

COMPLETION REPORT

Understanding Japan's Approach on Internationalization of Higher Education and Its Lessons for Indonesia

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This study has the objective to understand the development and current approach of internationalization of Japan's higher education and universities, and to further discuss in what manner Indonesia can acquire from Japan's experiences in making their higher education institutions more competitive in global level. This study was conducted during one-year period (March 2018-2019), including a field research trip in late October 2018 to University of Tokyo, Hitotsubashi University, Tohoku University, Meiji University, Toyo University, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Using a qualitative research methodology, the results of the study are elaborated below.

Internationalization in Japan's higher education has a quite advanced development, even since the 1983 the Japan's government had set the target of 100.000 foreign students to enroll to the country in the beginning of 21st century. The aid and international development approach were dominant, and the approach has changed where the current agenda of internationalization is more driven from the rationale to invite best human resources to boost the country's competitiveness (skilled-migration approach) and to revitalize the economy (revenue-generating approach). The Japanese government currently deliver the 'Top Global University' Project in 2014 which is the government-support competitive funding projects for universities. Following the current government's priority on education reform for economic revival, this project aims to provide intensive supports for Japanese universities to lead the global education and research, and the main three parts of the project are internationalization, governance, and educational reform.

The responses from the Japanese universities of these government approach on internationalization agenda are not always conclusive. Even though most universities agreed on the importance of internationalization in this globalization era, the perspective of 'university world ranking' has caused a huge debate. The current government agenda seems to raise the issues of urging too much on quantitative indicators rather than a whole comprehensive assessment to achieve the purposes of the project it self. However, regardless of the availability of government funding, the universities interviewed in this research stated that internationalization is something unavoidable and should be performed in a manner that suit the characteristic of each university. The challenges are prevailed in the debates into what extend should English Medium Instruction should be enforced, also in dividing perspectives between faculty members or departments within university.

Currently, Indonesian government and universities also moving forward to the reformation of higher education, which includes the goals to make Indonesian universities more competitive in regional and global level. As can be

seen from the pattern in Japan's approach of internationalization, in the national level, the trend towards higher education reform and internationalization in both Japan and Indonesia has many similarities, even though the policies evaluation and assessment might be different. With abundant human resources, the Indonesian government need to focus on the expansion of the opportunity and the enhancement of quality of higher education. Also, as Indonesia is a non-English speaking country like Japan, it is important to focus on the investment to make some typical research areas which Indonesia could be leading on.

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