

Online Survey: Evaluation of Indonesian Higher Education Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

In 2020, universities in Indonesia will use a new curriculum, called the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM). This policy makes all universities in Indonesia need to restructure the curriculum by referring to the MBKM curriculum. After one year, it is necessary to evaluate the implementation of the curriculum with the target of lecturers, students, and staff. This study aims to describe the implementation of the MBKM program at the Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University, to reveal the impact of the MBKM program implementation at the Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University, to describe the obstacles to implementing the MBKM program at the Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University (UST), and to provide recommendations that are expected to be useful for MBKM policies and the transformation of higher education. This survey involved 3174 students, 187 lecturers, and 56 staff at the UST. The survey was conducted online and then FGD was conducted to explore in depth the obstacles, suggestions, and recommendations from students, lecturers, and staff for a better MBKM. Based on the results of the study, it was found that the implementation of MBKM received a good response for students, lecturers, and staff. However, this program still needs some improvements and a thorough evaluation.

Keywords: Evaluation curriculum, Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka, Online survey.

INTRODUCTION

The Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka Program (MBKM) was launched by the Minister of Education and Culture in 2020 to prepare higher education graduates who are tough in facing change (Dirjen Pendidikan Tinggi, 2020). Both social, cultural, work, and technological changes are accelerating in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, as stated in the rules regarding the MBKM Program in Permendikbud Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Standards for Higher Education Article 18. The regulation states that undergraduate students allowed to choose learning a maximum of 3 semesters outside the study program (Sopiansyah et al., 2022).

Through the MBKM Program, students get the opportunity for 1 (one) semester (equivalent to 20 credits) to study outside the study program at the same university; and a maximum of 2 semesters or equivalent to 40 credits of studying in the same study program at different universities, studying in different study programs at different universities; and/or learning outside of higher education (Dirjen Pendidikan Tinggi, 2020). Currently, the MBKM program has been implemented by several universities. However, to be able to implement this policy, universities must prepare themselves to be able to run this program in accordance with the characteristics of universities and their resources (Sintiawati et al., 2022; Mirici et al., 2022).

Universities must determine policies that serve as guidelines for their study programs, including support for cross-study learning and allocation of funds, as well as ensuring that the quality of graduates will not decrease by running this program (Puspitasari & Nugroho, 2021).

Higher education leaders can also find suitable partners for all existing study programs (Mastuti et al., 2020). Meanwhile, the study program must align its curriculum to enable students to independently choose 3 semesters of study across study programs and/or outside universities (Sherly et al., 2021). Study Programs must also carry out quality assurance that the graduates produced will still obtain the learning outcomes that have been determined. Study programs need to collaborate and collaborate with partners to carry out learning activities in the MBKM Program to support the acquisition of the desired learning outcomes (Baro'ah, 2020; Irfan, 2016).

This is in line with the Tamansiswa Teachings proclaimed by Ki Hajar Dewantara, namely liberating the child physically and mentally, peacefully, greeting, and happy (Agus et al., 2021; Wardhana & Pratiwi, 2020; Wiryopranoto et al., 2017). In its implementation, Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa (UST) plays an active role in the Independent Campus Independent Learning Policy program, including Independent Student

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Exchange, Teaching Campus, and Independent Internship (UST, 2021). UST actively disseminates information to the entire academic community through various means, including circulars from the leadership, video conferences, social media, and WhatsApp groups. This has proven to be effective considering the high interest of both lecturers and students who register for the MBKM program.

Based on data from the Management Information System Bureau (SIM Bureau), the number of registered participants from UST is 300, consisting of 183 students involved in the Teaching Campus Program, Batch 1 and 2, 5 students in the Certified Independent Study and Internship Program, 107 students in the Independent Student Exchange Program, 5 students participate in International Credit Transfer (ICT). In addition to students, lecturers at the UST are also actively involved in several activities, namely 6 lecturers involved in Nusantara Module activities, 8 lecturers in the Independent Student Exchange program, and 3 lecturers in the Teaching Campus Program. With this achievement, UST is motivated to increase the quantity and quality of MBKM. In more detail, it is presented in Table 1.

