The new role of universities: Societal and intellectual entrepreneurs

by Abraham Simatupang

The New role of universities: Societal and intellectual entrepreneurs

Abraham Simatupang

Abstract

"Change or perish" is a well known idiom which also has a certain resonance in universities, the so called knowledge provider, although it is not widely recognized or implemented. Considering themselves the guardians of science and knowledge, universities have acquired a new title as "diploma mills". This phenomenon is true in developing countries for several reasons. First, since education should be accessible for everybody, not only for the elites, so the government facilitates anyone who wishes to pursue higher education, or any institution that is willing to help government in providing education to the society. Thus, mass education is recognized. Secondly, quality has not yet been prioritized and considered unimportant although Indonesian government introduced an accreditation system around 10 years ago. Thirdly, more people - even from the rural areas - want to go to tertiary education to get a university degree. Therefore, the number of higher education institutions (HEI) has grown significantly to meet the demand. The society is now very demanding, not only because they demand that graduates achieve good grades and skills, but also (com) passion to solve the societal problems. In addition to that, the Indonesian Department of National Education has promoted and challenged top rank universities to increase their capabilities to be world class universities. To achieve these ambitious objectives, universities have to equip themselves with (new) mindsets and capabilities. Universities which stand for their "classical" tradition and keep their distance from society should transform themselves completely into intellectual entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs. In this networked and interdependent world, the transformation process of the universities can be accelerated by incorporating "protagonists". A protagonist is a person that will bring a "wind of change." Not necessarily a structural leader of the institution, he or she can be someone from outside the university, a new person that will help the institution cope with the rapid change outside. Examples of lively interactions raised in universities which changed their virtues are also discussed in the paper.

Keywords: Good governance, change management, collaboration, internationalization, higher education

One type of education for all purposes?

Higher education or tertiary education is a continuum of education that people should pursue as much as they possibly can. However, according to the history of higher education either in the western or eastern hemisphere, higher education institutions which were established in the beginning of 14th century were only for the benefit of the few or privileges, which, at the end, also produced a class of elites. The purpose of the universities was firstly to inquire, distribute and preserve the "truth". The long tradition of HE institutions as "truth seekers and preservers" is confirmed by the rigid specializations of sciences and knowledge. A "myopic" way of seeing of all phenomena has been the traditional approach of HEIs to serve the community, which, unfortunately, is a web of complex systems. This, of course is an extrapolation

of reductionism instilled by Russel. Possibly, this has been the key factor of shoving HEIs into the ivory tower, and HEIs become busy for themselves but utterly isolated from the environment. However, this model of education has been changed due to the high demand of the society for a new role of the university (Hildebrand 2005:30-31).

Wind of change

Unlike any other (business and industrial) institutions, which are very open and ready to adapt to continuing change of their surroundings, higher education institutions seems to be rigid in their position as the only knowledge gathering and preserving. Higher education institutions received such a privileged status, because they were established for the benefit of the elites. But, society has its own course. Societies are changing with enormous development of science and knowledge. Information Technology (IT) i.e. internet and World Wide Web have made the change become fuller in speed. The world has become a global village and everybody is in some way interconnected (Buchanan: 2002, 30-33). Until the last decade, the ability to use technology to enable people to be connected was very limited. Nowadays, people are no longer hampered by space, time, even language through the help of IT, when they want to communicate. Many types of software which are embedded in the computers, for example, can simultaneously translate any language we receive from our counterparts. And this kind of change has been firstly and significantly influenced the business-alike spheres than HEIs.

As discussed above, the main objective of the HEIs is to inquire, explore, disseminate, and preserve the knowledge, "the truth" with their rigorous methodologies of which the under- and graduate students have to pass all these "hurdles". When they go into society afterwards, they assume that they are prepared for their professional lives or to serve the community. But, unfortunately, most of them encounter very different realities than that they imagined as students.

Intellectual entrepreneurship

The term Intellectual Entrepreneurship shows that intellectual is a term not limited to the academy as entrepreneurship to the business. As we see inside or outside of the university, intellectual entrepreneurs have some characteristics such as taking risks and grasping opportunities, and they discover and create knowledge, utilize innovative approaches, and solve problems in diverse social and cultural realms, including corporate, not for profit, government, and education (Cherwitz & Sullivan: 2002, 23-27).

The hearts of IE are *vision and discovery, ownership and accountability, integrative thinking and action,* and *collaboration* (Cherwitz & Sullivan: 2002, 23-27).

