

Enhancing Global Competency and Academic Excellence: A Strategic Analysis of FITK UIN Malang's Path to Becoming a World-Class University

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ABSTRACT:

This research delineates the strategic endeavors of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK) at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang to bolster student achievements, aspiring to evolve into a world-class university. Embracing a qualitative methodology, the study employs critical analytical descriptive methods to probe student coaching development strategies, resources, and outcomes at FITK. Data sources span strategic plans, educational guidelines, stakeholder interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). From 2020 to 2022, it marked a pivotal era, witnessing a surge in student accomplishments at regional, national, and international levels, eclipsing previous years' records. This progression highlights the faculty's commitment to fostering an environment conducive to innovation and creativity. The study underscores the faculty's pivotal role in sculpting individuals for global competencies, reflecting an emergent roadmap for academic institutions aspiring for international repute. However, it acknowledges its limitations in scope, advocating for future research to encompass broader educational contexts and integrate diverse measures of student success. These findings provide valuable insights for institutions striving to cultivate a culture of excellence and global readiness in the dynamic sphere of global education.

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ABSTRAK:

Penelitian ini menguraikan upaya strategis Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan (FITK) di UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang dalam meningkatkan pencapaian mahasiswa, dengan aspirasi berkembang menjadi universitas kelas dunia. Mengadopsi metodologi kualitatif, studi ini menggunakan metode deskriptif analitis kritis untuk menyelidiki strategi pengembangan, sumber daya, dan hasil pembinaan mahasiswa di FITK. Sumber data meliputi rencana strategis, pedoman pendidikan, wawancara pemangku kepentingan, dan Diskusi Kelompok Fokus (FGD). Periode 2020 hingga 2022 menandai era penting, menyaksikan lonjakan pencapaian mahasiswa di tingkat regional, nasional, dan internasional, melampaui catatan tahun-tahun sebelumnya. Kemajuan ini menonjolkan komitmen fakultas dalam menumbuhkan lingkungan yang mendukung inovasi dan kreativitas. Studi ini menekankan peran penting fakultas dalam membentuk individu untuk kompetensi global, merefleksikan peta jalan bagi institusi akademik yang berhasrat mencapai reputasi internasional. Namun, penelitian ini mengakui keterbatasan ruang lingkungannya, mendukung penelitian masa depan untuk mencakup konteks pendidikan yang lebih luas dan mengintegrasikan berbagai ukuran keberhasilan mahasiswa. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan berharga bagi institusi yang berusaha menumbuhkan budaya keunggulan dan kesiapan global dalam dinamika pendidikan global.

Kata kunci: *Strategi pendidikan, prestasi mahasiswa, universitas kelas dunia*

INTRODUCTION

Pursuing academic excellence and international recognition is a global goal for universities, exemplified by Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang State Islamic University's (UIN) ambition to become a world-class university (WCU). As detailed in its 2016-2025 development plan, this strategic aspiration focuses on regional recognition and reputation, underlining UIN Malang's commitment to aligning with global educational standards (Malang, 2018). This endeavor reflects a worldwide academic challenge involving harmonizing local educational frameworks with international benchmarks to contribute significantly to societal advancement and global academic discourse.

The educational management and strategic planning realm is richly documented in academic literature, offering insights into the complexities of guiding institutions toward excellence. Ropianto et al. (2017) emphasize the



crucial role of strategic planning in realizing an institution's vision and mission, affecting educational management and outcomes (Ropianto et al., 2017). Complementary studies by Gómez, Castillo, and Rodas (2022) and Odden (2011) delve into governance and human resource reforms in educational contexts, underlining the multifaceted nature of strategies required for academic success (Gómez et al., 2022; Odden, 2011). These include quality instruction and aligning with market-driven educational landscapes (Elena, 2003; Millett & Zelman, 2005).

Delving into the specifics of strategic management within universities, the literature presents diverse perspectives and methodologies. Mursidi (2017) highlights varied strategic management practices within STKIP Singkawang, indicating the diversity of approaches in the education sector (Mursidi, 2017). Moreover, the significance of competencies management (Lytras et al., 2006) and comprehensive strategic management measures (Zakharin et al., 2021) are acknowledged as key to shaping educational strategies. This is further illustrated by applying the Balanced Scorecard in Taiwanese higher education (Chen et al., 2006) and decision-making frameworks in healthcare education (Hall et al., 2018).

Despite extensive research, significant gaps and limitations still need to be discovered in the literature, particularly regarding the application of strategic management in educational contexts. The challenges of implementing commercial strategic management techniques in education (Yureva et al., 2016) suggest a need for more tailored strategies. The lack of a robust methodological framework in some areas, such as Russian higher education (Yureva et al., 2016), highlights the necessity for context-specific approaches. Additionally, exploring the relationship between resource utilization and academic performance (de Jager et al., 2018) presents opportunities for further research in university resource management.

