

The Impact of Students' Activity in the Independent Campus Learning Program (MBKM) on Students' Readiness to Enter the World of Work

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Abstract. *This research aims to determine the impact of student activity in the Independent Campus Learning Program (MBKM) on students' readiness to enter the world of work and to evaluate the effect of the Independent Campus Learning Program (MBKM) on the Medan State Polytechnic campus. This study was conducted by giving a questionnaire to Medan State Polytechnic students who had been or are currently taking part in the 2021-2023 Independent Campus Learning (MBKM) program. The research results show that implementing the MBKM Program impacts several things, namely increasing experiential learning to shape students' hard skills and soft skills in the world of work and fulfilling graduates' learning outcomes. The results of this research also show that the MBKM program provides considerable benefits in terms of competency for Medan State Polytechnic students. Not only does it benefit students, but the Independent Campus Learning Program (MBKM) also positively impacts parties involved with students in carrying out the Independent Campus Learning Program (MBKM) and increasing students' knowledge and skills. The MBKM program also affects students' readiness to enter the world of work, especially Medan State Polytechnic students who have participated in the MBKM program in the field of internship/field practice. Apart from that, this research also identified the satisfaction of Medan State Polytechnic students with the MBKM program implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture and Medan State Polytechnic University.*

Keywords: MBKM, Competency, World of Work, Understanding

1. Introduction

Independent Campus (MBKM) is an innovation created by the Ministry of Education and Culture and launched a policy to transform the higher education system in Indonesia to produce more relevant graduates. MBKM is implemented through 4 policy pillars: (1) the opening of new study programs; (2) the higher education accreditation system; (3) the legal entity of higher education; (4) the right to study outside the study program.

MBKM is a form of encouragement for the Independent Campus policy, which encourages higher education institutions (PT) to run MBKM programs independently. In the state of independent MBKM implementation, PT organizes, funds, and executes its MBKM program without intervention from the Ministry of Education and Culture. MKBM aims to help as many students as possible gain experience outside campus in preparation for future careers.

MBKM emphasizes independence, where the programs run by universities are not subsidized and are managed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. So, universities can implement the desired programs with regulatory provisions, funding, timelines, and documentation requirements determined by the universities themselves. This program, with the available platforms, can be utilized by universities to find opportunities to implement programs or activities for students. Outside campus, such as student exchanges, internships, research, teaching assistance, KKN, and others. (Kemendikbud, n.d.)

The MBKM policy is implemented to realize an autonomous and flexible learning process in higher education so that universities can design and implement innovative learning processes to achieve optimal learning outcomes, including aspects of attitudes, knowledge, and skills. This policy also aims to increase links and matches with the business and industrial world, as well as to prepare students for the world of work from the start (Padjajaran, n.d.)

The Independent Campus Learning Policy (MBKM) is expected to create learning in higher education that is autonomous and flexible to create a learning culture that is innovative, not restrictive, and in accordance with student needs. Student competencies are designed to adapt to social and cultural changes, the world of work, and rapid technological advances. Link and match not only with the world of industry and work but also with a rapidly changing future. Higher education curricula must be more innovative so that students can achieve learning outcomes, including aspects of attitudes, knowledge, and skills optimally and continuously relevant. One of the MBKM policies is the right to study for 3 (three) semesters outside the study

program, regulated in Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Higher Education Standards. Students can study various activities, such as internships/work practices in industry or other workplaces, carrying out entrepreneurial activities, initiating humanitarian projects, participating in military training, etc. Even though it is highly recommended, this right is optional for students to take or not. The MBKM policy is implemented to realize an autonomous and flexible learning process in higher education so that universities can design and implement innovative learning processes to achieve optimal learning outcomes, including aspects of attitudes, knowledge, and skills. This policy also aims to increase links and matches with the business and industrial world, as well as to prepare students for the world of work from the start (Handini, 2020)

The Independent Campus Learning Program (MBKM) was officially launched for the first time by the Minister of Education and Culture on January 24, 2020. This program is the most significant innovation in the world of education within the scope of higher education, both public and private. The program launched by the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Anwar Makarim is expected to be able to answer the challenges of universities to produce graduates who are in line with current developments, the demands of the business world, and the increasingly rapid technological developments. MBKM's main programs are ease of opening new study programs, changes to the higher education accreditation system, ease of state universities becoming legal entity PTNs, and student's right to study three semesters outside the study program. The three semesters in question consist of one semester having the opportunity to take courses outside the study program and two semesters carrying out learning activities outside the university. Each student is free to take Semester Credit Units (SKS) outside the study program. (Apriliyani et al., 2022). MBKM is here to significantly contribute to improving competence or skills through coaching programs in the form of soft skills and hard skills. These programs have not yet been fully implemented for several reasons, including they are still new, campus readiness, and campus policies in realizing these programs. (Hastuti et al., 2022)