Vision and discovery

Developing a vision is a basic step in IE. They have to visualize through reflection the realms of their academic and professional lives. Individuals continually and regularly

72

learn and relearn, invent and reinvent themselves and their areas of expertise. To achieve this, IE needs individuals to do more than simply perform their tasks (examples: heading corporation, conducting research, performs community service, taking care patients). It is advised also that individuals contemplate who they are, what matters most to them, and what possibilities are available to them. In the class, this can be brought to students by giving them cases which lead them to reflect what is important to them both professionally and personally. This learned and internalized experience brings them into another stage, which, at the end, develops new perspectives and insights. For example, a teacher can begin by asking students to think about what matters most to them and then use their answers to create research programs, while concurrently exploring possibilities for using that knowledge.

Ownership and accountability

In the old paradigm of knowledge acquisition, knowledge is handed over to students, a spoon-feeding method. The more facts and data you throw at them, the more "knowledgeable" the students seem to be. However, by developing the vision and discover about themselves and their disciplines, the intellectual entrepreneurs take responsibility for acquiring the knowledge and tools needed to bring their vision into reality. Therefore, the genuine ownership and accountability of discovering new approaches are developed in the visualization and by exploring the possibilities. When a student graduates from an IE-based program, jobs are no longer predetermined outcomes or entitlements acquired after completing an education or a certain degree, but jobs are seen as "possibilities" that challenge them to be explored and to be discovered regarding their own virtues. Controlling one's future is a major part of ownership and, therefore, has enormous implications for professional success. The link between ownership and accountability is important. Once individual gain control over their own destinies, it follows logically that they will assume greater responsibility for decisions and their outcomes.

Integrative thinking and action

In IE, one should acknowledge that there is no single answer for all questions, or one should know the boundaries of partial knowledge and particular perspectives. Therefore, synergy is more than a catchphrase in the context of IE. This means something greater than the sum of the parts can be generated when people employ in integrative thinking. People have to move beyond the conventional notion of discrete academic disciplines in search of the truth. In the IE class, students from multi-disciplined backgrounds are challenged to give inputs actively and solve the problems that reflect an integration of thinking and perspectives. For example, a medical graduate exposed to IE has to learn that the research questions she/he selects are of critical importance since they have direct implications for real setting and people.

Collaboration and teamwork

Individual professionals, even though they have achieved their maximum achievement, cannot even try without substantial support from other people. It is

73

really very important to bring up students with a capability of building and nurturing relationships. People and relationships are intellectual capital that makes possible integrative thinking and synergy. Ideas are the commodity of academic institutions and, therefore, have been the traditional focus of the delivery of graduate education; intellectual entrepreneurs understand that creativity and ideas are generated when people and networks are viewed as the primary resources. In IE class, students learn to work collaboratively in undertaking scholarly projects and deal with complex tasks. Obstacles that are pronounced in every problem-solving will be touched comprehensively by the synergetic effects that emerge from the group (Rodriguez and Solomon 2007: 3-13).

For short, IE describes the new form of union between the academy and the world and between the academy and its own deepest traditions.
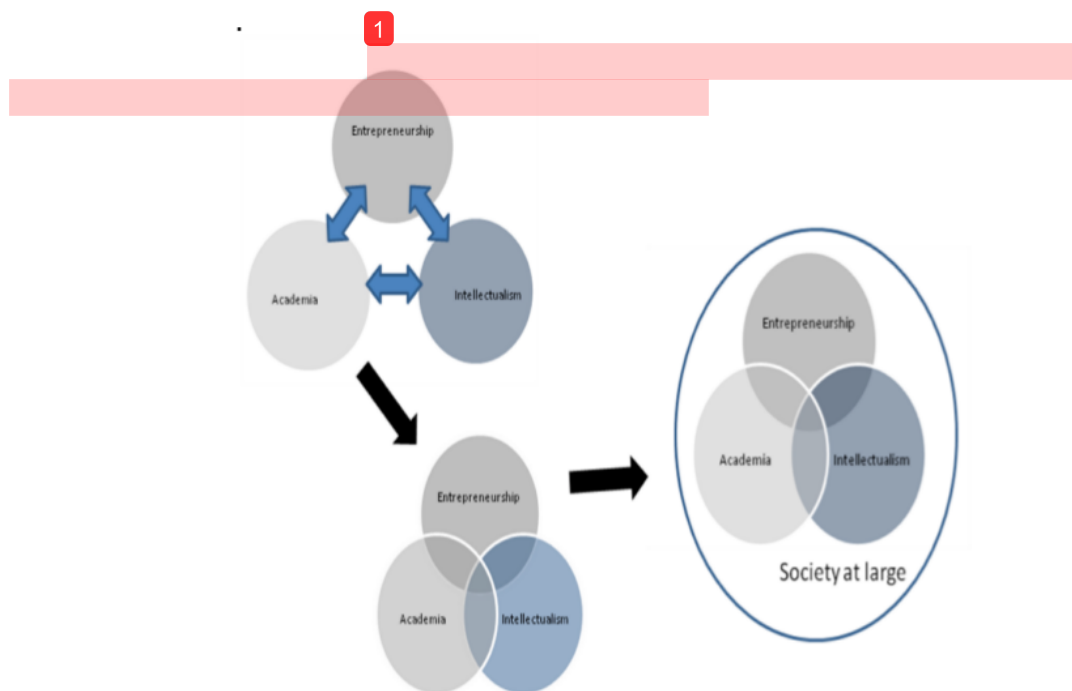