Addressing these gaps, this study centers on the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK) at UIN Malang. FITK's recent achievements in student performance on national and international stages offer a valuable case for examining effective educational management strategies. This research aims to uncover the specific practices and strategies that have propelled FITK to success, intending to provide insights into strategic management in higher education.

Investigating FITK's coaching methods and strategic initiatives will offer a replicable model for similar educational institutions.

Beyond analyzing FITK's practices, this research seeks to identify potential areas for improvement and innovation in educational strategic management. It will explore how FITK's approaches align with or diverge from established theories and practices in the field. By identifying the unique factors contributing to FITK's success, the study will contribute to a deeper understanding of how educational institutions can effectively navigate the challenges of achieving international recognition and excellence.

The ultimate objective of this research is to contribute substantively to the field of strategic management in higher education. By analyzing FITK's journey and its alignment with UIN Malang's goal of becoming a WCU, the study offers a comprehensive blueprint for other educational institutions with similar aspirations. This research will address existing literature gaps and aims to inspire and guide educational leaders and policymakers toward achieving excellence in the global academic arena.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach, explicitly utilizing a critical analytical descriptive method, which is instrumental in analyzing categorical data (Gunawan, 2022). Such a methodology is apt for deriving a comprehensive model that encapsulates the development of student achievement at the Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty of UIN Maliki Malang, aiming towards an international reputation. The research was founded on the principles of critical analysis, examining both content and historicity, to construct a robust understanding of the variables influencing the university's trajectory toward global recognition.

The research was structured into four stages: orientation, exploration, checking, and interpretation (Gammelgaard, 2017; Gerring, 2017; Komariah, 2019). Initially, the orientation stage focused on identifying the preliminary research focus without preconceived assumptions, relying solely on initial data from university strategic documents. The exploration stage involved meticulous data collection aligned with the research focus, examining student coaching development, resources, strategies, and outcomes. Subsequently, the checking



stage entailed editing and extracting pertinent data relevant to the research topic. Finally, the interpretation stage involved thorough data analysis, aligning it with the university's strategic plans and coaching outcomes to conclude the effectiveness of student development strategies.

Data sources included primary documents such as the UIN Malang Strategic Plan (2018-2022) (Malang, 2018), educational and student development guidelines, and various leadership regulations. They supported documents encompassing educational manuals and guidelines, institutional collaboration frameworks, and budgetary schemes. Additionally, interviews with key stakeholders like the vice chancellor, dean, lecturers, and students and focus group discussions (FGDs) provided rich qualitative data for analysis (Aspers & Corte, 2019).

Data were meticulously gathered from the documents above and through critical analysis of texts. FGDs offered insights into the perspectives of those directly involved in student achievement development. Data analysis involves systematically interpreting the collected information, ensuring accuracy and validity in presenting the research findings (Saleh, 2017). The analysis phase was crucial in synthesizing the descriptive content from documents and FGD outcomes, focusing on the university's journey toward becoming a world-class university.

Several strategies were employed to ascertain the reliability and validity of the study. Triangulation tests compared critical reviews of documents with FGD results to verify data accuracy. Discussions with knowledgeable and experienced individuals in student development provided additional validation (Saleh, 2017). Continuous observation and re-examining of the data ensured its authenticity and relevance to the research focus. These methods collectively reinforced the study's credibility, enabling a comprehensive and trustworthy analysis of the strategies propelling FITK UIN Maliki Malang towards international acclaim.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

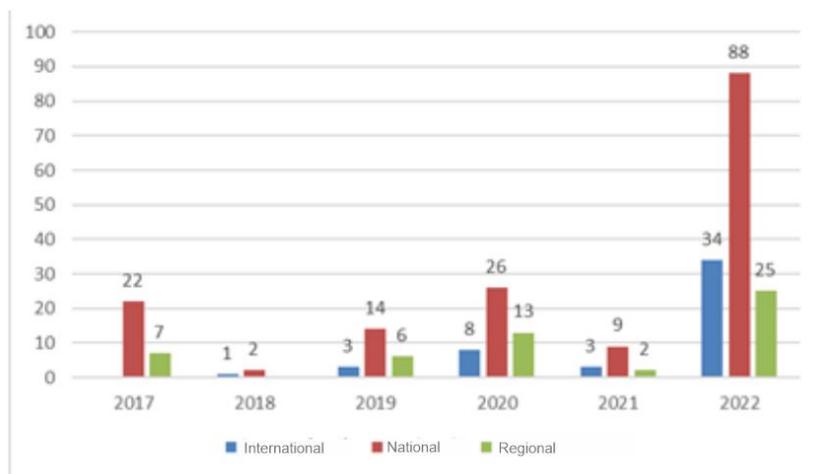
FINDINGS

Higher education is critical in shaping individuals into quality people, especially at universities (Anwar, 2021). One of the higher education institutions

