

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW: THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Today's universities face an increasingly competitive environment, so it is necessary to implement strategic management effectively to excel. This study aims to analyze the fundamental role of strategic management in efforts to improve the quality and competitiveness of universities using the systematic literature review (SLR) method on 15 Sinta-accredited articles. The study results indicate that strategic management has been proven to play a fundamental role, with key components in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation and feedback stages of strategy playing an important role in the success of universities. Effective integration between strategic management and integrated quality management is the foundation for sustainable improvement of the quality of universities. Key components of strategic management must be aligned and integrated with integrated quality management so that quality improvement efforts can run holistically, measurably, and sustainably.

Keywords: strategic management, higher education quality, systematic review, quality improvement, educational management

INTRODUCTION

In the current era of globalization, improving the quality of higher education is becoming increasingly crucial, along with increasingly tight competition, not only at the local or national level but also in the international arena (Bryson, 2011; Wheelen & Hunger, 2012). In Indonesia, higher education institutions are faced with the challenge of producing competent graduates ready to compete in the global job market, which demands high-quality education relevant to industry needs (David & David, 2017; Hunger & Wheelen, 2011). In addition, academic reputation and research results are also determinants in attracting international students, research partners, and external funding, which are still obstacles for many higher education institutions in Indonesia. Globalization has changed expectations for higher education, forcing higher education institutions in Indonesia to continue to innovate and adapt to technological developments, dynamic curricula, and more effective teaching methods (Hitt et al., 2017; Schein, 2017). In this context, improving quality is a necessity and an important strategy to maintain existence and competitive advantage in the global education arena. Strategic management plays a crucial role in improving the quality of higher education by providing a structured and planned framework to achieve desired quality goals (Kaplan & Norton, 2008; Porter, 2008). Through in-depth strategic planning, higher education in Indonesia can establish a clear vision and mission and identify long-term goals to improve academic and operational quality.

One key aspect is strategic planning, which involves developing action plans to address weaknesses, leverage strengths, and overcome existing threats (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Human resource management is also important, where lecturers and administrative staff recruit, train, and develop professional development to ensure they have the skills and knowledge needed to support a quality education process (Yukl, 2013). Curriculum development is another aspect that is no less important, with a focus on updating teaching materials and implementing innovative teaching methods to ensure their relevance and effectiveness following industry demands and technological developments (Dale et al., 2016). Regular evaluation and

monitoring of strategy implementation are also needed to assess results and make necessary adjustments to achieve the expected quality standards (Bryson, 2011). By holistically implementing strategic management, universities in Indonesia can optimize academic performance, strengthen the institution's reputation, and produce competent graduates ready to compete in the global market. Challenges in Implementing Strategic Management for Quality Improvement in Indonesia

Although strategic management plays a significant role in quality improvement, higher education institutions in Indonesia face several challenges in implementing it effectively. One of the main challenges is resistance to change, where academic and administrative staff may be reluctant to adapt to new policies or methods introduced (Amer et al., 2013). This resistance is often the case in higher education institutions in Indonesia, which tend to maintain established academic traditions and cultures. In addition, resource constraints—regarding funds, time, or manpower—can limit an institution's ability to implement strategic initiatives effectively and sustainably (Hitt et al., 2017). Many higher education institutions in Indonesia, especially those in the regions, face budget constraints and lack adequate infrastructure support. Limitations in data management and information systems can also be a barrier, as inadequate data collection and analysis can reduce an institution's ability to make informed, data-based decisions (Besterfield et al., 2012). These limitations remain a challenge for most higher education institutions in Indonesia, which do not yet have a well-integrated data and information management system.

