

University Leaders' Views on Independent Campus Curriculum as Educational Reforms in Indonesian Islamic Universities

Muhammad Nasir

Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris State Islamic University of Samarinda, Indonesia

Muhammad Khairul Rijal

Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris State Islamic University of Samarinda, Indonesia

Syarifah Kurniaty Kahar

University of Newcastle, Australia

Fathur Rahman

Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris State Islamic University of Samarinda, Indonesia

Anis Komariah

Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris State Islamic University of Samarinda, Indonesia

Abstract

The independent campus curriculum policy and implementation in Indonesian universities have faced many challenges during the past two years. This approach is complicated by the Indonesian school system, which divides education into religious and general institutions. The study aims to investigate the challenges and opportunities that Islamic Universities in Indonesia encounter when implementing the policy of the Independent Campus Curriculum as part of an educational policy reform initiative. We employed a case study approach and purposive sampling to select our prospective participants. Nine Islamic universities representing Indonesia's eastern and western regions were chosen purposively. Thirteen leaders of Islamic universities who occupy various structural positions related to implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum were interviewed. Our research showed that Indonesian Islamic universities must establish grant money, encourage cooperation and partnerships with relevant institutions, and generate a wide range of activities following a publicly accessible independent campus curriculum policy. Despite implementation problems, Islamic institutions' independent campus curriculum policy change offers great potential for campus quality improvement. This curriculum allows Islamic colleges to expand their collaborative networks and improve student skills. Our research has provided a new perspective on implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum, but only for Islamic higher education officials. A complete understanding requires input from students, stakeholders, and other interested parties.

Keywords: curriculum development, Independent Campus Curriculum, skill-based curriculum, Islamic University

Leading higher education presents a challenge in preparing graduates for the workforce. Academic credentials and practical knowledge acquired during a university education are significant indicators that enhance graduates' employability (Bui et al., 2019). It is widely believed that the accomplishments of these graduates will increase their income and serve as a gateway to future success (Wolla & Sullivan, 2017). Higher education, an establishment that qualifies graduates for the workplace, is confronted with evolving and unpredictable demands of the employment market (Walsh & Gleeson, 2022). The impact of employment uncertainty on educational institutions' preparation of graduates necessitates substantial modifications to their policies (Salas-Velasco, 2021). This complicates the processes of education, learning, and curriculum design (Altbach et al., 2010).

Universities significantly impact the development of individuals capable and adaptable to the demands of industrial 4.0 by the education they offer (Patel, 2021). To ensure the quality of higher education and produce exceptionally competent graduates, universities must enhance their educational management, which includes curriculum-related factors (Lukita et al., 2020). To equip graduates with the requisite competencies to confront the challenges of the industrial era 4.0, it is imperative that the curriculum consistently strives to enhance students' skill sets (Nasreen et al., 2022). Formulating an educational curriculum in Indonesia is essential for accommodating the nation's diverse religious and cultural landscape. The connection between religious pluralism and social harmony, shaped by historical, cultural, and socio-political contexts, necessitates collaborative efforts to address the challenge of reducing social conflict in the industrial era (Hutabarat, 2023). The emergence of religious universities in Indonesia integrates scientific knowledge with spiritual foundations, promoting tolerance and understanding among diverse religious communities (Anshari, 2012).

Indonesia's educational system distinctly categorizes religious and general universities. Each serving defined roles and limitations. Islamic higher education institutions, including State Islamic Universities (UIN), have developed from earlier forms, such as State Islamic Colleges (STAIN) and State Islamic Institutes (IAIN), reflecting a responsive adaptation to globalization and the need for competitive graduates (Logli & Wahyuni, 2023; Welch & Aziz, 2021). General universities encounter equity, quality, and funding challenges, striving to integrate social justice with human resource development. The historical foundation of Islamic higher education dates back to 1945, demonstrating significant growth in both the public and private sectors. The transition to State Islamic Universities reflects a response to globalization aimed at developing competitive graduates (Afrizal, 2022).

As a strategic measure to confront the challenges of the industrial era, the Indonesian government, via the Ministry of Education and Culture, instituted the Independent Campus Curriculum policy in 2020. The policy of the Independent Campus Curriculum suggests a novel trajectory for advancing higher education in Indonesia (Minister of Education and Culture Indonesia, 2020). The Independent Campus Curriculum policy aims to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively navigate and respond to evolving social, cultural, and technological landscapes, in addition to accelerated technological progress. The Independent Campus Curriculum is expected to establish a link between business, the

workforce, and the dynamic future (Siregar et al., 2020). The Independent Campus Curriculum strategy has the potential to decrease the unemployment rate among Indonesian university graduates (Purwanti, 2021).

Since it has been in effect for two years, the policy and implementation of the independent campus curriculum in Indonesian universities have undoubtedly presented their fair share of obstacles. One of the difficulties associated with this policy is that it is inextricably linked to the Indonesian education system, which divides education into religiously oriented and general educational institutions. The materialistic paradigm introduced the scientific dichotomy between religion and science, perceiving the two as fundamentally incompatible (Damper, 2022). Science and theology are opposed concerning status, authority, and professionalism (Levinson, 2006). Formal and material objects, research methods, truth criteria, the function of scientists, the status of the theories employed, the policies formulated, and the institutions that house them are all considered distinct domains of study (Abdullah & Kartanegara, 2003). This dichotomy between knowledge and science has negative repercussions and effects, and in Indonesia, it generates an abundance of gaps (Syarif, 2020).

Despite these challenges, merging science and religion remains a subject of intense discussion, underlining the importance of an integrated educational framework that integrates these two domains (Iqbal, 2019). The efficacy of the independent campus curriculum policy at Islamic universities has been inferior to that of general universities. This discrepancy in implementing the independent campus curriculum in Indonesia results in a disparity between general and Islamic universities. This disparity arises from multiple issues, including the divergence between policies and systems and challenges in obtaining support from relevant stakeholders. Challenges in Islamic higher education encompasses ineffective academic institutions, insufficient infrastructure and facilities, poor lecturer quality, and inadequate resources. (Nuryanto, 2017). This study aims to examine the challenges and opportunities faced by Islamic Universities in Indonesia in implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum as a component of educational policy reform.

Literature Review

Historical Curriculum Changes in Indonesia

Over the past two decades, Indonesia's curriculum development has progressed towards a competency-based, student-centered, and flexible model (Beatty et al., 2021). The 2004 Competency-Based Curriculum (KBK), which prioritized skills over rote memorization, transitioned into the 2006 School-Based Curriculum (KTSP), enabling schools to tailor the curriculum to local requirements within a national framework (Putri & Hamami, 2023). In 2013, the K-13 or Character-based curriculum emphasized character development, interdisciplinary learning, and scientific methodologies, although it faced challenges in under-resourced regions. The recent reform, Merdeka Belajar or the Independent Campus Curriculum, initiated in 2020, emphasizes teacher flexibility, reduces high-stakes testing, and promotes digital literacy, enhancing education's adaptability to individual student needs and

contemporary global demands (Anggadwita et al., 2024). This transition indicates a broader movement towards decentralization, the cultivation of practical skills, and alignment with 21st-century competencies, all while maintaining adherence to national education standards.