Figure 1. Delineating the notions of intellectual entrepreneurship (modified from Johannisson et al., 1997)

Social entrepreneurs

A growing number of non governmental organizations (NGOs) and for-profit organizations are implementing new approach to international development jointly stressing entrepreneurship and technology. The main objective of such an approach is to use technology for the benefit of the community. Ashoka, an example of a non profit organization which incorporates the approach was established in 1981. Since then, Ashoka has elected nearly 2,000 fellows working in over 70 countries. These fellows are important social entrepreneurs who have initiated inventive solutions to societal challenges. As agents of change, these individuals have been as inspiring as they have been useful. As Ashoka has grown, it has faced a new challenge: to leverage the collective knowledge of Ashoka fellows and galvanize members of the broader community in order to identify, envision, and realize the many untapped possibilities to effect positive social change through social entrepreneurship (Brown, 2007: 125-136). Another living example is Rodrigo Baggio from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He is a computer consultant with a passion for giving the young people in *favelas* an opportunity to access the digital world. Rodrigo provides computer, software and training. The community does the organizing, finding space, recruiting the students and faculty, and affording ongoing administration. Consider the impact Rodrigo has on a community when he introduces his programs. Muhammad Yunus, a professor in economics from Bangladesh, introduced a micro-credit system to women in the poorest areas of Bangladesh, which enabled them to increase their socioeconomic status. Now, micro-credit has also impacts in Brazil, Poland, some African and Asian countries.

In 1995 Institute for Socio-cultural Studies (ISOS) - University of Kassel, Germany launched a training offered for academic staff from developing countries such as Eastern Africa, Central America, Iran, Iraq, Asian countries like Indonesia and the Philippines. The contents of the training are organizational development, curriculum planning, teaching and learning, and research management; however, the training emphasizes self-discovery, creativity, teamwork in a multi-cultural and interdisciplinary setting. Now, there are more than 100 academic staff members from those respective regions that play key roles in their own context as agents of change. Thanks to the three ISOS' "protagonists": Michael Fremerey, Matthias Wesseler and Siawuch Amini who instilled this invaluable training.

Table 1. The Movement's Jujitsu: Four Levels of Leverage (Drayton, 2006)

Actions	Impact
In any school, community or country each year, ½ of 1 percent of the young people have a dream and create a lasting venture.	By leading, these young venturers become lifelong leaders. They have mastered the essential skills of empathy, teamwork and leadership-and irrefutable know it.
Each venture engages a team (typically 3-5 in the core group plus 20 who tutor, coach, broadcast, etc.).*	Everyone learns what teamwork, that they can lead, and how to do so. This further multiplies the next generation's proportion of "natural" leaders.
1% of a school or youth community launches ventures with on average 25 participants. Over two years: 20% to 25% of the whole institution are engaged, likely "tipping" its youth culture.	As venturer peer groups recruit and sell their work, they can both tip their school or neighborhood youth culture and also will wear down old attitudes and logistic barriers (e.g., space, insurance).
Society questions the current disempowering pattern, builds a women's/disability movement for young people. Youth Venture participants provide role models and champions. The press joins in.	Everyone redefines the youth years and lives them as a time of expected initiative, competency, and contribution.

*Youth Venture's experience in the U.S.