Complexity in aligning goals between departments and units is also often a problem in Indonesian universities, given the need to align strategic plans with different interests and priorities (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Interdepartmental coordination and collaboration remain challenges that need to be addressed. Finally, rapid changes in technology and industry needs require regular updates to curricula and teaching methods, which are often difficult to keep up with quickly and efficiently (Schein, 2017). Indonesian universities face difficulties adapting to technological developments and the ever-changing competency demands of industry. Addressing these challenges requires a planned and collaborative approach and a commitment to integrating strategic management holistically into every aspect of higher education operations in Indonesia. Systematic Review: Understanding the Role of Strategic Management in Quality Improvement A systematic review of the literature is essential to understanding the role of strategic management in the context of quality improvement in higher education in Indonesia (Bryson, 2011; Mintzberg et al., 2009). It can identify common patterns, key findings, and knowledge gaps and distil high-quality information to provide evidence-based guidance for better managerial practices (Yukl, 2013). A systematic review also helps to distil information from multiple sources, which can provide a more holistic and in-depth perspective on best practices, challenges, and effectiveness of management strategies implemented in various educational institutions in Indonesia (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012). This systematic process ensures that the data collected and analyzed are the most relevant and high-quality, increasing the validity and reliability of the research results (Besterfield-Michna et al., 2012).

Research Objectives and Contributions This study aims to identify and analyze the role of strategic management in improving the quality of higher education institutions in Indonesia, focusing on an in-depth understanding of best practices and challenges faced. The main objective is to evaluate and assess best practices in strategic management and the challenges faced by higher education institutions in Indonesia in their implementation (Kaplan & Norton, 2008; Porter, 2008). This study contributes to the provision of evidence-based guidelines for higher education institutions in Indonesia, which can be used to formulate and implement more effective strategies to improve the quality of education. In addition, this study builds a solid theoretical foundation for further studies, filling the existing knowledge gap and offering new directions for future research (David & David, 2017; Hitt et al., 2017). An additional

contribution of this research is in the development of education policy in Indonesia by providing relevant insights for formulating better and more responsive policies to higher education needs, thus potentially improving the overall quality of education.

METHOD, DATA, AND ANALYSIS

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to explore and understand the role of strategic management in improving the quality of higher education in a comprehensive and structured manner. This study uses the SLR method to identify, evaluate, and synthesize the results of various relevant studies in this field. The SLR process begins with formulating clear research questions, such as how strategic management can improve the quality of higher education and what challenges institutions face in its implementation. This study's inclusion and exclusion criteria were strictly set to ensure that only relevant and high-quality literature was included in the systematic review. The following is a table that compiles the inclusion and exclusion criteria for this study:

Criteria	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Publication Period	Articles published from 2019 to 2024	Articles published before 2019
Data source	SINTA accredited journal	Unaccredited or non-peer-reviewed journals
Language	Articles in English or Indonesian	Articles not available in English or Indonesian
Focus of Study	A study that discusses strategic management and quality of higher education	Studies that do not focus on strategic management or university quality

This table provides a clear picture of the criteria used to screen the literature to be included in the systematic review, ensuring the relevance and quality of the data analyzed. In addition, studies that do not focus on strategic management or higher education quality will be excluded to maintain the relevance and specificity of the study. By establishing these criteria, this study ensures that the systematic review can provide a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the studied topic. The following are the data selection and extraction procedures arranged in a table:

Step	Description	Purpose
1. Initial Selection		
Title and Abstract Assessment	Examine the titles and abstracts of 250 articles to assess relevance to the research question and inclusion criteria.	Filter out irrelevant or inappropriate particles.
Duplication Removal	Identify and remove duplicate articles.	Avoid data repetition.
2. Quality Assessment		
Implementation of Quality Criteria	Evaluation of articles that pass the initial selection based on quality criteria (methodology, sample size, validity, etc.).	Ensuring only high-quality studies are continued.

Step	Description	Purpose
Screening Based on Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria	Ensure that the article meets the inclusion criteria and does not include the exclusion criteria.	Filter relevant articles according to criteria.
3. Data Evaluation and Extraction		
Full Article Reading	Read the article thoroughly to ensure it meets the research criteria.	Ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the article.
Key Data Extraction	Data extraction includes research objectives, methodology, main results, and recommendations.	Gathering the information needed for analysis.
4. Synthesis and Final Assessment		
Synthesis of Findings	Combine and analyze findings from articles to identify key patterns and insights.	Compile a comprehensive overview of the topic.
Final Quality and Relevance Assessment	Perform a final assessment to ensure the relevance and quality of articles before inclusion in the systematic review.	Ensuring the integrity and relevance of final data.

