (1) 'equivalent', which examinations and degrees are recognized by the Government; (2) 'recognized', which may conduct examinations under government supervision; and (3) 'nonrecognized' students of this private institutes must undertake state
If examinations undertaken by 'registered' private schools are managed by the respective consortia. Periodically, for all institutions of tertiary education throughout the country a so-called state examination should be conducted, not merely to certificate students, but to monitor the standard and development of individual institutions in their own fields. It is very important to give feedback to top managers at the national level for the shake of better planning. Of course this policy makes tertiary education a more costly affair, but more efficient and effective, for instance, in giving support to various institutions in a more appropriate manner. Other serious difficulties in respect to standards as well as planning need to be resolved. Besides the private institutions and state universities run by the Ministry of Education and Culture, other state colleges or academic activities exist under the auspices of several ministries, such as Ministry of Interior, Public Works, Health, Finance, etc. These academic activities originally were concerned in giving a type of higher vocational training to supply the necessary middle-level manpower for the respective ministries. In the 1960's they were upgraded into faculties, based on the Tertiary Education Act no.22, 1962. The result was that several ministries in Indonesia operated their own faculties and granted degrees to their graduates who might have doubtful qualifications and inadequately planned training.

The development of tertiary education, which is a costly affair, should keep track not only with economic development, but also in terms of graduate output, with manpower requirements for the development of the society, to avoid excessive, as well as socially and politically dangerous unemployment. One of the easy answers is that jobs are scarce; in fact the high school graduates are not easy to get somekind of prestigious white-collar job. Another logical solution is to open vocational schools, but these also will have to be consistent with the economic and other developments in the country. In this way, to enter the labour market, the students will be better equipped with special skills.

In a less developed country, generally there is a greater need for medium-level technical and clerical skills. A common feature in every developing country is that unskilled labour is undoubtedly abundant, and at the same time, high-level positions which require university-training are saturated, or in some cases, nearly saturated. There are a few reasons why this middle level of skills is suffering from a scarcity of supply in manpower. The attitude of people, who can afford to get education and aim at white-collar positions, preferably with the government, stems from the high prestige of a government job where one can share public power. Even if it opens the way to a better material living, vocational training which leads to less prestigious positions is therefore less preferred. Indeed, vocational schools, particularly in the field of technical skills, are expensive because of the need for training equipment; experienced qualified instructors are scarce; while without them, the schools cannot operate. But whatever the difficulties, if a developing country is serious in its developmental efforts and realistic in its programme, it can find ways and means to remedy this deficiency. In big industrial centres, where there is equal opportunity, if not more, of employment in industries and businesses than in government, the traditionally negative attitude of people toward vocational training and
measured by the yardstick of public power only. As a matter of fact financial income and material wealth have developed in time as a high social value.

In his inaugural address at the new rector's meeting, recently, the Director General of Higher Education reported that at present there are 11 million students registered at institutes, while 450 thousand among them are registered as students of state institutes. The amount of students to be enrolled this year reach the number of 670,000. The problem of increasing number of students to be enrolled might not be solved by extending the capability of universities to enroll a greater number of freshmen each year, while sacrificing quality. Every university should improve the standard of education, to produce better and more manpower, better equipped with skills needed for the development of the society. The Government is now setting its priority for the founding of Polytechnic Institutes. At present, 7 Polytechnic Institutes are already operating. Eighteen more Polytechnic Institutes are being planned, 11 among them will get financial help from the World Bank and Australia. Meanwhile a polytechnic institute in agriculture gets support from the U.S.A., while another one in electronics from Japan. These institutes will be located not only on the island of Java, but will be scattered throughout the whole country. For high school graduates, who do not succeed in entering the university, two years ago the Government has established an "Open" University. Modern long distance communication methods are used and local study centres periodically conduct tutorials. The important aim of establishing such an open university is that people will be aware of the main objectives and goals of the system, i.e., to improve the intellectual skill of the students in problem solving, and not to get a white-collar job in government service after graduation.