Competency is generally used to describe the collection of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personal traits that enable a person or an organization to achieve a specific goal or task. Competencies can cover various aspects, including technical knowledge, interpersonal skills, analytical abilities, leadership, innovation, etc. In an individual context, competency refers to the combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that a person possesses. This can involve specialized expertise in a field, practical skills, and positive attitudes such as motivation, resilience, and teamwork. In the world of work, organizations often identify and assess employee competencies to ensure that they have the abilities necessary to perform their jobs well. This can be the basis for employee development, promotions, or decisions related to human resources.

Through MBKM, students have the opportunity to pursue learning outside the study program or higher education through 8 MBKM activities, namely:

1. Undertaking internships/work practices in industry or other workplaces.
2. Carrying out community service projects in the village.
3. Teaching in an educational unit.
4. Participate in student exchange.
5. Conducting research.
6. Carrying out entrepreneurial activities.
7. Creating independent studies/projects.
8. Participating in humanitarian programs.

(Permendikbud, 2020)

Students' success after attending a diploma or undergraduate education program is their parents' dream because students who have completed their studies are expected to immediately get a job so they can make their parents proud. Of course, to get a good job, they need good competencies or skills so that these skills are marketable and make it easier for them to get a job. These skills will be obtained through several factors, including high motivation, strong will, and hard work.

The Law no. 13 of 2003 concerning Employment Article 1, paragraph 10 states that competency is the workability of each individual, which includes aspects of knowledge, skills, and work attitudes that are in accordance with established standards. Decree of the Minister of National Education Number 045/U/2002 concerning the Core Curriculum for Higher Education states that competence is a set of intelligent, responsible actions that a person has as a condition for being considered capable by society in carrying out tasks in a particular field of work (Arfandi, 2013). Skill competency is something that should be taken into account in preparing students to enter the world of work. Skills competencies that follow what students do in the

industrial world will provide sufficient skills to prepare them for entering the world of work. (Cahyani et al., 2017)

Motivation is a factor that will encourage students to work hard to achieve their goals so that they always use their time to study. (Hastuti et al., 2022; Lee & Kuo, 2019; O'Shea et al., 2017). Students with high motivation will be encouraged to carry out all processes and be active in various activities (Hastuti et al., 2022). Motivation will encourage students to consistently work hard and master all the competencies that make the student successful. Motivation will increase students' ability to compete for success and healthily to get the best results (Hakim et al., 2018). Motivation is a strength for students to always be consistent in studying, complete all assignments, and work hard to achieve their goals (Hastuti et al., 2022). Comprehension refers to the ability to understand or interpret something. These involve the mental processes by which a person's ability to understand, draw conclusions, or grasp the meaning of information, ideas, or situations. Comprehension can apply various types of content, including written texts, abstract concepts, interpersonal situations, etc.

2. Method

The research location is at the Medan State Polytechnic, which is located on Jl. Almamater No. 1 USU Medan Campus. This research took place in November 2023. The data used is primary and secondary. Direct data comes from questionnaires, experiences, and observations in the field. Secondary data was obtained from reports, books, and guidelines related to MBKM at the university, faculty, and study program level. Primary data collection using questionnaires was carried out by sampling students. The questionnaire used is a questionnaire that was created by the research team for this article.

Respondents who filled out the questionnaire were 16 students, consisting of 8 students participating in internships, 1 student participating in IISMA (Indonesian International Student Mobility Award), 5 Independent Study students, 1 teaching campus student, and one independent exchange student. For respondents who had undertaken the MBKM program, these students were asked questions covering knowledge about the MBKM program, competencies obtained while participating in the MBKM program, and experience while participating in MBKM program activities.

3. Results and Discussions

In this research, a survey was conducted via questionnaire to Medan State Polytechnic students. The survey was conducted on student participants who had participated in the MBKM program. The following are the results of a survey conducted on MBKM Medan State Polytechnic students.

Response on Motivation of Medan State Polytechnic Students to Take Part in the MBKM Program

Medan State Polytechnic students were asked questions regarding their motivation for participating in MBKM and their goals in the MBKM program. Of the 16 students who filled in the answers, they gave very varied responses leading to good things, the same as the opinion expressed by Handini (2020) in her research, which stated that students are free to study in various forms of activities, such as internships/work practices in industry or other places, carrying out entrepreneurial activities, initiating humanitarian projects, participating in military training, etc. Even though it is highly recommended, this right is optional for students to take or not.

