

REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY OF MERDEKA BELAJAR KAMPUS MERDEKA CURRICULUM (MBKM) IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

After a long time since the MBKM program was launched, until now there has been no research that attempts to carry out reflection. Reflection needs to be done to find out whether universities experience obstacles in implementing MBKM. What obstacles do universities experience in implementing the MBKM program? Apart from that, with reflection, universities can rethink the various shortcomings that exist in implementing the MBKM program. In writing this article, the author used qualitative research methods using a library approach. Data collection in this paper begins with collecting various appropriate literature in the form of written text and soft copy, for example books and scientific articles published online. The results of this research show that several problems that need to be reflected on do not only originate from universities and study programs as organizers, but are also faced by implementers, namely students and lecturers as well as partners, both government agencies and partners from the business and industrial world. From the organizers, there are still universities and study programs that have not fulfilled the conversion of student scores. The study program has difficulty adjusting the course load with partner universities. Lack of information in understanding the concept and benefits of the MBKM program. At a practical level, several problems arise for small universities or universities with remote, outermost and underdeveloped geographical locations.

Keywords: *Reflection, Curriculum, MBKM, Higher Education*

1. INTRODUCTION

Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka Program (MBKM) was officially launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture at the end of January 2020 through several regulations. In general, the legal basis for implementing the MBKM curriculum is Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 3 of 2020 concerning Higher Education standards, especially Articles 15 to 18 (Santika, 2022). To ensure the implementation of MBKM in higher education, the Minister of Education and Culture has established instruments. An important instrument for implementation is implementing the eight Main Performance Indicators (IKU) determined through the Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 754/P/2020.

The MBKM program is intended to answer the challenges of higher education institutions to produce graduates who are in line with current developments, advances in science and technology, the demands of the business and industrial world, as well as the dynamics of society. The MBKM program is a policy to transform the higher education system in Indonesia to produce more

relevant graduates. The MBKM policy aims to create competitive people; This means that humans are healthy, intelligent, adaptive, creative, innovative, skilled, dignified, productive and have character in accordance with the values of Pancasila. In turn, universities can prepare graduates as future leaders of the nation who are superior and have personality (Sopiansyah, 2022).

MBKM aims to encourage students to gain learning experience with various additional competencies in study programs and/or outside campus. Through the MBKM program, students have the opportunity for 1 (one) semester or the equivalent of 20 (twenty) credits to study outside the study program at the same university; and a maximum of 2 (two) semesters or the equivalent of 40 (forty) credits studying the same study program at a different university, studying at a different study program at a different university; and/or learning outside of higher education. This means that the MBKM program launched by the Ministry consists of 8 (eight) programs, all of which give students the right to study outside the study program for a maximum of 3 (three) semesters equivalent to a maximum of 60 credits (Aswita, 2022).

The MBKM program is being intensively campaigned by the Ministry of Education and Culture, with the aim of getting more universities to implement it. Based on a survey conducted by the Ministry of Education and Culture in September 2023 regarding the independent implementation of MBKM, data was obtained that more than 60% of universities in Indonesia have implemented this policy in the field. During 2023, more than 134 thousand students from various universities will be involved with 8 MBKM programs such as certified internships, domestic and international student exchanges, teaching campuses and entrepreneurship programs.

After a long time since the MBKM program was launched, until now there has been no research that attempts to carry out reflection. Reflection needs to be done to find out whether universities experience obstacles in implementing MBKM. What obstacles do universities experience in implementing the MBKM program? Apart from that, with reflection, universities can rethink the various shortcomings that exist in implementing the MBKM program. Therefore, researchers think it is necessary to reflect in depth. The aim of reflecting on the MBKM journey in higher education is to understand more deeply the education policy and identify opportunities for improvement in practice, and ensure that the policy is not just mere knowledge, but also useful understanding in everyday life.

2. RESEARCH METODOLOGY

In writing this research, the author used qualitative research methods using a library approach. The bibliographic approach is a study that uses data analysis based on written material. The data is described descriptively, thus showing a scientific study that can be developed further. The object of study in this research was related to reflections on the journey of merdeka belajar - kampus merdeka curriculum (MBKM) in higher education.