Independent Campus Curriculum Policy in Indonesia

The Independent Campus Curriculum holds philosophical significance concerning the progressive education movement that Rousseau, Dewey, and Freire pioneered (Wilcock, 2021). An educational philosophy known as progressivism places significant emphasis on addressing the needs of students (Omole & Darling, 1995). An additional academic objective of the Independent Campus policy is to “humanize” individuals (Freire, 2019). The perception of education is not that which binds. Thus, it is expected to inspire students to develop in various ways, including academic excellence, social and personal qualities, independence, and community service (Prahani et al., 2020).

The experiential learning theory, as proposed by David A. Kolb, serves as the foundation for the learning approach implemented in the Independent Campus Curriculum (Cherry, 2019). This theory emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge through direct experience. According to (Kolb & Kolb, 2009), experiential learning theory (ELT) gives a complete picture of how people learn and grow and a nonlinear picture of how adults progress. The independence of the campus curriculum is predicated on the philosophical value that emphasizes the students’ learning experience. In the current educational landscape, tasks requiring students to solve problems and exercise their creative and logical abilities have surpassed memorization (Juita & Yusmaridi, 2021). The Experiential Learning Theory is widely incorporated into curricula across the globe (Lehane, 2020). The following figure depicts the progression of Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) stages, which align with the policy of the Independent Campus Curriculum and progress from abstract knowledge concepts to tangible experiences.

The Independent Campus Curriculum is very applicable during the Industrial Revolution 4.0 towards the era of Society 5.0. The implementation of this policy yields numerous advantages for advancing higher education. In addition to fostering collaboration among universities, including those ranked among the Top 100 by the QS World University Rankings, this initiative facilitates the establishing of new academic programs. It offers educational institutions additional opportunities and convenience (Basri et al., 2021). Furthermore, the management of campus accreditation is facilitated for academic institutions through ongoing collaborations with industry and professional organizations that possess comparable expertise, as well as with the local community (Qorib & Harfiani, 2021).

To the corporate environment, the link-and-match policy of the Independent Campus Curriculum concept mandates that universities furnish their students with a flexible curriculum and practical knowledge via extracurricular engagements, including student exchanges, internships, teaching assistantships, research endeavors, independent and humanitarian projects, and entrepreneurship (Kodrat, 2021). Entrepreneurial activities are anticipated to

foster increased enthusiasm among students and transform their perspective from job seekers to job creators within society (Amril & Hardiani, 2021).

Independent Campus Curriculum Policy at Indonesian Islamic Universities

Analysis of data from the 2022 National Labor Force Survey (SAKERNAS) indicates that graduates of Religious Higher Education (PTK) are more readily employed and established as entrepreneurs in the workforce compared to graduates of general universities (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2022). The accreditation status of Islamic universities serves as an indicator of their productivity and competitiveness. By implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum in Islamic universities, the technical directives or guidelines of the Ministry of Religion are transformed into campus authority. The delegation of power is critical due to the fact that every campus possesses distinct attributes in accordance with its potential.

As stipulated in Decree 7290 of 2020, issued by the Director General of Islamic Education, which pertains to implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum in Undergraduate Programmes, Islamic universities have eight distinct curriculum activities on campus. This directive necessitates a more intricate sequence of operational instructions and an additional responsibility for the Ministry of Religion to ensure religious moderation. As a derivative of the previous decree, Decree 1591 of 2022, issued by the Director General of Islamic Education of the Ministry of Religion, pertains to the technical guidelines for establishing and operating independent campuses at Islamic universities. Through Islamic universities' Independent Campus Curriculum policy, the Ministry of Religion develops, controls, and supervises independent, innovative, productive, adaptable, and relevant education, teaching, research, and community service to social dynamics, scientific and technological progress, and business and industry.

In developing this set of technical recommendations, the following goals were taken into consideration:

- 1) Establish a framework for the execution of the Independent Campus Curriculum at Islamic universities, both public and private;
- 2) Enhance and refine students' understanding and proficiency following their unique talents, interests, and capabilities;
- 3) Motivate students to acquire a diverse range of knowledge applicable to their entry into the business and industrial sectors; and
- 4) Serve as a standard against which educational program planning, implementation, and evaluation are measured.

These technical guidelines are designated for use by the following parties:

- 1) Islamic university leaders as the authority for the implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum policies;

- 2) Faculty leaders as the duty the implement the Independent Campus Curriculum policies;
- 3) The head of the department or coordinator of the study program has the duty for the technical implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum policies;
- 4) Instructors of courses administered through student exchange programs; and
- 5) Instructors who also function as on the job training supervisors.

Methodology

We are investigating how the higher education curriculum has changed over time. This is to help us figure out how to use the curriculum best to improve the quality of Islamic higher education in Indonesia. The explicit objective of our research is to identify differentiations in implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum policy between general and Islamic universities. We utilize qualitative research employing a case study methodology to gain comprehensive insights into the issue and leverage extensive information directly from the field (Creswell, 2021). This research design aims to understand the processes that occur and does not focus on the product of scientific investigation (Cohen et al., 2017). Moreover, researchers can identify critical issues about the Independent Campus Curriculum policies from multiple perspectives (Punch, 2005). Therefore, the primary focus of this study corresponds to the challenges and opportunities encountered by Islamic universities in Indonesia during the implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum policy.

Method

The study employed a purposive sampling method for participant selection. This strategy involves intentionally selecting individuals with specific characteristics or experiences relevant to the research topic.

This study focuses on the leadership of Islamic universities in Indonesia, who serve as campus authorities in implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum. Vice-Chancellor, Dean, Vice-Dean, Quality and Standards Committee, Head of Department, and Head of Undergraduate Program are among the structural leadership positions of Islamic universities represented as participants. Thirteen university leaders representing ten Islamic universities with diverse academic ranks participated in this study. To ensure the confidentiality, this study was conducted anonymously (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The 10 Islamic universities represented by participants are anonymously referred to as University A sequentially until University I.

Table 1
Participants' Characteristics

Variable	Subcategory	%	N
Age	Under 35	15.4	2
	35–50 years	38.5	5
	51–60 years	46.2	6
	61 older	0	0
Stages of academic rank	Professor	38.5	5
	Associate Professor	30.8	4
	Assistant Professor	30.8	4
	Instructor	0	0
Position	Vice-Chancellor	7.7	1
	Dean	7.7	1
	Vice-Dean	7.7	1
	Quality Assurance Center	38.5	5
	Head of Department	15.4	2
	Head of Undergraduate Program	23.1	3

Note. Creswell proposed this by interviewing 5-25 participants who had all witnessed the phenomenon.