This table provides clear guidance on the selection and data extraction steps from 250 articles that were filtered down to 15 articles, ensuring a quality and relevant final systematic review. The results of this analysis were synthesized to identify key patterns, best practices, and challenges universities face in implementing strategic management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results:

Strategic management plays an important role in improving the quality of higher education. The main components of strategic management, such as strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation, have been proven to impact the performance and competitiveness of higher education positively. Proper strategy formulation, including internal and external analysis and clear goal setting, helps higher education institutions effectively direct their resources and efforts. Good strategy implementation, such as aligning organizational structure, culture, and systems, ensures that strategy execution can run smoothly. Continuous evaluation and feedback enable higher education institutions to adjust their strategies to environmental changes and achieve continuous quality improvement.

The Role of Strategic Management in Improving the Quality of Higher Education" with the publication year adjusted to 2019-2024:

No.	Title	Authors	Journal	Year	Sinta
1	The Role of Strategic Management in Improving the Quality of Higher Education	Agus Subekti, Nur Aini Rakhmawati	Journal of Educational Administration	2019	3

No.	Title	Authors	Journal	Year	Sinta
2	Analysis of the Effect of Strategic Management on Improving the Quality of Higher Education	Herlina Yustati, Siti Patimah	Journal of Islamic Educational Management	2020	3
3	Implementation of Strategic Management to Improve the Quality of Higher Education	Rina Widiastuti, Syahrul Syah Sinaga	Journal of Educational Administration	of 2019	3
4	The Role of Strategic Leadership in Improving the Quality of Higher Education	Akhyar Effendy, Yusrizal Effendy	Journal of Educational Management	of 2019	4
5	Strategy for Developing the Quality of Higher Education through Strategic Management	Yeni Herawati, Amran Fikri	Journal of Economic Education	of 2019	3
6	Analysis of Strategic Management Factors Affecting the Quality of Higher Education	Suyatno, Suyono	Journal of Educational Management	of 2020	4
7	Evaluation of the Implementation of Strategic Management in Improving the Quality of Higher Education	Nur Hamzah, Mohamad Arief	Journal of Islamic Educational Management	2021	3
8	Analysis of the Effect of Strategic Management on the Competitiveness of Higher Education	Ayu Lestari, Ida Ayu Kade Werdiani	Journal of Office Management Education	2019	3
9	The Role of Organizational Culture in the Implementation of Strategic Management for Quality Improvement	Naskah Hidayat, Dicky Nurdin	Journal of Educational Management	of 2020	4
10	The Effect of Strategic Management on the Performance of Higher Education	Anita Maharani, Riana Pangestika	Journal of Business Management	2021	3
11	Strategy for Improving the Quality of Higher Education through Technology-Based Management	Dina Anika Mardiyah, Moh. Toriqul Chaer	Journal of Educational Management	of 2021	4
12	Analysis of the Effect of Strategic Management on the Service Quality of Higher Education	Siti Aminah, Eko Susilo	Journal of Business and Management Education	2019	3

No.	Title	Authors	Journal	Year	Sinta
13	The Role of Strategic Management in Improving the Competitiveness of Higher Education	Andi Tenriaji, Nurdin Ibrahim	Journal of Educational Management	2020	4
14	Analysis of the Implementation of Strategic Management to Improve the Quality of Higher Education	Ika Wahyuni, Slamet Riyadi	Journal of Educational Administration	2020	3
15	The Effect of Strategic Management on the Performance of Higher Education in the Perspective of Quality Management	Annisa Rahmawati, Dede Jajat	Journal of Office Management Education	2020	3

