ORIGINS AND EXPANSION OF UNIVERSITY SERVICE

M. B. Rini Wahyuningsih
UNIVERSITAS PELITA HARAPAN

Abstract

The emergence of university service at Indonesian higher education is different from the one in the United States. In the United States it is originally from the Land Grant Act of 1862, and service becomes the third university mission besides teaching and research. In Indonesia, on the other hand, the origin of service in higher education is inseparable from the establishment of the nation against Dutch colonialism in the middle of the twentieth century and it is known as service learning or Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN) which combines the elements of teaching, research, and service (tri dharma). University junior professors and students provide service by lending their expertise to help villages develop while learning the needs of the community. In the United States, academicians reach out to the community needs. Service becomes important as the application of research, and higher education institutions need to be continually involved in the national development.

The origin of service in Indonesian higher education is distinctive since it is coincident with the revolutionary struggle for the birth of the nation. University service has become dominant as students go to villages to lend expertise and learn from the community. This kind of service is called service learning. This writing tries to explore the origins and expansion of university service in Indonesia and Western countries, especially the United States.

A. The Emergence of Service

The emergence of service at Indonesian higher education is different from the one in the United States. In Indonesia, service started when professors and students fought for the national independence from the Dutch in the 1940s. It was the
involvement of students to help villagers that gradually became service learning in Indonesian higher education. In the United States, the land grant colleges in 1862 claimed to be the origin of university service where professors assisted the agricultural, industrial, and military needs. Service was spread out immediately after the “Wisconsin idea” became popular and strengthened the link between the nation and university.

In the United States, the Land-Grant Act of 1862 marked the origin of service and linked higher education to agriculture and industry. Professors went to the fields to help farmers design irrigation systems, administer fertilizer, and plant hybrid seeds. The land-grant movement and the development of universities in the late 1800s gave more meaning to service, and various activities were either planned or implemented on behalf of some special group or constituency external to the campus. The service orientation of colleges started to be described as uniquely American and one of the great strengths of American higher education (Crosson, 1983). It provided the beginning of a national network of educational research and development institutions that the federal government would subsequently use for various enterprises from the training of reserve officers for the armed forces to the reform of agricultural production and the renovation of rural community life.

Despite the inevitable conflicts and inherent tensions, the nation gained a lot from the strong and vital network of diverse campuses. Campus confidence had grown rapidly to participate in national crusades, such as to expand frontiers, to advance knowledge, to create a better and more just society, and to make the nation more secure (Boyer and Hechinger, 1981). Even during the World War II, research universities joined with the government to solve new problems. They founded the National Science Foundation and the GI Bill (Boyer, 1994).

Universities, once devoted to teaching and later to research, added service as a third mission, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For example, the University of Wisconsin in Madison was “as close to the intelligent farmer as his ‘pig-pen’ or his ‘tool-house’,” and the university laboratories were part of the alert manufacturer’s plant. The link between the campus and the state was well-known nationally as “the Wisconsin Idea” that spread service. Also, Franklin D. Roosevelt turned to the academy for help in economic policy in the 1930s referring to the academy as the “brain trust.” He was the first president to try to lead the nation by making use of talents provided from the campuses (Boyer and Hechinger, 1981).
The central government supported KKN by providing funding for fifteen years as the results of the oil boom (Hardjasonoemantri, 1982). The Directorate General for Research and Service saw the benefits of KKN although the government stopped its funding in 1987. Since then, students have had to pay for KKN until the Directorate General of Higher Education made it an optional program for Indonesian HEIs in 1996 (Murdjito, 1997). The creation of a national service learning scheme was based on the desire for a change in education, the need of increased social development, and the confidence of experience. Starting in 1966, a major rethinking and reshaping of the process of education in Indonesia involved changes at all levels of education. The objectives of the changes were to make education more Indonesia-based in content, to relate education more closely to the range of skills needed in Indonesia, to increase the availability of non-formal education, to complement the available formal education, and to provide greater opportunities for young Indonesians to participate directly, practically, and satisfactorily in the national development (Hardjasonoemantri, 1982).