That is how (social) entrepreneurs work. Having decided that the world must change in some important way, they simply find and build highways that lead inexorably to that result. Where others see barriers, they delight in finding solutions and in turning them into society's new and concrete patterns (Drayton, 2006: 80-96). This means that the entrepreneur is to a larger or lesser extent the co-creator of the very context which makes her/his envisioned project enactable. Entrepreneurs vary with respect to capability of grasping and controlling the context which makes this partially self-fulfilling enactment process happen (Johannisson, 1998). As it is also shown in a study on academic entrepreneurship in Duke University and John Hopkins University by Bercovitz and Feldmand (2004: 1-34), there are three important factors that foster academic entrepreneurship. These are training, leadership, peer or cohort support. Loscalzo (2007: 1504-1507) also showed that the medical profession, engendered as a "noble" profession based on trust between doctors and their patients, was offered lately lucrative incentives by moving towards commercialization of (health) research discoveries. Those afore mentioned examples of intellectual entrepreneurship and societal entrepreneurship are indeed a challenge for any university which has been asked by stakeholders to take a new role for the community by producing graduates who have the capability as intellectual entrepreneur and compassion to be a society entrepreneur.

Indonesian context

In the Indonesian context, the higher education institutions were established and intended merely for the benefit of the Dutch colonial government. The institutions recruited students from the local upper-class, namely, the sons of regents or the local high-ranking officers, and at the end this education system also produced elites. After the Independence, the HEIs carried the role of educated labour providers for the new emerging country. Therefore, education was no longer elite but was intended for mass education. Private sectors were also urged to get involved in education sector. Later on, not only did they establish primary and secondary schools, but also tertiary education institutions. A great numbers of colleges and universities are mushrooming all over the country. To date, there are 2865 private and 82 state higher education institutions. Although government has laid quality norms in terms of accreditation, there are still great numbers of universities and colleagues that do not pursue it. Regardless of the quality of the education offered by these colleges and universities, the demand of people pursuing higher education - only to get a university degree – is increasing. The people still believe that a university degree is a passport to get a better job.

A high unemployment rate is one of the major problems in Indonesia. According to BPS-Statistics Indonesia, the total number of unemployed attained by educational background was 9,394,515 in August 2008 of which 961,001 had academy and university degree (BPS-Statistics Indonesia 2008). According to the recent survey reported by Kompas (2008: 5), a leading Indonesian newspaper, more than 60% of university graduates are unemployed. Those who are employed, however, work in the areas far from their specialization/field. Customers and employers' dissatisfaction rate also increase. It shows clearly that the qualification or competences of the graduates do not meet the societal demand. In spite of this condition, some universities, fortunately, strive to excel by introducing and implementing change management (Simatupang & Sitepu, 2005: 183-195; Msiska, 2005: 227-238). Institutions should address this by bridging the gap. What Universitas Kristen Indonesia (UKI), Bogor Agricultural University (BAU), Institut 10 Nopember, Surabaya (10 November Institute of Technology, Surabaya) do, are examples in creating IE-based graduates.

Since 1999, the management study program of the Faculty of Economics–Universitas Kristen Indonesia, introduced and add entrepreneurship to the curriculum. Students are challenged to set up or write down a "business proposal" which suits to their vision and discovery (Ganda Hutapea, 2009: personal communication). Inviting alumni to meet students and to share their experiences of setting up their own enterprise or building up their professional careers is also one of the important steps in IE class.

The majority of the graduates reported back to the Department that they have their own small/medium scale enterprises like event organizer, catering, printing shop, etc. They acknowledge that after leaving the school, they did not look for job but created one. Intellectual entrepreneurship is also flourishing among universities in Indonesia.

At the Faculty of Medicine - Universitas Kristen Indonesia, Competence-based

curriculum based on student-centered learning and adult-learning is implemented. The objectives are producing medical doctors with certain competences, such as, explorative and integrative thinking, collaboration and team work (Maxwell, 1998 and 2002; Clark, 1996: 106-107). The development of the curriculum was made possible with the cooperation with the Faculty of Medicine of Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta. At the moment we are seeking collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine in Maastricht, the Netherlands to further develop the curriculum.

Institut Teknologi Sepuluh 10 November, Surabaya, a technological institute in East Java, has recently launched a techno-socio-entrepreneurship program which strongly emphasizes the building of the students' entrepreneurial capability by blending technological and sociological aspects as well as arts into the curricula and field practices. The program is also supported by the local government and local industries supervised by the regional Chamber of Commerce (Utama, 2009; personal communication).