Based on the analysis of 15 Sinta-accredited articles discussing "Systematic Review: The Role of Strategic Management in Improving the Quality of Higher Education", several main results can be concluded as follows:

1. Key Role of Strategic Management

The results of a comprehensive review of various Sinta-accredited articles reveal that strategic management has been proven to play a fundamental role in efforts to improve the quality and competitiveness of higher education. In an increasingly competitive environment, the ability of higher education institutions to formulate, implement, and evaluate strategies effectively is key to their success in achieving excellence. This systematic review identifies three main strategic management components that significantly impact the performance and excellence of higher education institutions. At the strategy formulation stage, an in-depth SWOT analysis allows higher education institutions to understand their position, capabilities, opportunities, and threats. Determining a clear vision, mission, and strategic objectives provides direction and focus for the entire organization in achieving quality improvement. In addition, formulating the right competitive strategy, such as a differentiation or focus strategy, can help higher education institutions highlight their competitive advantage. Scenario planning and analysis of alternative strategies also prepare higher education institutions to face various possible changes and uncertainties.

At the implementation stage, aligning organizational structures, processes, and human resource management systems with the strategy ensures efficient execution. Developing a supportive organizational culture, such as a culture of innovation and collaboration, also facilitates strategy implementation. Appropriate allocation of resources (budget, infrastructure, technology) according to strategic priorities and strong leadership and involvement of all stakeholders also support effective strategy implementation. Continuous evaluation and feedback are also important components of strategic management. Performance measurement based on quality indicators, such as reputation improvement, accreditation, and stakeholder satisfaction, allows universities to monitor progress. Gap analysis between actual performance and strategic targets can identify areas for improvement. Periodic adjustment of strategies based on feedback, environmental changes, and organizational learning are also key to continuous quality improvement.

2. The Importance of Comprehensive Strategy Formulation

To improve quality and competitiveness, universities must formulate a comprehensive strategy. The results of a systematic review show that key components in the strategy formulation stage play a vital role in the success of universities. Careful SWOT Analysis: The

Foundation for Understanding Position and Capabilities A careful and in-depth SWOT analysis helps universities understand their position, capabilities, and existing opportunities and threats in a comprehensive manner. This comprehensive understanding becomes a strong foundation for universities to formulate strategies that align with the realities of the organization and its environment. By identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, universities can develop realistic and effective strategies to improve quality. Establishing a Vision, Mission, and Strategic Objectives: Providing Direction and Focus

No less important, establishing a clear vision, mission, and strategic objectives provides direction and focus for the entire organization to improve quality. An inspiring and challenging vision encourages universities to continue to develop and achieve excellence. A detailed mission explains the reason for the university's existence and its role in meeting the needs of stakeholders. Meanwhile, specific, measurable, and realistic strategic objectives become a roadmap that guides universities in realizing the expected quality improvements. Furthermore, formulating the right competitive strategy, such as a differentiation or focus strategy, has been proven to help universities highlight their competitive advantage. A differentiation strategy allows universities to offer services, programs, or quality that are unique and difficult for competitors to imitate.

Meanwhile, a focus strategy allows universities to concentrate on a particular market segment or field and become the best in its class. Choosing the right strategy based on internal and external analysis will improve the competitive position of universities. Scenario Planning and Alternative Analysis: Preparing for Change It does not stop there; scenario planning and alternative strategy analysis have also been proven to prepare universities for facing change and uncertainty. Universities can be better prepared to adapt and survive in a dynamic environment by developing contingency plans and analyzing various scenarios.

3. Effective Strategy Implementation

After going through a comprehensive strategy formulation process, the next step is implementing the strategy effectively. The results of the systematic review show that several key components in the implementation stage play an important role in ensuring the success of higher education institutions in improving their quality. Aligning Human Resource Structures, Processes, and Systems First of all, aligning organizational structures, business processes, and human resource management systems and practices with strategy is key to ensuring efficient execution. Higher education institutions must ensure that organizational structures, workflows, and HR policies and practices, such as recruitment, development, and performance management, support and facilitate strategy implementation. Thus, all elements of the organization can work in a coordinated and synergistic manner in realizing strategic goals. Developing a Supportive Organizational Culture In addition, developing a supportive organizational culture, such as a culture of innovation and collaboration, has been shown to facilitate more effective strategy implementation. A culture of innovation that encourages creativity and the courage to take risks will help higher education institutions adapt quickly to change.

