



Students' Understanding of the Independent Curriculum at Serambi Mekkah University's Faculty of Teacher Training

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ABSTRACT

Various problems experienced by teachers and prospective teacher students in following and implementing the currently applicable Independent Learning and Independent Curriculum. The level of understanding for teachers and students about the implementation the Independent Curriculum has various interpretations and interpretations. The purpose of this study was to determine the level of understanding of students of the teaching the implementation design of the Independent Curriculum in the field. The time of the research was conducted at the teaching faculty of Serambi Mekkah with final year students as our data source. The data analysis method used was descriptive qualitative in the form of results from observations and questionnaire data answered by the respondents. The data from the analysis showed that (a) the number of students who really understood the Independent Curriculum was 85.14%; (b) respondents received information about the Independent Curriculum which mostly came from university pages and news media; (c) The activities that were most in demand by respondents were Internships or Field Work; and (d) there were 69.80% of them who were very happy with the Curriculum because it helped respondents improve personal skills which became capital in carrying out the teaching and learning process in the future.

1. Introduction

The Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) Curriculum is a government policy stated in the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Standards for Higher Education. The Independent Curriculum and Independent Campus seek to address the issue of artificial intelligence which is now increasingly felt, especially during the pandemic. The MBKM policy is also an effort to facilitate the preparation of the curriculum, especially in terms of process standards. Through this curriculum, the government prepares a productive, quality workforce with the latest knowledge so that they can compete both regionally and globally (Atikoh, N., & Farihin, F. 2022; Marwan, Ibrahim, Jalaluddin et al. 2024).

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In general, the government's policy on KM aims to improve the competence of graduates, both soft skills and hard skills. Students are expected to be better prepared to meet the needs of the times and become graduates who can become future leaders of the nation who are superior and have personality. Experiential learning curricula with flexible paths are expected to facilitate students to develop their potential according to their talents and potential. The MBKM curriculum provides a solution for learning in the digital era so that every student has many opportunities to work and contribute outside their own campus through various activities (Hanifah, M., & Fauziyyah, N. 2023).

The existence of the Independent Learning Independent Campus Curriculum in universities is a step taken by the government, especially by the Minister of Research, Technology and Higher Education in preparing students who are responsive in facing every social, cultural, and work world change. This is certainly in line with the basic principles in human life and social society, which will always move and indicate a movement towards change. The MBKM policy can be implemented if there is support from universities and students. As an effort to adapt to the development of the 4.0 revolution, the MBKM concept also uses blended learning in its learning methods. The method is to combine the advantages of face-to-face and virtual learning (Ibrahim, Cut Morina and Marwan, 2022). MBKM is an effort to encourage students to master knowledge that is useful for entering the world of work. However, even though it has been designed in such a way, the implementation of MBKM also has several obstacles, including limited partner campuses, uncertain campus budgets for the implementation of MBKM, and many students who are still doubtful about the MBKM Curriculum (Marwan, Ibrahim, et al. 2024).