committed to building its students' character and academic quality is the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK) at the State Islamic University (UIN) Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. FITK UIN Malang has long been known as a forum for students with a passion for learning and high dedication to pursuing knowledge, contributing in various fields, and achieving brilliant achievements.

During the period of implementation of student coaching starting from 2020 to 2022, FITK UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang students managed to achieve impressive achievements in various areas of achievement, both at regional, national, and international levels compared to 2017 - 2019, when there was no coaching program intensively (FITK UIN Malang, 2022). Figure 1 is a graph of student achievements for the last five years.

Figure 1. Student Achievement 2017-2022



In figure 1, the data depicts an extraordinary jump in achievement in 2022 for FITK UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang students. That year, there was a significant increase at various levels of competition, both at regional, national and international levels. In 2022, FITK UIN Malang students achieved 34 achievements in regional competitions. Even more impressive, achievements at the national level experienced a very significant jump, reaching a total of 88 awards in the same year. Not only does it stop at the national level, but FITK UIN Malang students have also achieved success on the international stage. By

achieving 25 achievements, students prove that their talents and knowledge are relevant within the country and can compete with students worldwide.

This very significant spike in 2022 certainly did not just happen. This shows that FITK UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang can develop students optimally. This increase also reflects FITK UIN Malang's commitment to creating an environment that encourages student achievement, innovation, and creativity. This brilliant achievement is not only an achievement but also an inspiration for future generations to continue to pursue excellence in various fields of competition.

First, at the regional level, student's achievements at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK) in 2022 managed to soar significantly from the previous year, namely 2021. This initial step towards World Class University (WCU) will trigger other FITK students' enthusiasm to achieve achievements at the national and even international levels. It was recorded that 34 FITK students achieved achievements at the regional level. The following are national-level FITK student achievement data as attached in attachment 1.

Regional-level achievements are the basis of a series of steps toward a world-class university (WCU) (PMB Uin Malang, n.d.). Of course, FITK students are familiar with competitions at the regional level, such as the Learning Media Competition at the national seminar and exhibition of Tadris Mathematics learning media at UIN Malang, FITK learning media, Tartil Competition for the Formadika Anniversary at UIN Malang, Essay Competition at the East Java student level in the context of UIN SATU Tulungagung's birthday, the 16th MPI Anniversary Festival at UIN KHAS JEMBER.

FITK students who succeed in achieving achievements at the regional level are happy and proud of themselves and make the entire UIN Malang academic community happy and proud, especially at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK).

Second, the achievements of national-level students from various study programs at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK) UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang in 2022 deserve a thumbs up. The students have made many extraordinary achievements in various national-level competitions, reflecting the excellent quality of education and coaching in the academic environment. In various fields of competition, such as the Ghina' Aroby

Competition, Arabic Debate Competition, Pencak Silat Competition, Olympics, and Learning Media Competition, FITK students succeeded in achieving brilliant achievements, which gave pride in not only themselves but also the entire academic community. The following are national-level FITK student achievement data as attached in attachment 2.

This achievement shows the students' commitment and hard work in developing themselves and competing and reflects the faculty's strong commitment to providing quality education and adequate facilities. This success inspires other FITK UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang students to excel and make new history in national competitions. With this impressive achievement, FITK UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang has become more assertive as an educational institution capable of producing students who are competent and ready to compete on the national and international stage.

Third, not only achieving achievements at the national level, the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK) at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang has also made a brilliant mark on the international stage. The achievements of international students from FITK UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang in 2022 provide an impressive picture of students' potential, dedication, and commitment to facing global challenges and competing internationally. Recorded achievement data reveals impressive and diverse accomplishments, reflecting excellence in various fields of study and competition. The following is the international level FITK student achievement data as attached in attachment 3.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Study Program students highlight their language and cultural skills through participation and achievements in various international events. Winning as Best Delegate of Future Leader Exchange at the Student Leadership Academy event in Istanbul marked their abilities in diplomacy, leadership, and cross-cultural interaction. Nominations and participation in the International Youth Exchange and Conference in Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore also confirm their commitment to cross-border dialogue and collaboration.