To evaluate the implementation of MBKM, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive survey involving students, lecturers, and staff. This survey aims to evaluate the implementation of MBKM at UST as a material for consideration and improvement of the MBKM program in the future (Sekretariat

Ditjen Pendidikan Tinggi, Riset Dan Teknologi Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi, 2021). This study aims to describe the implementation of the MBKM program at UST, describe the obstacles to implementing the MBKM program at UST, and formulate recommendations that are expected to be useful for MBKM policies and the transformation of higher education.

METHOD

Research Design

This research is qualitative research with the type of case study. The case studied is the implementation of MBKM from the point of view of students, lecturers, and staff. This research cannot help in making decisions or arriving at a conclusion (generalization). However, this research can help to understand how to evaluate the implementation of the MBKM program at UST.

Population and Sample

The research was conducted at UST by involving students, lecturers, and education staff. The research sample used random sampling, namely those who filled out the MBKM survey form online. However, for students it is limited to semesters 3, 5, and 7. A total of 3174 students, 187 lecturers, and 56 staff were involved in filling out the research questionnaire.

After filling out the form, the researcher chose purposively to conduct a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The aim is to explore in depth the constraints and recommendations of the MBKM program from the point of view of students, lecturers, and staff. Students are selected based on the MBKM program followed and the distribution of study programs. Lecturers and staff are selected based on direct involvement.

Data Collection Tools

The research instrument was developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture which oversees the MBKM policy. The research instrument is an online survey that can be accessed via the link: <https://instabio.cc/31218150zKC0u>. The questions consist of 25 items with groupings such as Table 2.

Table 1: Distribution of MBKM activity participants at UST

| No | Program | Participant | |
|----|--|-------------|----------|
| | | Student | Lecturer |
| 1 | International Credit Transfer (ICT) | 5 | - |
| 2 | Teaching Campus Program | 183 | 25 |
| 3 | Independent Student Exchange Program | - | 8 |
| 4 | Nusantara Module | 107 | 6 |
| 5 | Certified Internship and Independent Study Program | 5 | - |
| | | 300 | 39 |

Table 2: Grouping of Survey Questions

| Group | Question | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| | Student | Lecturer | Staff |
| <i>Planning</i> | | | |
| Socialization | 1, 4, 5 | 1, 4, 5, 14 | 1, 4, 5, 12 |
| Program Planning | 8, 10, 14 | 15, 16, 17 | |
| <i>Implementation</i> | | | |
| Debriefing | 2, 3, 6, 7, 9 | 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13 | 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 17 |
| Implementation of activity | 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 | 10, 11, 12, 18 | 9, 10, 14 |
| Internal monitoring | 20 | 19, 20, 21, 22 | 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 |
| <i>Report</i> | | | |
| Reporting | | 24 | 24 |
| Follow up plan | 21, 22 | 23 | 23 |

Data Collection

Data was collected using an online survey. Online surveys are used for reasons of flexibility, compatibility with the online work of students, lecturers, and staff during the pandemic (Irfan, Kusumaningrum, et al., 2020). In addition, online surveys are easy to manage and access using a variety of devices. The online survey was conducted on 20-23 December 2021. The online survey was disseminated through WhatsApp Group and the Chancellor’s official circular.

Data Analysis

Furthermore, 15 students, 15 lecturers, and 5 staff were selected for FGD. The FGD was carried out with the aim of exploring in depth the constraints and recommendations for implementing MBKM at UST. The data obtained are then grouped based on implementation, constraints, and recommendations. The data obtained were then interpreted and described by the researcher.

FINDINGS

This study aims to describe the implementation of the MBKM program at the UST, to reveal the impact of the MBKM program implementation at the UST, to describe the obstacles to implementing the MBKM program at the UST, and to provide recommendations that are expected to be useful for

MBKM policies and the transformation of higher education. Therefore, this section will present the implementation of the MBKM program, the constraints, and impacts of activities, as well as recommendations.