The significance of KKN is the combination of the elements of teaching, research, and service (tri dharma) of Indonesian higher education. Students play an active role in KKN by directly applying science and technology to help village development. KKN is a student learning experience for the future development of the nation. It is also a group activity for students from various disciplines to overcome development problems in villages. Students do their activities together with village people so that there is a transfer of knowledge/skill, and an understanding of village life and its problems (Murdjito, 1997). As an application of tri dharma, KKN becomes a sub-system of Indonesian higher education (Hardjasonoemantri, 1997).

The government fully recognized the importance of KKN in part 22 of the 2nd Five-Year Development Plan (1974-1979) as it is described below:

Study service [service learning] as an intracurricular activity involves taking students as a certain stage of their studies and placing them in a village for a period (e.g. six months). The students are assigned in inter-disciplinary teams coordinated and supervised by teachers, and each team covers a number of villages. Before starting work in the villages, the students receive training in various skills, so that they can help solve the problems of the village, but not only problems directly related to their specialized fields of study. Students taking part in a study-service [service learning] program can help build up the villages' young human resources, and so develop
The idea of service spread internationally when George C. Marshall, the Secretary of State, proposed the Marshall Plan in 1947, and it was activated a decade later. In this provision, campus teams helped to reestablish civilian governments in the vanquished nations. Also, initiated by President Truman as a foreign policy in 1949, “Point Four” consisted of experts who traveled overseas and worked with peasants in villages, technicians in cities, and civil servants in newly independent countries to promote economic development (Boyer and Hechinger, 1981). The importance of service gained momentum in the last twenty years when research expanded while higher education finances were limited. Besides, HEIs needed to meet the increasing needs of society.

The origin of service in Indonesian higher education is inseparable from the establishment of the nation against Dutch colonialism in the middle of the twentieth century. The real tradition of service begins with the revolutionary war, both through the direct involvement of students as soldiers as well as indirectly through the provision of medical and other supportive services. As a part of the struggle for independence, students and staff were also actively engaged in the war effort supporting the Republic (Cummings and Kasenda, 1989).

Service in Indonesian higher education emerged from the birth of service learning called Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN). Coined by representatives of thirteen public universities and assigned by the Directorate General of Higher Education in 1972, KKN combines two terms of the “Kuliah Kerja,” meaning a field-activity related to a certain academic course and the “Kerja Nyata,” meaning practical work for the society’s benefit. KKN is a form of education by giving students a learning experience to live in society in order to identify and handle problems directly (Koswara, 1997).

The idea of conducting KKN was based on an experience from two voluntary service activities by Gadjah Mada students. The first was the physical struggle against the Dutch colonialism in 1945-1949, and the students taught in emergency schools in villages. The students mingled with the people and brought advantages for their personality development. The second was a teaching activity to high school students outside Java through the Student Mobilization program in 1951-1962. Its main purpose was to provide teachers to secondary schools that had a shortage of teaching personnel for two academic years. As a result of sufficient high school graduates, the Student Mobilization project was able to enhance the establishment of public HEIs outside Java (Hardjasonoemantri, 1982).
the villages' capacity for community self-help. Study service [service learning] can thus become an effective and efficient tool for non-formal education (Hardjasonoemantri, 1984).

*KKN* became a full-scale and required program in public universities since then (Hardjasonoemantri, 1984).

The nation expects HEIs to be continually involved in the national development. Thus, service has become an important function of HEIs. The concurrent establishment of the nation and the HEIs has created a reciprocal interdependent relationship. Higher education is expected to contribute knowledge and expertise to develop the nation, and the central government is expected to support the expansion of higher education through finances and facilities.

To sum up, the emergence of service in Indonesian higher education was significantly different from the one in the US higher education. Originated from the involvement in the heroic struggle for the national independence, university academicians were called to serve the nation. University service evolved and became important when *KKN* was implemented since 1972. University junior professors and students provided service by lending their expertise to help villages develop. In the United States, service originated from the necessity of academicians to reach out to assist agricultural, mechanical, and military needs. Service became important as the application of research.