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of tertiary education in Indonesia, a basic memorandum on tertiary education submitted for the first time in 1967, calling for an overall review of policy. It is strongly stated that no more expansion is allowed, and that attention must be given to the so-called "pembina" faculties ("pembina" literally means "developer"), i.e. faculties which in view of their high academic standing have been assigned to develop the disciplines. A further step is the grouping of these "pembina" faculties into five "Consorria", starting from 1971-72, five out of 40 state universities/institutes have been selected into "Centres of Excellence", based on the following criteria: (1) academic standing; (2) possibility of interdisciplinary studies and research; (3) potential for innovation and experimentation; (4) capacity to extend their excellence to other universities; (5) prospects of better and quicker returns from investment of limited resources; and (6) sphere of influence in terms of student, teachers and academic disciplines. Since 1985 the Minister of Education and Culture issued a directive on the establishment of 12 Consorria of different groups of disciplines: (1) Religion; (2) Letters and Philosophy; (3) Education; (4) Law; (5) Economics; (6) Social Science; (7) Psychology; (8) Health Science; (9) Agriculture; (10) Mathematics and Science; (11) Technology; and (12) Art. These consorria are advisory bodies to the Minister of Education and Culture in designing comprehensive development programmes in their respective field. In special cases,
With regard to the scarcity of funds and facilities, it is fair to say that this
multisystem of education does not meet the criteria of efficient use of resources. With
the mobilization of financial resources from private sectors, anumber of senior or
young good teachers also get extra appointments from the Government as
administrators or key persons in various ministries. To increase the quality of
educators special training are conducted by the Government, i.e.: (1) Pascallas, the
philosophy of the nation, (2) Akta V courses in (a) Philosophy of Science, (b) Research
Methodology, (c) Educational Administration, (d) Important decrees and policies of
the government, (e) Principles of Education, (f) Educational Design, (g) Guidance
and Counseling, (h) Educational Measurements, (i) Instructional Technology, (j)
Curriculum Development, (k) Educational Psychology, and (l) Practice of Teaching.
To be promoted to the third category as government employees teachers should be
evaluated based on credit points in education, research, and service. For the sake of
efficiency and effectiveness, grants from foreign agencies are centralized to the "Centres
of Excellence" or "developer" facilities which will act as training/upgrading centres for
the other institutions. Teachers are highly motivated to participate in postgraduate
programmes to get higher academic or professional degrees.
To prepare students to become responsible leaders of the future the tertiary
education system in Indonesia exposes the students to problems in and of the society.
In 1987 it was proposed that students who are enrolled in the "sarjana muda"
(Bachelor's) program spend from two to four weeks in rural areas collecting data,
and for students enrolled in "sarjana" (Master's) program spend six months in directly
helping village development and rural productivity. The first concrete step towards
the introduction of the required village service for students took place in 1971. Three
universities, Andalas (in the western part of Indonesia), Gadjah Mada (in central
Indonesia) and Hasanudin (in the eastern part of Indonesia) were asked by the
Director General of Higher Education to run multidisciplinary community service
projects. During 1972 while the three preliminary pilot projects were still in progress,
President Soeharto, on a number of different occasions, publicly supported the idea
of higher education students being required to spend at least six months working on
village-level development projects as part of their education. This public support from
the President was a great help in encouraging its adoption by the vectors of the 40
state institutes of tertiary education. The degree of autonomy enjoyed by these
institutes means that no major programme, such as study-service, could be
introduced into an institution without the Rector's approval and support.
One of the occasions on which the President spoke about study-service was at
the Rector's Meeting held in March 1972 involving the Rectors of all 40 state
institutes of tertiary education. After discussing the question of study-service and
considering reports from the three universities carrying out preliminary pilot
projects and background papers prepared at the request of the Director of Higher
Education, the assembled Rectors approved the implementation of student-service
pilot projects in a number of universities as step towards a national study-service
scheme.
Following the Rector's Meeting, the Director of Higher Education
study-service piles projects during 1973/1974. Study-service activities are now still going on. The two major and interdependent purposes of this programme are to supply a large resource of young educated manpower for rural development and to give university students some very practical experience in rural developmental problems as part of their education. As a result of their experience, it is hoped, that students will develop the habit of taking an interdisciplinary approach to developmental problems, will be more willing to accept employment in rural areas following their graduation, will develop more self-confidence and initiative, and will have a much better understanding of rural development needs, the needs of 80% of Indonesia's population. It is also hoped that university staff members, who participate in these activities in supervisory and advisory roles will get the experience, so that the universities will be led to make curricula more related to Indonesia's development needs.

In their own campus, some departments are also giving the opportunity to students to join research conducted by staff or to conduct their own research on a smaller scale.

Since the most important skill to be mastered by graduates from tertiary education system is the ability to solve problems, the whole instructional activities should be based on problem identification and solving. Most instructional activities still have the characteristics of just transmitting knowledge systematically and descriptively following the sequences of topics in textbooks. Scholars and administrators should have professional skills to carry out professional, technical, managerial and entrepreneurial functions.