This study collected data using both interactive and non-interactive qualitative techniques. Data-collecting methods include documentation and interviews (Baxter & Jack, 2015). Documentation and interviews were used to observe and document the implementation of independent campus curriculum policies in Islamic universities and identify opportunities and obstacles on its implementation.

Researchers employ instruments whose validity has been established through testing. The instrument's validity is established through testing, verifying whether the data gathered precisely represents the assessed construct (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Instrumental validity refers to the accuracy of the conclusions derived from the research within the given framework. This suggests that there is agreement between researchers and respondents concerning the definitions and descriptions of the events (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Data validity was assessed using source and procedure triangulation (Sutama, 2019). Source triangulation is a method employed to ascertain data reliability by assessing the information gathered from participants. Subsequently, the described and categorized data is divided into three distinct categories: identical, unique, and specific.

The interactive analysis by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana is used to analyze and interpret data (Miles et al., 2014). By using coding procedures, we could identify themes and make sense of the narratives provided by our respondents. In this study, obtaining data, distilling, presenting, and concluding are the stages involved in data analysis.

Findings and Discussion

Challenges of Implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum in Indonesian Islamic Universities

Islamic universities in Indonesia are subject to the supervision of the Ministry of Religion, an institution that demonstrates agility and responsiveness to the development of policies and curricula in Indonesia. This is shown by the release of guidelines that provide Islamic universities with a foundation and direction for implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum policy. It implies that the Independent Campus Curriculum at an Islamic university possesses a legal foundation, legitimacy, and explicit trajectory in terms of policy, which are derived from the overarching attributes of the Islamic university. There are numerous obstacles to implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum policy in Islamic universities.

The Independent Campus Curriculum Program Lacks ICT Capacity

In implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum Program, the Ministry of Religion and the Ministry of Education and Culture, as education implementers, have the same role to collaborate with and promote a nationwide initiative to standardize the Independent Campus Curriculum. The Ministry of Religion specifically developed an information system to facilitate the implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum policies, known as MERPATI. It is currently designed to support the student exchange program as the primary activity of the Independent Campus Curriculum. However, the Information System cannot accommodate all programs in the Independent Campus Curriculum. As stated by the Head of the Quality Assurance Center of University A:

“I think we (Islamic Universities) are late in developing an independent campus curriculum information system from general universities. The MERPATI application only serves one program, namely student exchange through learning between universities. There are still other programs that should be developed in this application service. This information system service is one of the keys that encourages the independent campus curriculum programs to run effectively and efficiently”.
(Respondent 3)

A Head of the Quality Assurance Center of University J stated similar challenges associated with the information system integrated into The Independent Campus Curriculum. He expects that the developed information system will be able to support many programs in the future, as stated:

“One of the biggest challenges of the Islamic university is to develop an integrated service system for the independent campus curriculum to facilitate various program activities in the independent campus curriculum, so it’s not just student exchange through learning at other campuses.” (Respondent 5)

It differs from the choice of programs in the independent campus curriculum at general universities, which have provided various programs in the Independent Campus Curriculum policy. The various programs are Teaching Campus, Certified Independent Study and Internship, Independent Study, Independent Student Exchange, Independent Entrepreneurship, Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards, and Teaching Practitioners. (*Program Kampus Merdeka*, 2022)

Information systems and the learning management system (LMS) support information technology in implementing the independent campus curriculum. A Dean of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business at University A expressed the importance of LMS in facilitating online lecture programs under the Independent Campus curriculum. It is regrettable, given the information technology resource deficient support that limits learning optimization in the Independent Learning Curriculum program. As previously mentioned by the dean of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business at University A.

“Information technology support and application services that support independent campus curriculum policies at Islamic universities are still lacking.” “We need to develop big data to facilitate strengthening student competence through various learning activities that can be accessed with one click according to their individual learning needs and interests.” (Respondent 1)

The Independent Campus Curriculum Lacks Government-Private Sector Collaboration

A member of the Quality Assurance Center of University G complained about the lack of cooperation facilities between government institutions and business entities to accommodate the implementation of programs included in the Independent Campus Curriculum. She acknowledged:

“The Ministry of Religion has not facilitated cooperation between ministries and business entities, both government and private, which provide access to Islamic university students to be able to take the independent campus curriculum programme provided by the ministry of education, so that this hinders strengthening the competence of Islamic university students.” (Respondent 11)

Furthermore, the Head of the Quality Assurance Center at University A highlighted the importance of collaboration among campuses and stakeholders. Additionally, establishing optimal and targeted collaboration is significantly influenced by a successful socialization process. As he stated:

“The lack of collaboration between the government, ministries, and the campus is a serious obstacle

Campus collaboration with the industrial sector is hampered by the absence of socialization of programs and information on student skill demands that are pertinent to the workplace”. (Respondent 3)

The Independent Campus Curriculum is Budget-Constrained

A Head of the Undergraduate Program at University E acknowledges that managing grant funds from the Ministry of Religion is one of the most significant obstacles to implementing Islamic universities’ Independent Campus Curriculum policy. Education budget constraints impede the implementation of programs in the Independent Campus Curriculum, just as operational expenses catalyze program implementation, as she uttered:

“The big challenge for leaders of Islamic universities is managing limited education funds to invest in implementing the independent campus curriculum, which requires a lot of funds, while the ministry of religion does not yet have a grant funding policy.” (Respondent 9)

Additionally, the vice dean of University A highlighted that financial support was crucial to the campus’s capacity to manage the Independent Campus Curriculum programs effectively.

“The Independent Campus Curriculum policy has major challenges, mainly due to the lack of financial support,” (Respondent 2)

Opportunities to Reform Indonesian Islamic Universities’ Curriculum to Independent Campus Curriculum

The Independent Campus Curriculum Allows Career and Industry Engagement

The programs in the independent campus curriculum offer great opportunities for universities and students. The campus has the opportunity to expand its collaboration network, and at the same time, students have the opportunity to develop their skills. This effort can reduce the gap between higher education and work needs in the business and industrial world. As a member of the Quality Assurance Center from University F and University B acknowledged:

“A great opportunity for Islamic universities to expand their network of cooperation, together with various parties, to improve and develop student skills according to the demands of the world of work, thereby minimizing the gap between universities and the industrial world and the business world” (Respondent 10).

“Both in business and industry, the courses in the Independent Campus Curriculum are supposed to assist close the discrepancy between higher education and the actual needs in the world of employment. Through internships, actual projects, and industry-relevant independent study programs, students are given the chance to be directly involved in

the workplace in their execution. Therefore, they not only acquire academic knowledge but also useful experience fit for the expectations of the modern workforce....