Another problem related to the MKBM Curriculum is the limited understanding of lecturers and students about the MBKM implementation design. The low understanding of the MBKM Curriculum implementation design will have a negative impact on the interest and enthusiasm of students and lecturers to implement this Curriculum. This condition can be an obstacle for lecturers in preparing the curriculum and various supporting facilities for the implementation of MBKM. Meanwhile, for students, it can be an obstacle in terms of interest and enthusiasm for participating in MBKM activities both on and off campus. Serambi Mekkah University is one of the oldest private campuses in the city of Banda Aceh. Serambi Mekkah University is committed to implementing the Independent Learning Campus Merdeka Curriculum (MBKM). Serambi Mekkah University's commitment to implementing MBKM is evidenced by the issuance of the Rector's Decree No. 2 of 2021 dated August 16, 2021 concerning the Guidelines for the Implementation of MBKM at Serambi Mekkah University Serambi Mekkah. The Rector's Decree is the basis for the implementation of MBKM as well as a reference for the Faculty and Study Curriculum in formulating an MBKM-based curriculum. One of the efforts made in each Study Curriculum is to revise the curriculum, prepare internal collaboration between the Study Curriculum at Serambi Mekkah University and with partners consisting of Faculties and Study Curricula outside Serambi Mekkah University and industry or the business world. Research related to the MBKM Curriculum has been conducted in many Universities in Indonesia. Serambi Mekkah University itself has conducted MBKM research on the academic community. Serambi Mekkah University conducted a survey of students in the Study Curriculum to find out how students interpret the MBKM implementation design that has been carried out so far (Marzuki, Ibrahim, Juli Firmansyah, M Syarif, 2023). However, in this study, it was carried out on all active students at Serambi Mekkah University, so it is important to do it as a reference and guideline in taking steps and determining MBKM policies at Serambi Mekkah University. The purpose of this study is to analyze students' understanding of knowledge and readiness for the MBKM policy. The technicalities, learning processes, and evaluation of MBKM will be described. The results of this study will be used as an adaptation of the MBKM activity study regarding planning, learning process, assessment, and evaluation of learning. The results of this study are used to see a comprehensive

picture of the facts and circumstances that describe the condition of the Information Systems study curriculum at Serambi Mekkah University in the preparation and implementation of MBKM. In other words, the results of this study will be used to see the suitability of the existing study curriculum and become a reference for designing relevant learning processes and academic collaboration (Baharuddin, 2021; Panjaitan, M., Rini, A., 2022).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive using tabulation and graphs. The qualitative descriptive method according to Sugiyono (2021) is a method used to analyze research results through systematic, factual and actual descriptions or descriptions of the facts, characteristics and relationships between the phenomena being investigated. Mean while, according to Arikunto (2019), descriptive research is research that is intended to investigate the circumstances, conditions or other things that have been mentioned, the results of which are presented in the form of a research report.

The phenomenon that is trying to be portrayed in this study is about the perception or response of Serambi Mekkah Universitas students regarding the MBKM policy, especially those related to their understanding and what forms of activities are most in demand in implementing this MBKM. The total population used as respondents is all students.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The learning process in the MBKM Curriculum is one manifestation of student-centered learning. Learning in MBKM provides challenges and opportunities for the development of innovation, creativity, capacity, personality and needs of students. This goal can be achieved if students' understanding and knowledge of the MBKM Curriculum are good enough. The results of data analysis related to student perceptions of the design of the implementation of the MBKM Curriculum at Serambi Mekkah University can be described as follows:

The first aspect captured in this survey is student knowledge regarding MBKM. Based on the answers to the survey results, it is known that 40.86% stated that they knew a little, 32.17% stated that they knew most of it, 12.20% stated that they knew everything and 14.77% stated that they did not know at all about the MBKM policy. These results are in line with and strengthen the research of Hanifah, & Fauziyyah (2023).

Based on this data, it can be concluded that the understanding of Serambi Mekkah University students regarding the MBKM policy is quite good. Meanwhile, 14.77% of students who do not know at all about the MBKM policy are due to the lack of socialization from lecturers to students. An overview of the knowledge of university students about MBKM can be seen in figure 1.