In Arabic Language Education (PBA), students achieved international recognition by winning The Best Abstract in AICOIES 2022 award at IAIN Salatiga. Students' active participation and role as presenters in this conference



also show their contribution to stimulating discussion and exchange of ideas at the international level. Students also achieved impressive rankings at the International Universities Debating Champions event in Istanbul, Turkey. This success illustrates solid analytical and rhetorical skills and the ability to adapt to a competitive and multicultural environment.

In the arts field, FITK students demonstrate unique student qualities through achievements in calligraphy and fine arts. Student involvement in the Al Quds Exhibition in Lebanon and The Event ICONIC, the International Conference on Indonesian Culture, reflects students' appreciation of cultural values and art as a tool of cultural diplomacy in the international arena. Student achievements in competitions and tournaments include sports like winning the NU Cup Pencak Silat Tournament throughout the archipelago. This shows that students have academic excellence and competence in physical and athletic aspects.

The achievements of FITK UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang students at the international level provide concrete evidence of the quality of education that students receive. Students' ability to appear on the international stage, communicate in various languages, adapt to different cultures, and contribute to the global scope indicates their readiness to face global challenges and be responsible world citizens. This achievement also reflects the efforts and support of lecturers and institutions in equipping students with knowledge, skills, and values relevant globally.

DISCUSSION

Pursuing the transformation of FITK UIN Malang into a world-class university necessitates a comprehensive understanding of its current educational landscape and strategic management approaches. This study addresses the critical role of student achievement in enhancing the institution's reputation and aligning with global educational standards, as underscored by Ziegenfuss Jr. & Weitekamp (1996) and Appleton & Staddon (2017) (Appleton & Staddon, 2017; Ziegenfuss et al., 1996). As detailed in this research, the emphasis on curricular and extracurricular development resonates with the broader educational trends of holistic student development (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2005; Shawyun, 2016). The strategic management practices at FITK, paralleling those observed in STKIP Singkawang (Mursidi, 2017) and

other international educational institutions (Odden, 2011; Rexwinkel et al., 2017), highlight the dynamic interplay of governance, curriculum, and student engagement in achieving academic excellence.

Table 1. Student Performance Construction Strategy

Student Performance Construction Strategy
1. Formulate a construction vision
2. Plan construction programs and performance construction guidelines intensively
3. Making an approximate reinforcement of construction
4. Tracer and mapping of outstanding students
5. Increase student input from the achievement path
6. Effective implementation of construction programs
7. Collaborate with study programs and units in the faculty
8. Delegate students
9. Send coaching students to several reputable competitions
10. Giving rewards such as scholarships to outstanding students

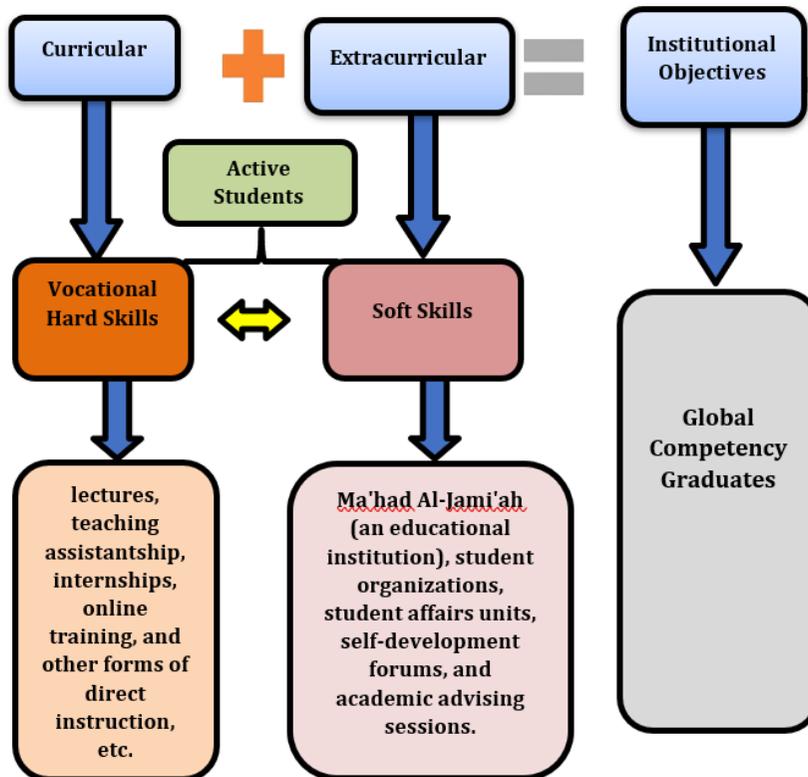
This study revealed that FITK UIN Malang's intensive student coaching program, initiated in 2020, led to a remarkable increase in student achievements at various levels, surpassing the performance recorded from 2017 to 2019. The significant achievements in 2022, especially at international competitions, illustrate the institution's successful alignment with global educational benchmarks (Anwar, 2021; FITK UIN Malang, 2022). This aligns with findings in strategic educational management, where active student engagement and comprehensive coaching are pivotal for academic success (de Jager et al., 2018; Millett & Zelman, 2005). The results underscore the importance of strategic planning and quality assurance in higher education, as demonstrated in studies by Shawyun (2016) and Mursidi et al. (2019) (Mursidi et al., 2019; Shawyun, 2016).