We attempt to constantly harmonize the curriculum with input from many parties, including industry participants, so that our graduates can be better prepared and relevant to the changing needs of the world of work.” (Respondent 4)

Student exchanges between Islamic universities have constituted a collaborative effort over the past few years. The student exchange program is executed via cooperation among universities, with the participation of up to sixty Islamic universities in Indonesia. However, the execution of programs within the Independent Campus Curriculum has been undesirable, characterized by a shortage of diversity in the programs that have been incorporated (*Merdeka Belajar PTKI*, 2023).

The Independent Campus Curriculum Fosters Student Interests and Talents

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, the Ministry of Religion has launched the Independent Campus Curriculum at Indonesian universities to promote interdisciplinary learning experiences for students. Students’ academic experiences will be customized according to their interests and abilities to foster their development and enhance their performance. A Head of Department at University C and Head of the Undergraduate Program at University D demonstrates that implementing this policy in Islamic universities is an ideal opportunity to advance students’ professions in the future. As they declared:

“Through the independent campus curriculum policy, students will be able to meet their own learning needs by choosing the programmes they need.” “Surely this is a perfect opportunity for their future career development.” (Respondent 8)

“Students have the chance to identify their potential in more depth by choosing courses outside of the academic schedule, internships, research, or independent projects. reported the vice chancellor of the university. “We hope that through the flexibility given, students can discover their true interests and develop their talents in appropriate fields, which will finally support their future career success.” (Respondent 7)

The activities of the Independent Campus Curriculum are intended to allow students more flexibility in pursuing their interests and abilities. It provides an ideal environment for students to develop holistically in academic and non-academic disciplines.

The Independent Campus Curriculum Connects Islamic University Graduates to Industry and Business

Islamic universities gain a deeper comprehension of the demands of job opportunities for the graduates they produce by implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum’s programs.

Implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum policy facilitated the university's ability to determine the requirements of graduate users or job providers, as articulated by a Vice-Chancellor of University C. It contributes substantially to achieving the standards for job providers concerning graduates' qualifications. As he stated:

“The current difficulty of Islamic universities is identifying the needs of graduate users for our graduates.” Therefore, the independent campus curriculum policy helps Islamic universities identify “what is needed for the world of work and what their hopes are for university graduates.” (Respondent 6)

The Independent Campus Curriculum programs enable students to explore the actual demands of the labor market, encompassing both technical capabilities and highly valued soft skills qualities. As the Head of the Undergraduate Program at University H and the Head of the Department at University I stated:

“Students can see first-hand the standards and expectations that exist in the world of work by means of internships, industry projects, and cross-disciplinary partnerships.” (Respondent 12)

“We want our graduates to have not just great academic knowledge but also useful industrial demands awareness and practical abilities. We think our graduates, with the help of the Independent Campus Curriculum, will be more ready to meet worldwide competition and contribute actively in the professional setting”. (Respondent 13)

Discussion

Particularly in the 4.0 industrial revolution, one of the challenges of higher education in Indonesia is to empower its graduates with the necessary work skills. Many graduates are currently experiencing difficulty securing suitable employment. Despite numerous employers seeking university graduates, there continues to be a substantial discrepancy between the educational response and the requirements of employers. Education systems must adapt to labor markets to balance human intelligence and technology (Garcia-Esteban & Jahnke, 2020). Universities must acknowledge that potential employers of their graduates perceive a discrepancy between their anticipated performance and the actual circumstances. Employers will identify the deficiency and develop a suitable bridge program for adjusting recent graduates to their specifications and industry norms.

Consequently, the government will possess an enhanced capacity to devise policies for achieving the nation's strategic goals (Sangeetha, 2022). Their skills and competencies must be augmented to provide potential graduates of this program with a competitive edge in the domestic and international job markets. As the course syllabus indicates, this issue can be resolved by enhancing the curriculum and classroom teaching and learning activities (Dela Cruz et al., 2016). Developing an intervention strategy predominantly centered around converting the course syllabus into an output-oriented system is imperative. Academic

institutions have developed their distinct categories. The initiatives that promote these competencies enhance students' academic achievement and employability (Sui et al., 2019). According to the Indonesian government, the curriculum policy on independent campuses can more effectively equip its citizens to confront the challenges of the contemporary industrialized.

Indonesian Islamic universities face many challenges when implementing the policy regarding the Independent Campus Curriculum. The primary obstacles the Islamic universities encounter when trying to implement the Independent Campus Curriculum are regulatory constraints and the preparedness of human resources (Yudhawasthi & Christiani, 2022). However, significant prospects exist for Islamic universities to improve the standard of instruction due to this policy. The curriculum policy of independent campuses enables Islamic universities to strengthen and collaborate with other universities, including those ranked among the top 100 by QS World University Rankings.

Challenges of Implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum in Indonesian Islamic Universities

The Merdeka Campus curriculum allows students to learn more about and improve their understanding of scientific fields relevant to their present interests and priorities through on-the-job training. Students can spend one to three semesters (20 to 40 credits) exploring their hobbies and interests. Students can receive similar learning experiences both inside and outside their studies, including those outside their educational courses. It is the best option for students to study because the Independent Campus curriculum offers a wide range of programs. Islamic institutions' independent campus curriculum policies aim to transmit and broaden students' knowledge beyond their field of study. To ensure that the independent campus curriculum policy is implemented effectively and efficiently, students must have access to the national scale independent campus curriculum policy program, organized by the Ministry of Religion and implemented nationally, such as in the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The application of the MERPATI Information System by the Ministry of Religion facilitates the implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum within the ministry's authority. Nevertheless, the current utilization of the MERPATI Information System is undesirable. This application solely supports student learning exchange programs within the Independent Campus Curriculum. Further efforts are required to assist with additional programs included in the Independent Campus Curriculum at Islamic universities. This policy distinguishes it from the diverse activities of the Independent Campus Curriculum at general universities. With optimal information and communication technology services development, the Ministry of Religion intends to facilitate various available activities following the Independent Campus Curriculum policies. Students will acquire enhanced job-related skills through this diverse curriculum (Gowsalya & Kumar, 2017). Further curriculum augmentation with elective activities would foster greater autonomy among students in their decision-making processes (Krishnapatria, 2021).

One of the foremost obstacles Islamic universities encounter while implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum is the functionality of technology. Higher education institutions are responsible for providing their students with the skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly technologically advanced global society. To accomplish this, Islamic universities must prioritize the development of information technology and information service systems capable of facilitating a wide range of activities related to the Independent Campus Curriculum programs. Through the nationwide implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum and an efficient information service system, Islamic universities can offer their students numerous prospects to enhance their scholarly and vocational proficiencies (Qomarul Huda & Hussin, 2010). These opportunities include teaching assistance, apprenticeships with private and public organizations, entrepreneurial endeavors, research, religious moderation, humanitarian initiatives, community development, and student exchanges. In addition, information service systems can facilitate simple access to various academic and organizational resources, simplify administrative procedures, and enhance communication among faculty, staff, and students at Islamic universities. Moreover, it can assist Islamic universities in monitoring and evaluating student progress, spotting areas that require enhancement, and tailoring every student's educational experience (Sarkar, 2012).