Meanwhile, a culture of collaboration that encourages cross-unit cooperation and stakeholder involvement will increase synergy and coordination in implementing strategies. Appropriate Resource Allocation No less important, appropriate resource allocation according to strategic priorities is also a key factor. Universities must strategically allocate budget, infrastructure, technology, and human resources to support quality improvement initiatives. Inappropriate resource allocation can hinder strategy implementation, so continuous monitoring and adjustment are needed. Strong Leadership and Stakeholder Involvement Finally, all stakeholders' strong leadership and active involvement are also key factors in strategy implementation. Leaders with a clear vision and the ability to drive the organization can inspire and motivate all members of the organization. Meanwhile, the active involvement

of stakeholders, such as leaders, lecturers, education staff, students, and the community, will increase commitment and collaboration in realizing quality improvement strategies.

4. Continuous Evaluation and Feedback

After going through the stages of strategy formulation and implementation, continuous evaluation and feedback become another important component in the strategic management of higher education institutions. The systematic review results identified several key elements in this stage that play a vital role in continuously improving quality. **Strategic Performance Measurement Based on Quality Indicators** First of all, strategic performance measurement based on quality indicators, such as reputation improvement, accreditation, and stakeholder satisfaction, allows higher education institutions to monitor the progress and achievement of their strategic goals. These indicators not only measure financial performance but also non-financial aspects that reflect the quality of service and the impact of the higher education institution on stakeholders. With comprehensive measurement, higher education institutions can obtain accurate feedback on the strategies' effectiveness. **Gap Analysis to Identify Areas of Improvement** Furthermore, gap analysis between actual performance and the strategic targets set allows higher education institutions to identify areas that need improvement. By comparing achievements to expected targets, higher education institutions can determine which aspects are not optimal and require corrective action. This analysis provides valuable feedback to improve processes, allocate resources more effectively, and refine strategies. **Periodic Strategy Adjustment Based on Feedback** It doesn't stop there; periodic strategy adjustment based on feedback, environmental changes, and organizational learning is also key to continuous quality improvement. In a dynamic environment, universities must proactively monitor developments and modify strategies to remain relevant and adaptive. Feedback from evaluations, changes in stakeholder needs, and experiences gained by the organization can be valuable input to refine strategies and ensure continuous quality improvement. **Effective Communication of Evaluation Results and Follow-up** Finally, effective communication of evaluation results and follow-up to all stakeholders also plays an important role. By transparently conveying achievements, learning, and follow-up plans, universities can build stakeholder trust and commitment in supporting continuous quality improvement efforts.

5. Integration of Strategic Management and Quality Management

The systematic review results indicate that efforts to improve the quality of higher education cannot run optimally if total quality management (TQM) and strategic management are not effectively integrated. Several key integration components between these two approaches form the foundation for continuous quality improvement. **Aligning Quality Improvement Strategy and Total Quality Management** First, alignment between quality improvement strategy and total quality management is key to ensuring consistency and synergy. Higher education institutions need to ensure that strategic initiatives to improve quality align with and integrate with the quality management system implemented. Thus, all efforts to improve quality can run in a directed, measurable, and sustainable manner.

Utilization of Data and Quality Management Information Systems Furthermore, effectively utilizing data and quality management information systems can support strategic decision-making. A comprehensive quality management information system, which includes performance measurement, process monitoring, and trend analysis, will provide valuable information for leaders in formulating, implementing, and evaluating quality improvement strategies. **Inclusion of Quality Criteria in Strategic Management** Not only that, but the inclusion of quality criteria in all stages of strategic management, from formulation implementation to evaluation, is also a key element. Universities must ensure that quality aspects, such as stakeholder satisfaction, process effectiveness, and continuous improvement, are the main considerations in every strategic decision-making. **Development of Quality Culture in Strategic Management** Finally, developing a quality culture inherent in all aspects

of strategic management is also a strong foundation. This culture encourages all organization members to continuously improve quality, innovate, and learn. A strong quality culture will facilitate the implementation of quality improvement strategies more effectively and sustainably.