From the survey results regarding the MBKM program, it can be concluded that 56.3% of Medan State Polytechnic students who take part in the MBKM program stated that the programs are relevant to the student's competency in the field of study they are undertaking while those who take the very suitable programs are 31.3% of students, and students who take the programs that are not relevant to their competency are 12.5%. In the diagram, it can be seen that Medan State Polytechnic students who take part in the MBKM program predominantly choose relevant to the student's competency in their field of study.

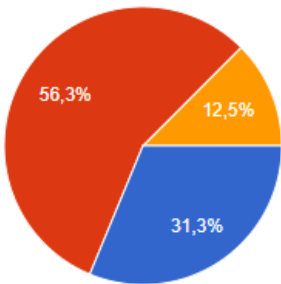


Figure 1. Relevance of MBKM to Student Competencies

Responses from the survey results show that the number of students from majors taking part in the MBKM program is more dominant from accounting majors at 62.5% than other majors, as shown in diagram 2.

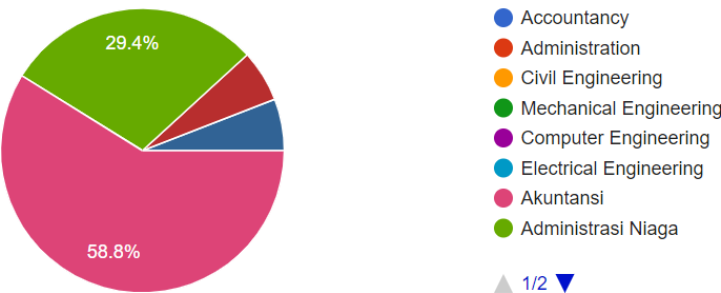


Figure 2. Student Participation in MBKM

Responses from the survey showed that the number of students from study programs participating in the MBKM program came predominantly from the Finance and Sharia banking study program, as much as 43.8% compared to other study programs. It can be seen in Figure 3 which explains the percentage of students who come from different study programs.

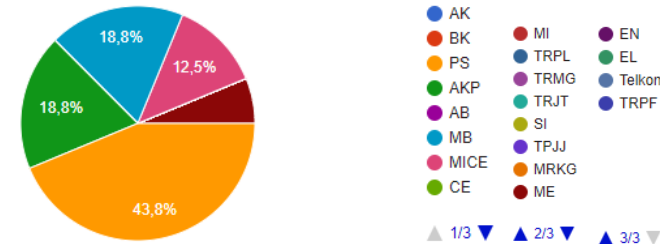


Figure 3. Student Participation from Study Programs for MBKM

Characteristically, most respondents who participated in the MBKM program were Muslim, represented by 81.3% of Muslim students and 18.8% of Christian students.

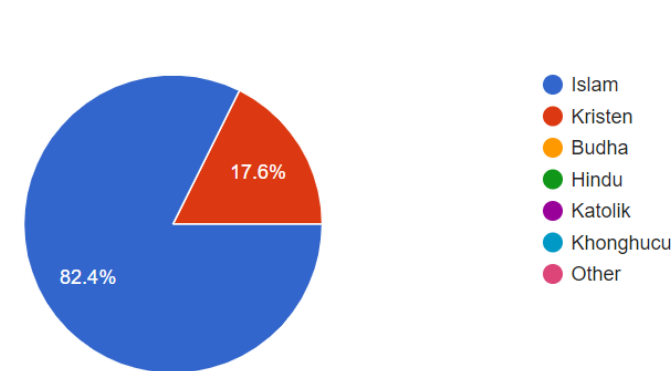


Figure 4. Characteristics of Respondents Based on Religion

Responses from survey results show that the number of Medan State Polytechnic students who take MBKM is dominantly from Batak, reaching 25% compared to other ethnic groups. The diagram below explains in more detail the percentage of Medan State Polytechnic students from other ethnic groups.