Policymakers in Islamic universities endeavor to develop suitable information and communication technology (ICT) that can yield multifaceted advantages for the institutions. These advantages may include enhancements to the quality of education, improvement of students' work capabilities, and preparation for a technologically advanced and globalized world.

Islamic Universities are encouraged, as part of the Independent Campus Curriculum, to become more engaged in the development of cooperative partnership initiatives with Indonesian ministries and state-owned enterprises (BUMN). Facilities to increase student competency through programs in the Independent Campus Curriculum will be the result of the collaboration that will be executed with the assistance of the existing programs. Therefore, in order for Islamic higher education students to have greater access to programs in the Independent Campus Curriculum, cooperation between government institutions, the business world, the industrial world, and non-government institutions must be strengthened at Islamic universities. Policymakers in Islamic universities must establish mechanisms for cooperation among these institutions and other entities. In order for the Independent Campus Curriculum policy to hopefully enhance the standard of graduates and offer advantages for the state, nation, and religion, Islamic universities must be ready to fortify collaborative networks with external stakeholders. Establishing partnerships with other ministries in Indonesia, including State-Owned Enterprises (BUMN), poses a significant obstacle for Islamic universities seeking to incorporate partnership programs into the Independent Campus Curriculum.

The Independent Campus Curriculum Partnership Program intends to establish a framework for collaboration among universities, BUMN, and other ministries to make higher education more relevant to the demands of industry and society. The curriculum for this program is customized to meet the requirements of local communities and industry (David et al., 2016;

Harman et al., 2010). Nevertheless, cooperation among universities, BUMN, and other ministries may present obstacles for several reasons. For instance, effective collaboration may be impeded by disparities in organizational culture, barriers in communication, and competing priorities (Jongbloed et al., 2008; Plewa et al., 2015; Zusman, 2005). To surmount these obstacles, universities must establish transparent communication channels and determine shared objectives with BUMN and other ministries. Mutual regard, confidence, and openness must underpin any collaboration. Establishing efficient project management procedures and ensuring all stakeholders are engaged in program planning and implementation are additional critical aspects to consider. Moreover, universities must foster a culture of collaboration by equipping faculty and staff with the necessary resources and assistance to establish partnerships and collaborate. The educational initiatives encompass the cultivation of proficiencies in negotiation, team building, communication, and conflict resolution (Eletter et al., 2017; Mehar Singh, 2021).

Islamic university leaders underlined the importance of collaboration in determining the success of the partnership program in the Independent Campus Curriculum. By working together, universities, state-owned enterprises, and other ministries can create curricula that meet the needs of industry and society and equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the world of work.

In addition, supporting the implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum program with grants from engaged stakeholders, particularly graduate users, is crucial for ensuring its effectiveness and efficiency in Islamic universities. The provision of grant funds can significantly contribute to the execution of the Independent Campus Curriculum initiative within Islamic universities. Operating these programs could incur significant costs, and providing students with the essential resources and opportunities could prove difficult without sufficient funding (Purwanti, 2021). Hence, graduate users who may be interested in the success of these programs and government agencies, private organizations, and other stakeholders may be required to assist Islamic universities. These stakeholders may contribute grants or other forms of financial aid that may be utilized to support internships, entrepreneurial endeavors, research projects, and other facets of the curriculum at the independent campus. Vulnerabilities and guidance, as well as financial support, can be offered by stakeholders to aid in achieving program objectives. Graduate users may provide valuable insights regarding the skills and knowledge in high demand in the labor market. The curriculum is influenced by financial support to equip students for better career prospects (Yusuf, 2021).

Leaders of Islamic universities require grant support and encouragement from other stakeholders to ensure the success of the Independent Campus Curriculum program at their institutions. Through collaborative efforts and the utilization of available resources, Islamic universities can equip students with the opportunities and tools necessary for success in the digital age.

Opportunities to Reform Indonesian Islamic Universities' Curriculum to Independent Campus Curriculum

The Independent Campus Curriculum policy, which allows students to study for three semesters outside of their program, will create a Higher Education Partnership Network, a transformational way of connecting, collaborating, and learning about transformation and innovation (Vick & Robertson, 2018). Islamic universities must allocate appropriate time for learning and networking with colleagues and industry partners. This collaboration positions Islamic universities for a paradigm shift. Partnerships with businesses and industry can reduce the unemployment rate and enhance university graduates' assimilation (Lima et al., 2021). This policy confers advantages upon the Islamic University by facilitating networking opportunities for its students with industry partners. The collaboration, as mentioned earlier, has the potential to promote revolutionary changes within Islamic universities and generate fresh prospects for partnerships with the business and industrial sectors. Increased cooperation between academic institutions and industry stakeholders may facilitate a more seamless transition of university graduates into the workforce, thereby reducing unemployment rates (Perkmann et al., 2013).

The implementation of policies promoting collaboration and networking among students, universities, and industrial collaborators has been met with a favorable reception from leaders of Islamic universities. This may positively affect the academic and professional development of students and create new avenues for innovation and expansion.

The Independent Campus Curriculum program provides Islamic higher education students the opportunity to acquire a broader range of experiences through on-the-job training. Through on-the-job training, students can develop work experience while enhancing their practical skills and knowledge. In addition to sharing their work-related experiences and perspectives, students will attend to and gain knowledge from one another. This allows students to engage in direct dialogue and interaction with industry, academic, and business leaders and network with other attendees (Pinto & Pereira, 2019). In addition to imparting practical knowledge, fieldwork allows students to establish connections with prominent speakers and industry experts. This can assist students in establishing relationships and connections that could benefit their future professions. Furthermore, students can gain valuable insights into recent trends and advancements by discussing them with authoritative figures in their respective fields (Dixon, 2017). Students can network with industry leaders and foremost speakers, acquire practical experience, and develop their skill sets through on-the-job training.