The findings of this research both support and extend previous studies in educational strategic management. This study's positive correlation between comprehensive coaching and student achievement corroborates Odden's (2011) emphasis on holistic human resource management in education (Odden, 2011). Similarly, the role of strategic management in enhancing student performance echoes the insights from studies on the effective use of the



Balanced Scorecard in the Taiwanese education sector (Chen et al., 2006). However, unlike the findings from Rexwinkel, Haenen, & Pilot (2017), which focused on the cognitive and affective aspects of learning outcomes, this study places a stronger emphasis on tangible achievements in regional, national, and international arenas (Rexwinkel et al., 2017).

Figure 2. Student Development Concept



In figure 2, the significant advancements in student achievements at FITK UIN Malang can be attributed to the strategic integration of curricular and extracurricular development, resonating with the cooperative learning models advocated by Pudjiarti, Werdiningsih, & Wea (2023) (Pudjiarti et al., 2023). This integration fosters academic excellence and cultivates essential soft skills, a key aspect underscored in the study of strategic management education by Parente, Stephan, and Brown (2012) (Parente et al., 2012). Moreover, applying strategic management practices in the educational context, as observed at FITK, aligns

with the principles of effective strategic planning and quality assurance in higher education institutions (Mursidi et al., 2019; Shawyun, 2016).

While the results are promising, cautious interpretation is necessary. Though impressive, the increase in student achievements at FITK UIN Malang must be viewed within the context of continuous quality improvement and sustainable educational practices, as highlighted by the DIECU Model (Mursidi et al., 2019). The holistic approach to student development, integrating curricular and extracurricular aspects, aligns with the cooperative learning theories emphasized by Pudjiarti, Werdiningsih, and Wea (2023) (Pudjiarti et al., 2023). However, these strategies' long-term sustainability and adaptability in a rapidly evolving global education landscape remain areas for further exploration.

FITK UIN Malang's remarkable achievements reflect the role of strategic management in educational settings. This approach, mirroring the practices in the business sector (Lytras et al., 2006), underscores the importance of aligning educational strategies with broader institutional objectives. Furthermore, the emphasis on student achievements as indicators of educational quality and reputation parallels the strategic management practices in other sectors, such as the medical industry (Yeh & Lai, 2015). It aligns with the principles of scholarly leadership in education (Shaughnessy et al., 2013).

The strategic focus on student achievements at FITK UIN Malang is a testament to the institution's commitment to excellence and a catalyst for continuous improvement in educational practices. This approach aligns with the Triple Bottom Line strategy in business, emphasizing holistic development (Shams et al., 2023). The achievements at FITK also reflect the growing trend in higher education to align with Sustainable Development Goals, as evidenced by the influence of these goals on university rankings (De La Poza et al., 2021).

The findings from FITK UIN Malang's strategic approach to student achievement development have broader implications for higher education. They underscore the necessity of a strategic, holistic, and sustainable approach to student development, aligning curricular and extracurricular elements with institutional goals. This approach, resonating with the principles of strategic management in various sectors (Lytras et al., 2006; Yeh & Lai, 2015), provides a valuable model for other educational institutions aiming to enhance their



global reputation and academic excellence. The implications extend beyond immediate academic achievements, suggesting a roadmap for educational institutions to foster a culture of continuous improvement and adaptability in a rapidly evolving global educational landscape.

CONCLUSION

In this study, we examined the strategies implemented at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FITK) of UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, aiming to elevate the institution to a world-class university through enhancing student achievements. From 2020 to 2022, they marked a significant upturn in student successes across regional, national, and international levels, a testament to the effective nurturing environment at FITK UIN Malang. These achievements demonstrate the high quality of education and holistic development and offer a roadmap for other educational institutions to foster a culture of excellence and global competency. However, this study recognizes its limitations in scope and calls for future research to explore a broader range of educational contexts and incorporate both qualitative and quantitative measures of student success, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the strategies needed for educational institutions to achieve global recognition.

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