Implementation

The MBKM program begins with the socialization of policy programs. Socialization is carried out massively in various forms of activity. Information regarding MBKM policies is carried out through the Ministry of Education and Culture website, online and offline socialization activities organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture and universities, mass media, and social media (Hapsari & Yunus, n.d.). After the massive socialization, it is hoped that students, lecturers, and staff will have a good understanding of this policy. From the survey conducted on the question “how much do you know about the policy (MBKM)?” obtained results such as Figure 1a (lecturer) 1b (student), 1c (staff).

Based on Figure 1, lecturers, students, and staff know most of the contents of the MBKM policy program. This shows that broadly speaking, the MBKM policy has been understood by lecturers, students, and staff. This is in line with the results of research (Fuadi & Aswita, 2021; Sintiawati et al., 2022) which states that the MBKM policy has been continuously disseminated thoroughly and can be understood by lecturers, students, and staff. The implementation of the MBKM policy

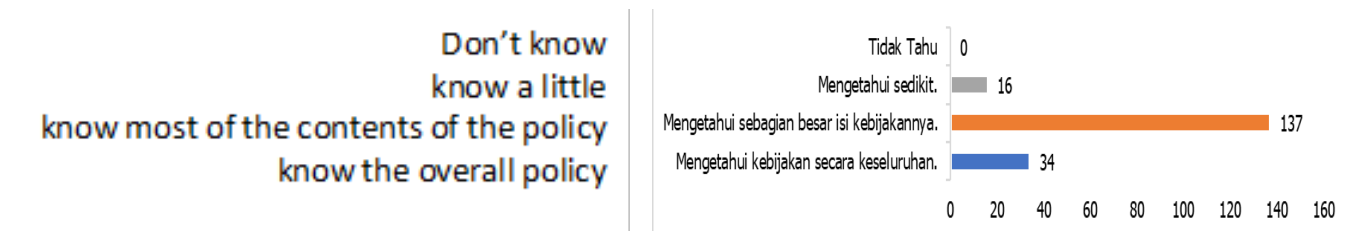


Fig. 1a: The number of Lecturers who know about MBKM policies

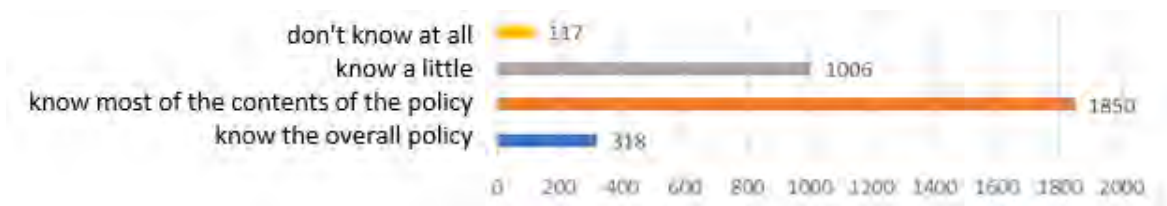


Fig. 1b: The number of students who know about MBKM policies

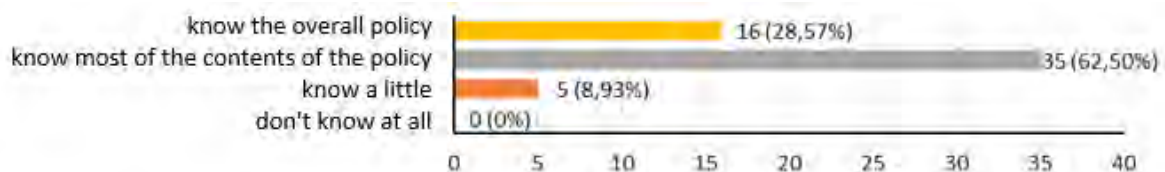


Fig. 1c: The number of staff who know about MBKM policy

needs to be prepared so that at the time of implementation it can run well. According to the group of lecturers, there are several points that need to be prepared, namely: ensuring the alignment of learning outcomes with activities and assessments (36%), designing MBKM activities with partners (22%), preparing courses to be taken by study programs/colleges (22%), and prepare the mentoring process (20%). This is in line with the results of research (Sopiansyah et al., 2022; Widayanti & Thedy, n.d.) which states that there is still much that needs to be prepared to implement MBKM policies, such as alignment of learning outcomes, the guidance process, and preparation of courses that can be taken by students (Agus et al., 2020; Irfan et al., 2018, 2019; Irfan, Nusantara, et al., 2020; Rochmiyati et al., 2020).