Ensuring the quality of graduates is a critical responsibility of any educational institution, especially Islamic universities. Islamic universities can assist in producing competent and capable graduates who satisfy the requirements and expectations of the industry by offering students a methodical and comprehensive learning experience (Fajardo et al., 2020; Puranik, 2020). Islamic universities must ensure the standards of their forthcoming graduates to satisfy industry demands for proficient and capable labor forces and generate experienced human capital for the labor market. This demand can be achieved by implementing an organized and comprehensive learning process that guarantees the quality of future graduates. Consequently,

curriculum programs and appropriate teaching design approaches must prioritize the post-graduation capabilities of the graduates. By employing an independent campus curriculum policy, Islamic universities can ascertain which postgraduate competencies are in demand in the labor (Maher, 2004). Curriculum design strategies and programs are indispensable for guaranteeing the standard of forthcoming graduates. Islamic universities may emphasize developing workforce-relevant skills and knowledge when formulating their curriculum programs. This measure can facilitate the commencement of their professional lives with the essential competencies and understanding (Kouwenhoven, 2009).

Through the Independent Campus Curriculum strategy, Islamic University leaders can assess which graduate skills are required in the workplace by connecting them to industry and business. This practice can facilitate aligning university curriculum programs with the industry's requirements and expectations. Islamic universities can also align policies with the training and experience required to cultivate students' skills by identifying the competencies in demand in the professional world.

Conclusion and Implications

As a new direction for developing higher education in Indonesia in anticipation of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era, the Independent Campus Curriculum policy, presently a priority program for the Indonesian Ministry of Education, represents a technological advancement. This strategy aims to enhance the standard of higher education instruction to enable establishments to produce graduates who are proficient and possess industry-relevant skills.

Islamic universities are regarded similarly to general universities regarding the implementation policies for the Independent Campus Curriculum in Indonesia. However, their policies are implemented using various techniques. Nonetheless, the policies are executed through various techniques customized to align with the specific focus of religious or general contexts. The effectiveness and efficiency of independent campus curriculum policies at Islamic universities are generally inferior to those observed at general universities. Policymakers affiliated with Islamic universities in Indonesia require sufficient resource support to implement the programs outlined in the Independent Campus Curriculum effectively. The success of this program's implementation is primarily determined by the catalyst, which is the ICT support. In addition, Islamic universities necessitate extensive collaboration between the private and public sectors, as the sustainability of the Independent Learning Curriculum program is highly reliant on the availability of partners willing to provide opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and experience. Insufficient financial support impedes the effective and efficient operation of numerous programs within the Independent Campus Curriculum. The implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum in the field is affected by this deficiency. This lapse in implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum in public and Islamic universities in Indonesia must be assessed to ensure the ongoing program's continuity.

Islamic universities in Indonesia are required to develop grant funds, promote cooperation and partnerships with various relevant institutions, and generate a wide range of activities following

an openly accessible independent campus curriculum policy. The transformation of the Independent Campus Curriculum policy in Islamic universities presents exceptional prospects for enhancing campus quality, notwithstanding the challenges that impede its implementation. This curriculum provides Islamic universities with the chance to broaden their networks of collaboration while simultaneously affording students the opportunity to enhance their skill sets. Additionally, this policy generates a variety of programs that can be tailored to the interests and abilities of individual students to foster growth and enhance academic achievement. Due to the ongoing nature of their programs, Islamic universities have a greater understanding of the employment opportunities that are most important to the graduates they produce. This necessitates the academic community's readiness and unwavering support to facilitate the operation of the Independent Campus Curriculum programs.

Our research findings reveal the difficulties and advantages encountered by leaders in Islamic higher education in Indonesia when implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum, despite the literature's emphasis on its relevance to the industry and workforce. Implementing the Independent Campus Curriculum Policy presents implications and significant prospects for Islamic universities to establish partnerships with global universities and the corporate sector. Consequently, it is anticipated that this collaboration will contribute to the mitigation of unemployment and the augmentation of employment prospects for graduates. This opportunity enables students to enhance their comprehension of scientific disciplines pertinent to their present interests, abilities, and priorities through various programs in the Independent Campus Curriculum. In addition, the Ministry of Religion, as the primary sector, should prioritize advancing information technology and information service systems that can enable various activities associated with the Independent Campus Curriculum initiative. However, the policymakers leading Islamic universities have identified this issue as an obstacle to assessing the future implementation of the Independent Campus Curriculum policy.

The transformation of the Independent Campus Curriculum in Indonesian Islamic Universities would potentially improve global education through a flexible, collaborative learning model, thereby producing graduates with skills applicable to the industrial sector. The Independent Campus Curriculum in Islamic Universities in Indonesia exemplifies how education can be customized to align with individual interests and needs while preserving local and religious values. By sharing these experiences, Indonesian Islamic universities can enhance cross-cultural cooperation and foster international educational policy innovation.

Limitations of the Study

The viewpoints of Islamic university leaders regarding the Independent Campus Curriculum policies as educational reforms in Indonesian Islamic universities are outlined in our research. Although our study has offered a fresh outlook on the execution of the Independent Campus Curriculum, this is restricted to the opinions of Islamic higher education leaders. Diverse interested parties, including students, stakeholders, and other relevant parties, must contribute their perspectives to obtain a comprehensive understanding. In addition to this, prior research studies that provide an overview of the integration of Islamic higher education graduates before

the introduction of the Independent Campus curriculum are scarce. Therefore, examining multiple facets of the execution of the Independent Learning Curriculum as an educational reform in Islamic universities in Indonesia is imperative.

Acknowledgment

This study was supported by the Directorate of Islamic Higher Education, Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, via the 2022 LITAPDIMAS research funding program. All of the data included in this study has been obtained with permission from the parties involved.

References

- Abdullah, M. A., & Kartanegara, M. (2003). Menyatukan kembali ilmu-ilmu agama dan umum: upaya mempertemukan epistemologi Islam dan umum. Sunan Kalijga Press.
- Afrizal, A. (2022). Perkembangan Perguruan Tinggi Islam di Indonesia (Kasus STAIN, IAIN, UIN Dan Perguruan Tinggi Islam). *Berkala Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 2(1), 18–32. <https://doi.org/10.51214/bip.v2i1.378>
- Altbach, P. G., Reisberg, L., & Rumbley, L. E. (2010). Tracking a global academic revolution. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 42(2), 30–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00091381003590845>
- Amril, A., & Hardiani, H. (2021). Entrepreneurship intentions for students in Jambi Province, Indonesia (Study in response to the implementation of the freedom to learn, independent campus). *Jurnal Perspektif Pembiayaan Dan Pembangunan Daerah*, 8(6), 595–608. <https://doi.org/10.22437/ppd.v8i6.11239>
- Anggadwita, G., Indarti, N., & Ratten, V. (2024). Changes in Indonesian private universities educational practices in the post COVID-19 environment. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 22(1), 100905. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2023.100905>
- Anshari, Z. (2012). Pendidikan agama islam di perguruan tinggi umum (Studi Historis dan Realitas Pendidikan Agama Islam di Perguruan Tinggi Umum). *Edu Islamika*, 4(1), 56–84. <https://doi.org/10.12962/j24433527.v4i2.630>
- Basri, M., Arif, S., Heryandi, H., & Samosir, A. S. (2021). School mapping to support the implementation an independent learning-independent campus program in West Lampung Regency. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 8(3), 164. <https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v8i3.2408>
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2015). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 554–559. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2008.1573>
- Beatty, A., Berkhout, E., Bima, L., Pradhan, M., & Suryadarma, D. (2021). Schooling progress, learning reversal: Indonesia’s learning profiles between 2000 and 2014. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 85, 102436. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102436>
- BPS-Statistics Indonesia. (2022). Labor Force Situation in Indonesia August 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.bps.go.id/id/publication/2022/12/07/a64afccf38fbf6deb81a5dc0/keadaan-angkatan-kerja-di-indonesia-agustus-2022.html>
- Bui, H. T. M., Nguyen, H. T. M., & Cole, D. (2019). Innovate higher education to enhance graduate employability. In H. T. M. Bui, H. T. M. Nguyen, & D. Cole (Eds.), *Innovate Higher Education to Enhance Graduate Employability: Rethinking the Possibilities* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429058899>
- Cherry, K. (2019). The experiential learning theory of David Kolb. In *Experiential Learning*.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2017). Research methods in education. *Research Methods in Education* (8th ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315456539>