In Bogor Agricultural University, students are encouraged to take an elective program of entrepreneurship. The program is directed by the Directorate of Career Development and Alumni of Bogor Agricultural University. The students have to follow three consecutive phases: firstly, a preparation phase in which students are recruited and selected; secondly training (2-3 months) on principles of entrepreneurship, writing a business plan and field work in designated small and medium scale industries. In the third phase, a student or group of students are ready to start their own business according to their business plan(s) with a seed money start from Rp 8,000,000 per person to Rp 40,000,000 per group (from around 750 USD to 3,700 USD). Besides, they are also supported, monitored and evaluated by mentors from the university and the small and medium scale industries (Directorate for career development and alumni, 2009: 1-24)

Widyagama University in Malang, Bina Nusantara University in Jakarta, Gajah Mada University in Yogyakarta and Bogor Agricultural Institute in Bogor, to name a few, are successful in implementing IE-based curriculum and/or programs.

Conclusion

In this networked society, universities have to involve themselves in the transformation of the society by, among others, producing graduates with IE competencies. Universities become more contextual. Not only that they produce science and knowledge but also graduates who can utilize their knowledge contextually and further create their own networking for their own virtues. Successful alumni returning to their alma mater is a proof that networking does take place. Besides sharing knowledge and experiences, they create network with their juniors and vice versa.

Acknowledgement

References

Bercovitz J. and Feldman M. (2004): Academic Entrepreneurs: Social Learning and Participation in University Technology Transfer. 1-34.

BPS-Statistics Indonesia. Unemployment by Educational Attaintment 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007*) and 2008. Retrieved 28 April 2009 from http://www.bps.go.id/sector/employ/table4.shtml.

Brown C. (2007): Open sourcing social solution. Innovations Summer 2007: 125-136.

Buchanan M. (2002): *Nexus*. W W & Norton Comp. Inc. New York: 30-33.

Cherwitz RA, Sullivan CA. (2002): Intellectual entrepreneurship. A vision for graduate education. Change November/December: 23-27.

Clark F. (1996): *Leadership for quality*. McGraw Hill. London.

Directorate of Career Development and Alumni – Bogor agricultural University (2009): Program Pengembangan Kewirausahaan Mahasiswa. Wahana Berkarir sebagai Entrepreneur (Students' entrepreneurship development program: A method of being entrepreneur). Bogor: 1-25.

Drayton W. (2006): Everyone a change maker. Social entrepreneurship's ultimate goal. Innovations Winter 2006: 80-96.

Hildebrand D.L. (2005): Academics Are Intellectual Entrepreneurs. Association of American Colleges and Universities. Spring 2005: 30-31.

Johannisson B, Kwiatkowski S, Dandridge T.C.(1998): Intellectual entrepreneurship-emerging identity in a learning perspective.

Kompas (2008): Pengangguran Lulusan Perguruan Tinggi (Unemployment of colleges and universities graduates. 15 April 2008: 5.

Kouzes J.M. and Posner BZ. (1988) *The leadership challenge. How to get extraordinary things done in organizations*. Jossey-Bass Publishers. San Francisco.

Loscalzo J. (2007): Entrepreneurship in the Medical Academy: Possibilities and Challenges in Commercialization of Research Discoveries. Circulation 115; 1504-1507. Retrieved 25 April 2008 from http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/full/115/12/1504.

Maxwell J.C. (1998): *The 21 irrefutable laws of leadership*. Thomas Nelson Publ. Nashville.

Maxwell J.C. (2002): *The 17 indisputable laws of teamwork*. (Indonesian version translated by Saputra, A. & Saputra L., Interaksara, Jakarta).

Msiska F.G.W. (2005): Challenges and prospects of quality education in the University of Malawi: The case of Chancellor college in *Towards a shared vision in higher education. Cross cultural insights & projects*. Vol. IV. Editors: S Amini, M Fremerey and M. Wesseler. Institute for Socio-cultural Studies – University of Kassel. Witzenhausen. 227-238.

Rodriguez D. and Solomon D. (2007). Leadership and innovation in a networked world. Innovations Summer 2007: 3-13.

Simatupang A., Sitepu I. (2005): Change management – A "tricky" task in university context: an experience of a mid-size private university in Indonesia. Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan; 12: 183-195.

Warner D. and Leonard C. (1992): *The income generation handbook. A practical guide for educational institutions.* The society for research into higher education & Open University. Buckingham.

The new role of universities: Societal and intellectual entrepreneurs

8 Julia Novy-Hildesley. "From Idea to Impact: Funding Invention for Sustainability", Innovations Technology Governance Globalization, 01/2006

Publication

1 %

Exclude quotes	On	Exclude matches	< 1%
Exclude bibliography	On		