Impacts and Constraints

The MBKM policies that have been implemented in Indonesia have had both positive and negative impacts. According to policy, the Study Program is free to make curriculum adjustments and gives students the right to study for 3 (three) semesters outside the study program. In practice, the main obstacle for the Study Program according to lecturers is the adjustment of the study program curriculum and the adjustment of the academic information system (Sidharta, 2021; Susetyo, 2020; Nyaboke, Kereri & Nyabwari, 2021). Meanwhile, according to staff, the main obstacle to implementing the MBKM policy is adjusting the academic information system and exploring partners (Hadi, 2020). In surveys and FGDs, students said that MBKM is an interesting program, but its implementation still has many problems. The problem most often faced by students is that the conversion of 20 credits is not clear (Sidharta, 2021). For example, student A joins the MSIB program and gets 20 credits course conversion rights. However, during the conversion process in the Study Program, they were still confused in choosing conversion courses. In addition to conversion problems, students have problems in the field, for example in the KMA program. When they were sent to school, the school still didn't know about the KMA program. This shows that there has not been good coordination between the government and schools (Arifin & Muslim, 2020; Setiawan et al., 2019).

In contrast to students, from the lecturer's perspective, MBKM is a good program and needs to be continued. However, the implementation of MBKM requires careful planning and synergies between the government, universities, and partners. In the survey, the obstacles faced by lecturers in implementing MBKM were the alignment of Learning Outcomes (CPL) with activities and assessments, designing MBKM activities with partners, and preparing courses to be taken by other study programs/universities (Puspitasari & Nugroho, 2021; Widayanti & Thedy, n.d.).

Other obstacles faced by lecturers include the MBKM website often experiencing technical problems, so that the

student reporting process is hampered; there are obstacles in converting grades from MBKM activities to courses in the original study program; socialization of the MBKM program has not been evenly distributed in several related offices and schools, so that it is found that some schools do not know how to implement the MBKM program; students still experience difficulties in time management between the implementation of MBKM and lectures in their respective study programs; and reporting from the student side to the center on the MBKM website is considered too heavy, thus burdening students.

In line with students and lecturers, staff also experienced problems in the implementation of MBKM. Some of the obstacles faced by lecturers in implementing the MBKM program include document administration there is no clear template/stipulation; SKS conversion still overlaps because there is no guideline yet; not all lecturers and students fully understand the MBKM program (Agus et al., 2021; Arifin & Muslim, 2020; Mariati, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it was found that the implementation of MBKM received a good response for students, lecturers, and staff. However, this program still needs some improvements and a thorough evaluation. University academics recommend that it is necessary to improve communication between several components of the implementation of MBKM, such as the Center, universities, and schools or related agencies; it is necessary to develop training/ mentoring/ team teaching in making module material or program implementation; Universities need to create systems internally (eg websites) to accommodate information, share data, and assist MBKM programs; provide assistance for students affected by Covid-19; create a simple and tactical flow of communication; the need for training for study programs, supporting lecturers, guardian lecturers, and students to improve understanding of the implementation of MBKM.

SUGGESTION

The implementation of MBKM has several obstacles from students, lecturers, and staff (Mariati, 2021). Of the several obstacles faced, several recommendations emerged, namely improving communication between several components of MBKM implementation, such as the Center, universities, and schools or related agencies; it is necessary to develop training/ mentoring/ team teaching in making module material or program implementation; universities need to create systems internally (eg websites) to accommodate information, share data, and assist MBKM programs; provide assistance for students affected by Covid-19; create a simple and tactical flow of communication from 1) leader to lecturer; and 2)

direct leadership to students; and the need for debriefing for study programs, supporting lecturers, guardian lecturers, and students to improve understanding of the implementation of MBKM (Baharuddin, 2021; Supatmi et al., 2022).

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