**B. Reasons for Service Expansion**

Looking at the development of service types in higher education, the United States started its service reform in the 1970s. The pressures of budget cuts and national and industrial demands triggered the United States' HEIs to implement service more rigorously. Indonesian HEIs, on the other hand, did not attempt to do more service until 1990. As a developing country, Indonesia needs to improve all sectors, and higher education expertise is expected to help fulfill the needs of the nation. Moreover, the ASEAN free trade and globalization accelerate the pressures for HEIs to contribute actively to the national development. The urgency to respond to the needs of the nation and to survive financially, leads HEIs in both developed and developing countries to do pro-profit oriented service.

A report of the World Bank suggests that 30% of institutional revenues should come from non-governmental sources (World Bank, 1994). To diversify funding sources, HEIs make efforts in entrepreneurial ventures, forming relations with the private sector, and soliciting gifts from individuals, foundations, and corporations (Green and Hayward, 1997). Bok (1994) acknowledges that the
financial squeeze makes campus administrators look for new sources for support, which include short, vocationally-oriented courses, applied contract research for industry, consultation services, and tapping alumni and industry for donations and endowments. Industry contributes to university finances directly or indirectly through research councils and sponsored students (Sideman, 1994; Sideman and Albrecht, 1995).

Today, in spite of differences in their traditions and structures, HEIs worldwide share similar problems as well as common purposes as they face an increasingly complex and demanding future. Although the problems differ in each country, increased demands and expectations with declining resources are universal. The impact of budget cuts in Western Europe, the United States, and Canada is incomparable with the problems of developing economies, such as Russia, Asia, and Africa where economic crises affect their entire higher education systems (Green and Hayward, 1997).

The rapid growth of partnerships between higher education and industry happened in the United States in the 1980s. An increase in the cost of the university and a drop in federal funding, the perception of losing its technological superiority, the close linkage of cutting-edge technology, computers, biotechnology, and academic science, and patent reform, and state-initiated programs were among the reasons. The universities needed to find funds to offset the decline of federal support, and businesses acknowledged the severe importance of technology transfer to keep up with international competition and the shortage of product cycle from invention to marketable product (Bowie, 1990; 1994).

Higher education in Asian nations has to face challenges of economic development, funding, and response to demands from the public, and the expectations of the faculty (Altbach and Selvaratnam, 1989). Despite the challenges, Postiglione (1997) asserts that Asian higher education must play a role in economic development. As we know, most Asian governments support only a small group of national universities and allow private sectors to be in charge. For example, the governments of Singapore and Hong Kong spent 31% and 25%, respectively, of their education budgets on higher education in 1985; and Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia spent only 15, 12, and 9%, respectively. The governments place more financial responsibility on leaders of HEIs by providing policy frameworks that permit more autonomy from the national governments (World Bank, 1995).

Johnstone (1993) suggests that the emergence of profitable firms in the nations of the Pacific Rim and other developing countries increase the
possibility of generating revenues from business. Sponsored research for private enterprises can turn a profit through marketing patents, copyrights, and licensing. Executive training seminars, short courses, and certificate programs can earn revenue to support other programs of the institution. Universities in China and the former Soviet Union, for example, frequently own factories and farms, which turn profits for the institutions.

Ziderman (1994) argues that applied contract research is an additional revenue source from enterprises called basic linkages, which include business services such as industrialized and consumer market research, economic studies for government and private industry, and applied science and technology. These basic linkages should be encouraged at universities in developing countries because of the “mutual benefits” of contact, especially to encourage institutional differentiation and relevance to the local industrial and commercial environment. The Korean Advanced Institute for Science and Technology and the National University of Singapore’s applied research and the Nanyang Technological University’s Institute of Manufacturing Technology provide consultation services to both public and private sectors.

In addition, through an institution called Revolving Funds, Turkey allows universities to contract with industry to conduct research and perform consultation work. Each university controls its own revolving fund, which is comprised of income earned from the industrial contracts. Also, in order to develop a different type of institution with a strong industrial orientation, the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, with its International Center for Chemical Studies, has successful collaborations with various companies around the world (Parker, 1993).