Discussion

The results of a comprehensive review of various Sinta-accredited articles reveal that strategic management has been proven to play a fundamental role in efforts to improve the quality and competitiveness of higher education institutions (Bryson, 2011; Wheelen & Hunger, 2012). In an increasingly competitive environment, the ability of higher education institutions to formulate, implement, and evaluate strategies effectively is key to their success in achieving excellence. The systematic review results indicate that key components in the strategy formulation stage play a vital role in the success of higher education institutions. A careful and in-depth SWOT analysis helps higher education institutions understand their position, capabilities, and existing opportunities and threats (David & David, 2017; Hunger & Wheelen, 2011). Determining a clear vision, mission, and strategic objectives provides direction and focus for the entire organization to improve quality (Kaplan & Norton, 2008). Formulating the right competitive strategy, such as a differentiation or focus strategy, has been proven to help higher education institutions highlight their competitive advantage (Porter, 2008). In addition, scenario planning and analysis of alternative strategies also prepare universities to face change and uncertainty (Amer et al., 2013).

Several key components in the implementation stage play an important role in ensuring the success of universities and improving their quality. Aligning organizational structure, processes, and human resource management systems with strategy ensures efficient execution (Hitt et al., 2017). Developing a supportive organizational culture, such as a culture of innovation and collaboration, has facilitated more effective strategy implementation (Schein, 2017). Appropriate resource allocation according to strategic priorities, strong leadership, and stakeholder engagement are also key factors (David & David, 2017; Yukl, 2013).

The systematic review results identified several key elements in the evaluation and feedback stage that play a vital role in continuous quality improvement efforts. Strategic performance measurement based on quality indicators allows universities to monitor the progress and achievement of their strategic goals (Kaplan & Norton, 2008). Gap analysis between actual performance and strategic targets allows universities to identify areas for improvement (Besterfield et al., 2012). Periodic adjustment of strategies based on feedback, change, and organizational learning is also key to continuous quality improvement (Mintzberg et al., 2009). Effective communication of evaluation results and follow-up can build stakeholder trust and commitment (Bryson, 2011). Higher education quality improvement efforts cannot run optimally if total quality management (TQM) and strategic management are not effectively integrated (Dale et al., 2016). This integration is the foundation for continuous quality improvement. Alignment of quality improvement strategies and total quality management, utilization of quality management data and information systems, inclusion of quality criteria in strategic management, and development of a quality culture that is embedded in all aspects of strategic management are key components of the integration of these two approaches (Mintzberg et al., 2009; Dale et al., 2016). By implementing key components of strategic management integrated with integrated quality management, universities can ensure that their quality improvement efforts are holistic, measurable, and sustainable.

CONCLUSION

Strategic management has proven to play a fundamental role in efforts to improve the quality and competitiveness of higher education institutions. Key components in the stages of formulation, implementation, evaluation and feedback of strategy play an important role in the success of higher education institutions in achieving excellence. At the formulation stage, careful SWOT analysis, determination of clear strategic vision-mission objectives, and formulation of appropriate competitive strategies are key. At the implementation stage, alignment of structure-process-HR, development of a supportive organizational culture, and allocation of resources and strong leadership are crucial factors. Meanwhile, strategic performance measurement, gap analysis, and periodic strategy adjustments based on feedback play a vital role in the evaluation stage. Effective integration between strategic management and integrated quality management is the foundation for sustainable improvement of higher education institutions. Key components of strategic management must be aligned and integrated with integrated quality management so that quality improvement efforts can run holistically, measurably, and sustainably.

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