

The Role of Law Schools and Law Schools Leadership in a Changing World; A Special Reference to the Law Schools of Indonesia

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A changing world is facing unprecedented challenges arising from the convergent impacts of globalization. In the world of higher education development, it brings about a shift of the role of higher education institutions, included higher legal education namely law schools, from traditional learning institutions towards knowledge creator, a change from random planning to strategic planning, as well as a movement from comparative approach to competitive one. For a developing country such like Indonesia, there is a need to create a breakthrough for enhancing higher education and particularly the role of law schools in relation to the implementation of national educational development in the country.

In facing challenges of globalization, Indonesian higher education development in general implemented a new paradigm where institutional autonomy and accountability becomes a strategic issue. A great deal of efforts must be conducted in the accelerated manner to overcome the legal higher educational problems. Focus of the establishment of legal higher education is not the only meant for the institutional itself, but also for the stakeholders included the Government, as their role in such development is increasingly important. In this sense, the stakeholders should therefore consider that the development of higher legal education should be placed in the level of priority, as well as intervention of the Government in the establishment of law schools is indeed very urgent.

It is expected that in the coming years Indonesia will have a competitive leverage due to the existence of highly reputable higher legal education institutional, and a strong law schools programs will lead to a nation's competitiveness in the coming decades.

The competitiveness can only be achieved under the framework of strong nation's character and civilization. In this respect, the higher legal education system within the law schools in the country has the responsibility in providing students with high competence in legal knowledge and jurisprudence to good and skilled lawyers. In one hand, the system should also contribute to the process of shaping a democratic, civilized, and inclusive society, maintaining

national integration through its role as moral force, and act as the bearer of public conscience particularly in the development of academic and practical lawyers that possess an appropriate legal knowledge and skill in practicing their own legal profession nationally and even internationally. And on the other hand, the law schools have a strategic position to establish their role and function in providing skilled lawyers, both legal academics and practical lawyers, which needed to fulfill concerned legal professionals within universities, the Government offices, private corporations, law enforcement agencies, legal consultants and professional such like notaries, as well as in preparing future leaders and good citizens.

In the context of Indonesia as a multicultural country, a highly quality interdependent a changing world requires an appropriate higher legal education system for promoting and generating cultural diversity and fostering intercultural understanding, respect and tolerance among peoples in the country. It represents a commitment to the development of national solidarity, human security and helps to build a conducive atmosphere of national integration and the global peaceful in general.

It is in fact that objectives of higher legal education which is established and generated at law schools institutions can usually be classified under three broad heading i.e. legal knowledge and science, legal skill and practice, and legal attitude and behavior. Those are able to be directed to an essential objective to higher legal education system namely education in legal science, instruction in legal skill and practicing, promotion the general powers of the minds, the advancement of legal learning and reasoning, and the transmission of a common legal culture and standards of citizenship. In order to achieve these urgent objectives as mentioned above, the law schools institutions should develop and match their own legal education curricula, teaching methods and techniques, as well as suitable other supporting measures such like law library, mootcourt room, electronic legal information media and documentary system, law study centers , etc.

Law schools in Indonesia has for a long time not divided between academic and professional legal education. The distinction between the two is naturally urgent, and it is important to be designed in producing lawyers that has a specific legal knowledge whether in the level of academic or skilled and professional lawyers. Since legal education institutional was first introduced in the country, both academic and professional legal education which trained and educated at law schools have been fused. The mixing of university and professional legal education has clearly been expressed within the existing curriculum of law schools to achieve a general attempt and implement the legal applied approach to university and academic legal education.

In the era of globalization, the challenge of legal education at law schools especially in Indonesia is to produce graduates that are comparable with graduates from law faculties across the globe. It is, therefore, a number of law schools in the country have already consciously started to change their legal education paradigm for the purpose of preparing and providing graduates that have appropriate legal knowledge and skill in entering the era of competitiveness in the level of both nationally and internationally.

In order to answer the mentioned challenges in a changing world, the competency-based legal education paradigm is recently introduced and implemented across higher legal education throughout Indonesia. The law schools should look for ways and set up educational strategy to incorporate the recently legal education paradigm into curriculum of law schools in the country. In sum, the effort of improving legal education at law schools is primarily dedicated to prepare skilled graduates that are ready for immediate professionals employment in any specific area, as well as to provide graduates that possess theoretical and doctrinal knowledge in legal science. In other words, the role of law schools and law schools leadership are two fold namely, in one hand, providing academic or university legal education with the purpose of producing academic lawyers, and on the other hands, for facilitating professional legal education in order to preparing skilled practical lawyers that have capability both nationally and internationally to enter the era of competitiveness in a changing world.