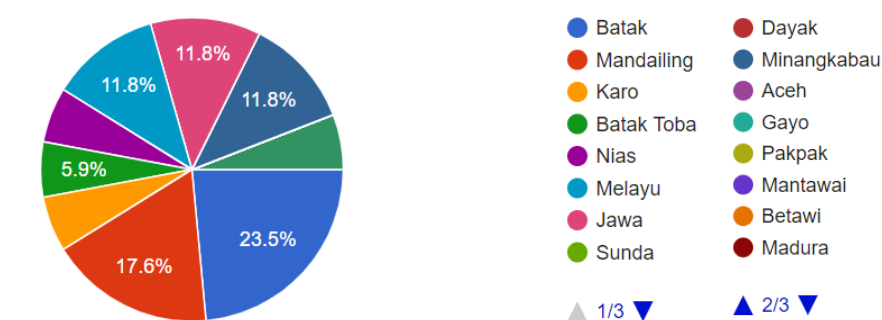


Figure 5. Characteristics of Respondents by Ethnicity

The response from the survey results for residence was stated by the MBKM Medan State Polytechnic participants who predominantly live with their parents, with a percentage of 56.3% compared to living in the boarding house. Therefore, it can be concluded that those who live with their parents receive more attention, which supports their children's enthusiasm for participating in the program, than those residing in a room for rent.

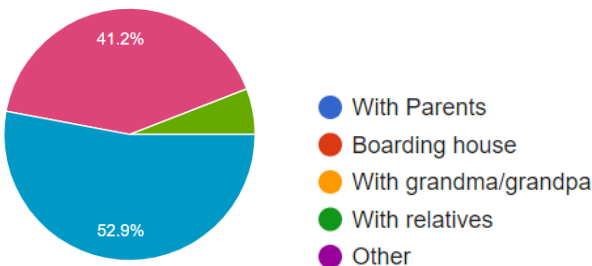


Figure 6. Respondents by Residence Status

Responses from the income survey results of POLMED students who took part in MBKM showed that as many as 75% stated that the income of students participating in MBKM Medan State Polytechnic received IDR 100,000-IDR 1,000,000 while as many as 25% received payment of IDR 1,000,000-IDR 2,000,000.

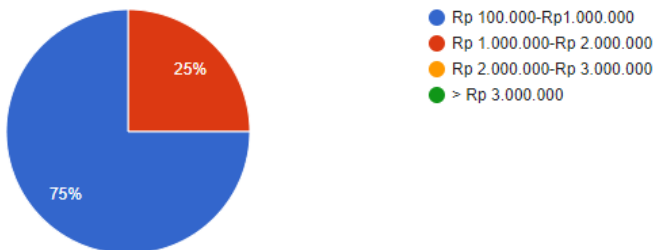


Figure 7. Student Incentives for MBKM Activities

Responses from the expenditure survey results of Medan State Polytechnic students who participated in MBKM showed that more than 81.3% stated that the expenditure of students participating in MBKM Medan State Polytechnic was Rp. 100,000-Rp. 1,000,000, and 12.5% of students stated that their expenditure was Rp. 1,000,000-Rp. 2,000,000, while 6.3% of students reported their expenses amounting to > Rp. 3,000.00. This can be seen in the diagram below regarding the completeness.

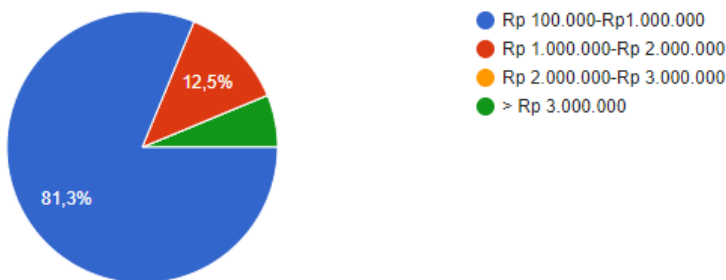


Figure 8. Student Expenditures in MBKM

Responses from the survey showed that the final education percentage of parents of MBKM Medan State Polytechnic participants was 56.3% only reaching high school because parental education also indicates the quality of parents in educating and guiding their children to achieve success as well as in teaching them about the world of work. Organizations often identify and assess employee competencies to ensure they have the abilities necessary to perform their jobs well.

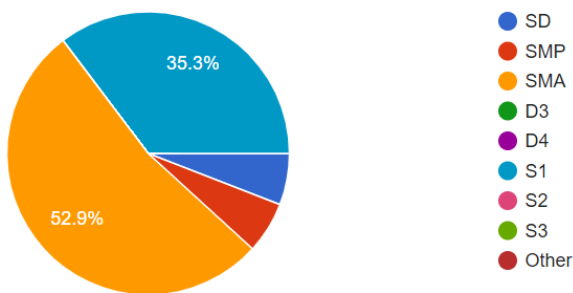


Figure 9. Educational Characteristics of Parents of MBKM Participants

Responses from survey results showing the percentage of parents' work that supports the education of MBKM Polmed participants show that as many as 56.3% work as entrepreneurs because the role of parents must continue to support and facilitate a student's success as much as possible. Highly motivated students will encourage themselves to carry out all processes and participate in various activities.