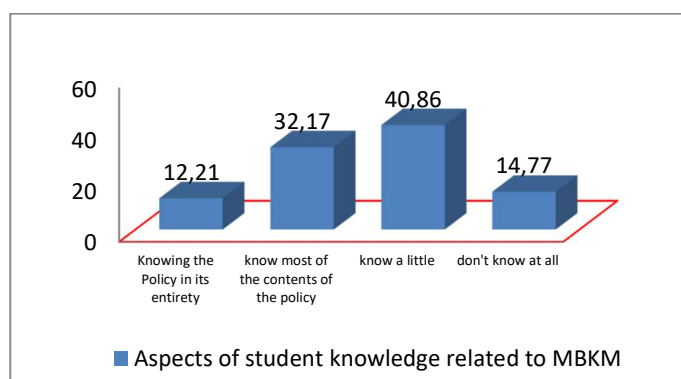


Fig.1 Knowledge of MBKM Policy

One of the problems often encountered related to the implementation of the MBKM Curriculum is the lack of student understanding of the number of credits that are equivalent to the MBKM Curriculum. Based on the survey results, it is known that the understanding of Serambi Mekkah University students about this is still low so that these results are also in line with research from Tima, M. T., Leha, E., & Siso, S. M. (2023). Referring to the National Higher Education Standards on MBKM, it is known that the number of semesters that can be equated with MBKM activities outside of Higher Education is 2 credits. However, only 12.37% answered 2 semesters, the rest answered 1 semester of 21.20%, those who answered 3 semesters of 32.57% and 4 semesters of 19.09% (Figure 2).

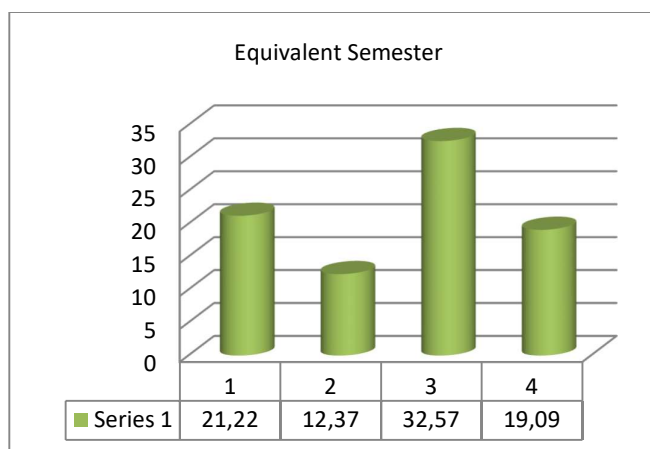


Fig.2 Equivalent Semester

The Independent Learning Independent Campus Curriculum began to be echoed since 2020 by the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem A. Makarim and began to be widely socialized in the mass media and social media (Marwan, Ibrahim, Jalaluddin, & Cut Morina Zubainur, 2024).

This process stage was passed with the ratification of the MBKM Guidelines by the Chancellor of Serambi Mekkah University. And this Survey activity is part of the process towards the implementation stage of the MKBM Curriculum. One of the questions in the MBKM Survey stage for Serambi Mekkah University students is whether the Study Program has previously implemented a Curriculum in accordance with MBKM and as many as 68% answered Yes and 17.24% answered (Figure 3).

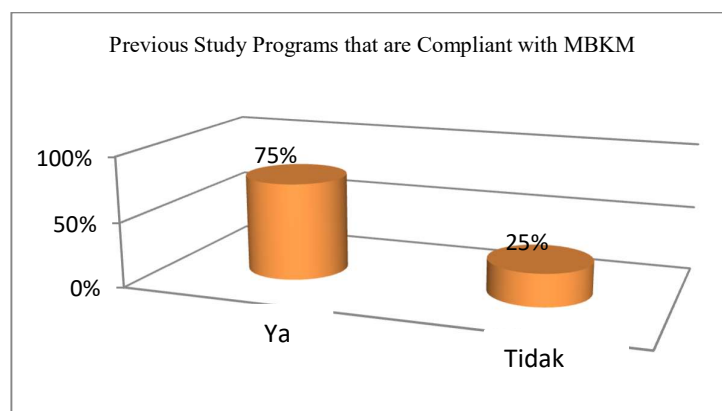


Fig.3 Previous Curriculum of Study Programs in Accordance with MBKM

Based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Standards for Higher Education which contains MKBM, there are 8 forms of learning activities outside the Study Curriculum that must be chosen by students (Siregar et al., 2020). Based on the survey results, it is known that of the 8 forms of MBKM activities outside the study program, Serambi Mekkah University students chose the most Internship/Work Practice activities as much as 33.50%. Then followed by Teaching Assistance in Education Units by 17.85%, building villages or Thematic KKN as much as 12.68%, Student Exchange by 8.33%, entrepreneurial activities by 7.88%, research or studies by 2.42%, independent studies or projects 1.35% and humanitarian projects by 1.21% (Figure 4)