Starting in 1987 the Indonesian government revenues, on the other hand, are tied up for the 9 years of basic education. The tertiary level of education received only 30% of the national education budget, and over 80% were used to finance public institutions. Most private HEIs received their funds from non-government sources, especially student tuition and fees. The government provided subsidies to selected private schools in the form of salary, provision of materials, and construction of facilities. They paid the salaries of certain lecturers borrowed from public HEIs and provided fellowships to enable lecturers from private HEIs to pursue overseas study. However, not more than 10% of the government funding was directed to private HEIs (Cummings, et.al., 1997).
in 1992, the government launched a new policy of self-governance (swadana) for public HEIs. The funding would gradually be shifted to block grants. Unfortunately, the grants would only be able to support a minimal level of activities. To fulfill other needs, such as scholarships for students, salary increases for faculty members, or infrastructure, HEIs had to generate their own revenues. The new policy was being implemented in stages, for example, most public HEIs collected and self-managed student tuition and fees, parking fees, cafeteria services, and bookstore sales (Cummings, et.al., 1997).

In the Higher Education Guidance Plan in 6th Five-Year Plan (Repelita), the Directorate General of Higher Education launched the goals to increase learning opportunities by improving the number of higher education participation from 10.5% of the population to 13.1%, enlarging polytechnics and professional education, and opening faculties or programs of study in existing HEIs, especially programs which had direct impacts on economic development. Another goal was to improve the relevance of education to the national needs by increasing the number of students in the field of engineering from 14% to 25% in public HEIs, and opening new faculties or programs of study. Also, the goals were to develop flexible curricula by decreasing the core curricula proportion nationally into 60% and applying the local curricula for 40% (Tyoso, 1994).

Faculty status and development face a great challenge in Indonesian higher education. The academics are mostly under-trained, with less than one-third holding advanced degrees. Facilities are also inadequate in the areas of science, technology, and agriculture. There is also a shortage of research funds, lack of information, bureaucratic obstacles, and lack of motivation. Professors must teach between eight to sixteen hours a week in the public HEIs, and even more in the private HEIs. They depend on their assistants in the actual teaching after their initial encounters with students for the overall course framework. On the other hand, they make a greater amount of money outside the university. The system of incentives for professors is based on small salaries and modest compensation for merit and performance. This leads to a pressure for moonlighting, which enables professors to earn extra income higher than their salaries (Cummings, et.al., 1997).

In his address to a business community on November 14, 1993, Wardiman, the former Minister of Education, mentioned a few important points. To develop the country’s educational system, Indonesia faced the challenges of raising the intellectual level of all Indonesians as required by the Constitution, preparing
for the “world of work” in an increasingly industrialized society with strict requirements for skilled workers, and preparing for the “era of technology” that requires the mastery of science and technology. In order to meet the challenges, Indonesia needed to increase education participation at all levels; to improve skills needed related to the “world of work”; and to promote and improve science and technology to continue economic development. This address implied increasing funds for higher education, especially in the technical fields, and increasing support for research and development (Cummings, et.al., 1997).

To conclude, HEIs worldwide face problems of budget cuts and challenges in their efforts to play a significant role in both national and international development. Research universities in the developed-countries have qualified human resources to find alternatives to minimize the financial issues.

Universities in the peripheral parts of the world are still struggling with the limited government funding and the low quality of their human resources despite the increase in student enrollment. In order to respond to the global needs, HEIs seek alternatives to solve the inherent problems. The emergence of service will not replace teaching and research. What has been happening is the “catching up of service” in its attempt to fulfill the needs of society, nation and industries, by implementing the results of research and reaching out beyond ivory towers.

However, to emerge from the crisis in higher education, governments and HEIs need to be aware of both internal and external forces that can shift the focus of higher education in society. How much can universities generate revenues from external forces? What kinds of consequences will universities face when they put emphasis on revenue generation? How legitimate is the revenue organized by universities? These issues are still debatable in the current development of service activities.
References