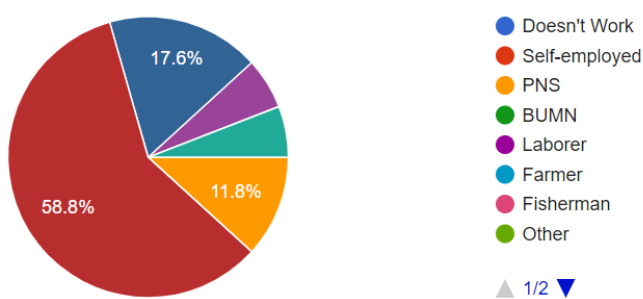


Figure 10. Job Characteristics of Student Parents

Respondent's statements regarding the MBKM program influencing future career plans. All respondents felt that the MBKM program they were undertaking greatly influenced their future careers in the world of work because motivation is a strength for students to always be consistent in studying, completing all assignments, and working hard to achieve their goals (Hastuti et al., 2022).



Figure 11. Respondents' Responses Regarding Career Plans

Responses Regarding the Differences in Advantages Possessed by Students Who Take Part in the MBKM Program and Those Who Do Not Take Part

There are various advantages that MBKM students who come from Medan State Polytechnic get, one of which is getting wider opportunities to explore their interests and talents while undergoing education in the MBKM process, which directly impacts society. Those students get a lot of practical knowledge not obtained in a classroom environment and could improve soft skills and self-confidence. Being able to study abroad in the IISMA program and being able to experience what it is like to be an elementary school teacher in a campus teaching program made several students feel very enthusiastic in giving varied answers from those who took part in the MBKM program. In general, it can be concluded that all MBKM Medan State

Polytechnic students gave positive responses and could measure themselves as superior compared to other students who did not participate in the MBKM program.

Responses Regarding MBKM Participants' Statements in Assessing the Quality of Guidance and Support from Lecturers and the Ministry of Education and Culture.

It shows that the Ministry of Education and the Medan State Polytechnic College facilitate excellent guidance and support, and always teach what needs to be done and evaluated by the students. The supervisor is very supportive of running the activities in the MBKM program. It can be concluded that most MBKM Medan State Polytechnic students responded positively and considered that the Ministry of Education and Culture and the lecturers from Medan State Polytechnic College had facilitated it by providing the maximum guidance process.

Students' Responses Regarding the MBKM Experience in Increasing their Understanding and Motivation for the Future.

The various experiences gained by Medan State Polytechnic students who take part in the MBKM program included feeling better and enthusiastic about being able to compete in the world of work and later gaining extraordinary knowledge and experience. A supervisor with extraordinary knowledge and expertise can mentor the students. Therefore, Medan State Polytechnic students who participate in the MBKM program can explore this knowledge, practice it directly in the field, and train their sense of responsibility and teamwork. In general, it can be concluded that students responded that the MBKM program positively impacted their readiness to enter the world of work.

Responses Regarding the MBKM Program in Providing a Positive Impact

The various positive impacts obtained by Medan State Polytechnic students who take part in the MBKM program include having extensive relationships and networks, such as making friends from different universities/polytechnics and developing soft skills to build discipline and readiness to face the world of work. MBKM is an innovation created by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the launch of a policy to transform the higher education system in Indonesia to produce more relevant graduates

Responses Regarding Self-Reflection, Skills, Competencies, and Knowledge they Want to Improve to Face the World of Work based on the MBKM Experience

In general, MBKM Medan State Polytechnic students show that they are successful or they can re-evaluate themselves. Most of them think they need to develop further to improve their skills, competencies, and knowledge in the future. This means that those who participate in the MBKM program can evaluate themselves more quickly. It can be concluded that Medan State Polytechnic students who take part in the MBKM program still have a lot of that needs to be improved, especially in deepening their knowledge of hard skills and soft skills as well as the ability to adapt to the environment.

4. Conclusion

The MBKM program helps improve students' competency in hard and soft skills. The MBKM program also provides opportunities for students to learn directly (experiential learning) in the workplace/industry, which can be a provision for students to face the world of work after graduating from college. The MBKM program can also improve students' knowledge and skills, especially their speed of responding to conditions when facing problems and their readiness to enter the world of work according to their experience while undergoing MBKM.

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