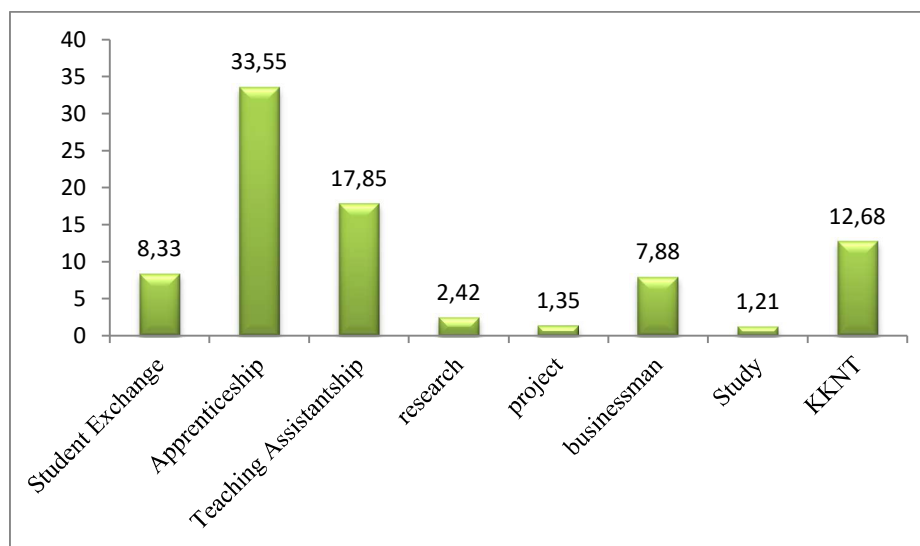


Fig.4 learning activities outside the Study Curriculum

In general, students at Serambi Mekkah University are ready to be part of MBKM. Based on the survey results, it is known that 70.49% of students at Serambi Mekkah University stated that they are ready to be part of MBKM activities, the remaining 13.96% stated that they are not ready and 0.78% are not interested (Figure 5). Students who stated that they are not ready and not interested are likely due to a lack of understanding of the MBKM policy due to lack of socialization (Ibrahim, Marwan, Fakhrol Rijal Jalaluddin, 2022). These eight activities are expected to provide contextual field experiences that will improve students' competencies as a whole, be ready to work, or create new jobs (Nona, R. V. 2022). Based on the survey results, it is known that 70.80% of Serambi Mekkah University students stated that they were very interested in this MBKM policy and 13.63% stated that they were interested.

4 CONCLUSION

The survey findings indicate that a substantial proportion of Serambi Mekkah University students possess awareness of the MBKM policy, albeit with varying degrees of comprehension across the student population. Specifically, 85.23% of respondents reported having knowledge of this policy. The university website emerged as the predominant source of information, while internship or practical work experience constituted the most favored activity among students. With respect to student interest and perceived relevance, respondents indicated that they regard the MBKM policy as highly significant and expressed considerable enthusiasm for participating in MBKM activities. This finding carries particular importance, as the policy is widely regarded as a mechanism for enhancing soft skills and equipping students with competencies valuable for post-graduation professional life. Regarding students' willingness to endorse the policy, 69.83% of respondents indicated a strong inclination to recommend it to relatives or colleagues. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that students' comprehension of the substantive essence of this curriculum remains relatively limited. Given that students constitute the primary target of this policy, it is recommended that socialization and mentoring initiatives be sustained and intensified through multiple channels, including mass media, social media platforms, and both online and face-to-face engagement formats. Furthermore, it is recommended that a dedicated forum be established to enable students to contribute input regarding the design and implementation of the MBKM Curriculum. Such a mechanism would facilitate curriculum development that is responsive to the labor market demands specific to each region.

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