Data collection in this research begins with collecting various appropriate literature in the form of written text and soft copy, for example books and scientific articles published online. These two types of literature were the main sources that researchers use to explain the variables in this paper. After the data has been successfully collected from various sources, both in text and soft copy form, then comprehensive data identification is carried out by selecting and sorting information that is relevant to this research.

The selection of data is done by studying, understanding and connecting it to the main problem at hand. Next, the author analyzes the data and reduces various relevant information until finally producing a solution to the problem discussed in this research. This kind of data collection and analysis technique is called

triangulation, which tries to combine a set of data taken from various existing data sources.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

So far, the implementation of the MBKM policy has certainly not been without problems. Some of the problems that need to be reflected on apparently do not only originate from universities and study programs as organizers, but are also faced by implementers, namely students and lecturers as well as partners, both government agencies and partners from the business and industrial world (Sabriadi & Wakia, 2021).

From the organizers, there are still universities and study programs that have not fulfilled the conversion of student scores. So the grades resulting from the MBKM program have not been processed and cannot be used as grades that will be used at the end of the semester (Andari, 2021). Some universities don't even have a system for data management processes. As a result, universities will certainly have difficulty managing the grades and data of students participating in MBKM. Not to mention that data that is not entered automatically can cause other problems, for example hidden data (Bhakti, 2022). This is caused by a lack of socialization about MBKM technical and mechanisms. Another problem faced by organizers is confusion in the process of converting and recognizing the number of credits into the appropriate course (MK) (Santika, 2021). In general, study programs experience difficulties in converting courses to the chosen MBKM program. There are also many cases of not understanding the value recognition process, so that universities cannot fully recognize the value produced by students during the MBKM process. The most crucial mistake when carrying out the MBKM process is making mistakes in value conversion management. This happens because universities do not fully understand how to carry out the value conversion process properly and correctly (Fuadi & Aswita, 2021).

Study Programs Have Difficulty Adjusting Course Loads with Partner Universities. As the MBKM program progresses after facing curriculum changes, each university will certainly have different courses even with the same study program. The same thing related to the obstacles to implementing MBKM is that in order for the curriculum to be effective and efficient in implementing MBKM, the assignment completion schedule for one semester determined by the faculty is in line with the stages of teaching and learning activities in the campus environment (Arifin, & Muslim, 2020).

Lack of information in understanding the concept and benefits of the MBKM program. The lack of information conveyed is due to not being properly disseminated to students and related parties, so understanding and awareness of the program can be hampered (Meke, 2022). It is important for institutions to actively disseminate information regarding the benefits, requirements and procedures of the MBKM program to the entire campus community. The lack of socialization of the MBKM program in universities is also a major obstacle to implementing this strategic program among them (Oksari, 2022). Respondents mostly regretted that there was no socialization carried out by the university management, the majority stated that it was very lacking, so that until 2023 the MBKM program would be minimally implemented, except for programs that have been established such as PPL (Field Experience Practice) which in MBKM is called Teaching Campus, and KKN (Field Work Lecture) (Nofia, 2020).

At a practical level, several problems arise for small universities or universities with remote, outermost and underdeveloped geographical locations. Apart from the issue of collaboration mechanisms between study programs and

universities and large study programs (referring to the level of accreditation), questions arise among study programs and students, what is the financing mechanism for these internship activities. The majority of universities and study programs in the above categories have students from lower to middle economic levels, so financing internships is a big problem. Internship activities require at least transportation costs and other activity support costs.

4. CONCLUSION

So far, the implementation of the MBKM policy has certainly not been without problems. It turns out that several problems that need to be reflected on do not only originate from universities and study programs as organizers, but are also faced by implementers, namely students and lecturers as well as partners, both government agencies and partners from the business and industrial world. From the organizers, there are still universities and study programs that have not fulfilled the conversion of student scores. Study Programs Have Difficulty Adjusting Course Loads with Partner Universities. Lack of information in understanding the concept and benefits of the MBKM program. At a practical level, several problems arise for small universities or universities with remote, outermost and underdeveloped geographical locations.

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