- Creswell, J. W. (2021). Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research, ebook, Global Edition. In Pearson Education, Limited.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage.
- Damper, R. I. (2022). Science and religion in conflict, part 1. Preliminaries. *Foundations of Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10699-022-09870-0>
- David, F., van der Sijde, P., & van den Besselaar, P. (2016). Entrepreneurial Incentives, obstacles, and management in university-business co-operation. In Saiz-Álvarez & J. Manuel (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Social Entrepreneurship and Solidarity Economics* (pp. 499–518). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-0097-1.ch024>
- Dela Cruz, L. A., Ferrater-Gimena, J. A. O., Inot, P. P., & Biore, C. (2016). Competencies learned and relevance of the business administration curriculum to the graduates' job. *JPAIR Multidisciplinary Research*, 25(1), 118–129. <https://doi.org/10.7719/jpair.v25i1.394>
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Sage Publications. Retrieved from <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=X85J8ipMpZEC>
- Dixon, K. A. (2017). Bridging the gap: An exploratory study on classroom-workplace collaborations. University of Arkansas.
- Eletter, S., Taleb, N., Mohamed, E. A., & Alnaji, L. (2017). Exploring interns' satisfaction: A case study of United Arab Emirates. *International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research*, 15(22), 547–560.
- Fajardo, Z. I. E., Rocha, M. C., & Pibaque, L. M. B. (2020). Effective teaching methods in higher education. *PUBLICACIONES*, 50(2), 59–71. <https://doi.org/10.30827/publicaciones.v50i2.13943>
- Freire, P. (2019). Pedagogy of the oppressed. In R. Falk (Ed.), *Toward a Just World Order* (1st ed., Vol. 1, pp. 47–54). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429269400-8>
- Garcia-Esteban, S., & Jahnke, S. (2020). Skills in European higher education mobility programmes: outlining a conceptual framework. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*, 10(3), 519–539. <https://doi.org/10.1108/HESWBL-09-2019-0111>
- Gowsalya, G., & Kumar, M. A. (2017). Perceptions on employability skills necessary to enhance arts and science students in Namakkal District. *International Journal of Pure and Applied Mathematics*, 116(22), 9–18.
- Harman, G., Hayden, M., & Nghi, P. T. (2010). Higher education in Vietnam: Reform, challenges and priorities. In P. Maassen & M. Klemenčič (Eds.), *Higher Education Dynamics* (Vol. 29, pp. 1–13). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-3694-0_1
- Hutabarat, F. (2023). Navigating diversity: Exploring religious pluralism and social harmony in Indonesian society. *European Journal of Theology and Philosophy*, 3(6), 6–13.
- Iqbal, M. (2019). Dualism system of higher education in Indonesia BT - Proceedings of the International Conference on Educational Sciences and Teacher Profession (ICETeP 2018). 136–140. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icetep-18.2019.33>

- Jongbloed, B., Enders, J., & Salerno, C. (2008). Higher education and its communities: Interconnections, interdependencies and a research agenda. *Higher Education*, 56(3), 303–324. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-008-9128-2>
- Juita, D., & Yusmaridi, M. (2021). The concept of “Merdeka Belajar” in the perspective of humanistic learning theory. *Spektrum: Jurnal Pendidikan Luar Sekolah (PLS)*, 9(1), 20–30. <https://doi.org/10.24036/spektrumpls.v9i1.111912>
- Kodrat, D. (2021). Industrial Mindset of Education in Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) Policy. *Jurnal Kajian Peradaban Islam*, 4(1), 9–14. <https://doi.org/10.47076/jkpis.v4i1.60>
- Kolb, A. Y., & Kolb, D. A. (2009). Experiential learning theory: A dynamic, holistic approach to management learning, education and development. *The SAGE Handbook of Management Learning, Education and Development*, 7(2), 42–68. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857021038.n3>
- Kouwenhoven, W. (2009). Competence-based curriculum development in higher education: A globalised concept? In A. Lazinic & C. Calafate (Eds.), *Technology Education and Development*, pp. 1–25. InTech. <https://doi.org/10.5772/7297>
- Krishnapatria, K. (2021). Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) curriculum in English studies program: Challenges and opportunities. *ELT in Focus*, 4(1), 12–19.
- Lehane, L. (2020). Experiential Learning—David A. Kolb (pp. 241–257). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-43620-9_17
- Levinson, M. H. (2006). Science versus religion: A false dichotomy? ETC: A review of general semantics, 63(4), 422–429. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42578676>
- Lima, J. C. F., Torkomian, A. L. V., Pereira, S. C. F., Oprime, P. C., & Hashiba, L. H. (2021). Socioeconomic impacts of university–industry collaborations—a systematic review and conceptual model. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.3390/joitmc7020137>
- Logli, C., & Wahyuni, H. I. (2023). Indonesia: The Politics of Equity and Quality in Higher Education. In D. Kapur, D. M. Malone, & L. Kong (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region* (p. 0). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780192845986.013.37>
- Lukita, C., Suwandi, S., Harahap, E. P., Rahardja, U., & Nas, C. (2020). Curriculum 4.0: Adoption of industry era 4.0 as assessment of higher education quality. *IJCCS (Indonesian Journal of Computing and Cybernetics Systems)*, 14(3), 297. <https://doi.org/10.22146/ijccs.57321>
- Maher, A. (2004). Learning outcomes in higher education: Implications for curriculum design and student learning. *The Journal of Hospitality Leisure Sport and Tourism*, 3(2), 46–54. <https://doi.org/10.3794/johlste.32.78>
- McMillan, J. H. & Schumacher, S. (2001). *Research in education, A conceptual approach* (Fifth ed.). Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Mehar Singh, M. K. (2021). English language communicative competence of university interns for employability. *E-BANGI Journal*, 18(3), 67–81.
- Merdeka Belajar PTKI. (2023). Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia. Retrieved from <https://merpati.kemenag.go.id>

- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis, A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Sage Publication.
- Minister of Education and Culture Indonesia. (2020). Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Standards for Higher Education.
- Nasreen, F., Halili, S. H., & Razak, R. A. (2022). Employability skills of Malaysian university students for IR4.0: A Systematic Literature Review. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Management (MOJEM)*, 10(4), 15–28.
- Nuryanto, A. (2017). Kritik Budaya Akademik di Pendidikan Tinggi. *The Journal of Society & Media*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.26740/jsm.v1n1.p35-42>
- Omole, O. R., & Darling, J. (1995). Child-centred education and its critics. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 43(4). <https://doi.org/10.2307/3121823>
- Patel, D. T. (2021). Education in the era of industry 4.0. In *Research Anthology on Cross-Industry Challenges of Industry 4.0* (pp. 1647–1665). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-8548-1.ch082>
- Perkmann, M., Tartari, V., McKelvey, M., Autio, E., Broström, A., D’Este, P., Fini, R., Geuna, A., Grimaldi, R., Hughes, A., Krabel, S., Kitson, M., Llerena, P., Lissoni, F., Salter, A., & Sobrero, M. (2013). Academic engagement and commercialisation: A review of the literature on university-industry relations. *Research Policy*, 42(2). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2012.09.007>
- Pinto, L. H., & Pereira, P. C. (2019). ‘I wish to do an internship (abroad)’: investigating the perceived employability of domestic and international business internships. *Higher Education*, 78(3), 443–461. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-018-0351-1>
- Plewa, C., Galán-Muros, V., & Davey, T. (2015). Engaging business in curriculum design and delivery: a higher education institution perspective. *Higher Education*, 70(1). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-014-9822-1>
- Prahani, B. K., Utama Alan Deta, Mochammad Yasir, Sri Astutik, Paken Pandiangan, Sayidah Mahtari, & Husni Mubarak. (2020). The Concept of “Kampus Merdeka” in Accordance with Freire’s Critical Pedagogy. *Studies in Philosophy of Science and Education*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.46627/sipose.v1i1.8>
- Program Kampus Merdeka. (2022). Kampus Merdeka-Kemedikbud RI. Retrieved from <https://kampusmerdeka.kemdikbud.go.id/program>
- Punch, K. F. (2005). Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches. In *Introduction to social research quantitative and qualitative approaches*.
- Puranik, S. (2020). Innovative teaching Methods in higher education. *BSSS Journal of Education*. <https://doi.org/10.51767/je0907>
- Purwanti, E. (2021). Mempersiapkan Pelaksanaan Merdeka Belajar – Kebijakan Kampus Merdeka di Perguruan Tinggi Institusi. *518(ICoSIHESS 2020)*, 384–391.
- Putri, L. A., & Hamami, T. (2023). The Islamic religious education curriculum towards globalization of education: A study on the dynamics and implications of curriculum changes. *Muslim Education Review*, 2(2), 249–274. <https://doi.org/10.56529/mer.v2i2.199>

- Qomarul Huda, M., & Hussin, H. (2010). ICT implementation barriers and organizational issues in Islamic-based Higher Education Institution: The case of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta. *Proceeding of the 3rd International Conference on Information and Communication Technology for the Moslem World (ICT4M) 2010*, A18–A25. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICT4M.2010.5971877>
- Qorib, M., & Harfiani, R. (2021). Independent campus policy in the new normal era. *Proceeding International Seminar of Islamic Studies*, 2, 13–20.
- Salas-Velasco, M. (2021). Mapping the (mis)match of university degrees in the graduate labor market. *Journal for Labour Market Research*, 55(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12651-021-00297-x>
- Sangeetha, J. (2022). Human capital factors in the recent college graduate: employers' perspective. *Journal of Advanced Research in Economics and Administrative Sciences*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.47631/jareas.v3i1.385>
- Sarkar, S. (2012). The role of information and communication technology (ICT) in higher education for the 21st century. *Science*, 1(1), 30–41.
- Siregar, N., Sahirah, R., & Harahap, A. A. (2020). Konsep Kampus Merdeka Belajar di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0. *Fitrah: Journal of Islamic Education*, 1(1), 141–157. <https://doi.org/10.53802/fitrah.v1i1.13>
- Sui, F. M., Chang, J. C., Hsiao, H. C., Chen, S. C., & Chen, D. C. (2019). A study regarding the gap between the industry and academia expectations for college student's employability. *IEEE International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management*, 2019-Decem. <https://doi.org/10.1109/IEEM.2018.8607269>
- Sutama. (2019). Metode Penelitian Pendidikan; Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, PTK, Mix Methods, R&D. *Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling*, 53(9).
- Syarif, F. (2020). Reintegration of religious knowledge and general knowledge (Criticism of the discourse of science dichotomy). *Transformatif*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.23971/tf.v4i1.1850>
- Vick, T. E., & Robertson, M. (2018). A systematic literature review of UK university-industry collaboration for knowledge transfer: A future research agenda. *Science and Public Policy*, 45(4). <https://doi.org/10.1093/SCIPOL/SCX086>
- Walsh, L., & Gleeson, J. (2022). Theorising and preparing students for precarity: how can leaders and educators better prepare students to enter an increasingly insecure workforce? *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 54(1), 7–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2020.1868981>
- Welch, A., & Aziz, E. A. (2021). Higher education in Indonesia BT – International handbook on education in South East Asia (L. P. Symaco & M. Hayden (Eds.); pp. 1–30). Springer Nature Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-8136-3_41-1
- Wilcock, N. (2021). Rousseau, Dewey, and Freire: A political and educational method. *Metaphilosophy*, 52(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/meta.12483>
- Wolla, S. A., & Sullivan, J. (2017). Education, income, and wealth. *Choice Reviews Online*, 51(02).

- Yudhawasthi, C. M., & Christiani, L. (2022). Challenges of higher educational documentary institutions in supporting Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka Program. *Khizanah Al-Hikmah : Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan, Informasi, Dan Kearsipan*, 9(2).
<https://doi.org/10.24252/kah.v9cf2>
- Yusuf, F. A. (2021). The independent campus program for higher education in Indonesia: The role of government support and the readiness of institutions, lecturers and students. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, 12(2), 280–304.
- Zusman, A. (2005). Challenges facing higher education in the twenty-first century. In P. G. Altbach, R. O. Berdahl, & P. J. Gumport (Eds.), *American Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century: Social, Political, and Economic Challenges* (2nd ed., pp. 115–162). The John Hopkins Unity Press.

Corresponding author: Muhammad Nasir

Email: muhammadnasir@uinsi.ac.id