

THE AWARENESS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MBKM PROGRAM AS FLEXIBLE LEARNING IN FACULTY

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ABSTRACT

The research discussed Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM), an independent learning policy for universities in Indonesia issued by the Minister of Education and Culture in 2020. One highlighted policy was the right to study for students to study outside the study program for three semesters. The research intended to determine awareness and implementation of the MBKM program from students, lecturers, and education staff. The research applied a quantitative-descriptive method with a survey model. The research data and information were collected by distributing and filling out questionnaires at the Online Learning System (SPADA) of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of Indonesia. The data obtained were then processed through several analytical techniques, namely descriptive statistics using rank order and text processing and analysis. The population in the research consisted of students, lecturers, and educational staff at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Telkom University. The research indicates that the level of knowledge of lecturers, students, and educational staff regarding the MBKM program is relatively high, obtained from various sources of information, including through online/offline channels from the Directorate General of Higher Education. Follow-up that needs to be done as part of continuous improvement is the need for easy access to working groups at the Ministry of Education and Culture and the importance of socializing in terms of rules and technical aspects of MBKM implementation so that activities can run more optimally.

Keywords: MBKM, student awareness, lecturer awareness, flexible learning

INTRODUCTION

Facilitating freedom of learning has been a challenge for many stakeholders within the education environment, especially in higher education (Müller & Mildenerger, 2021). Various researchers contemplate how education facilitators should ensure their students' flexibility and freedom inside the learning environment (Maisyaroh et al., 2021; Huda et al., 2020; Zhang, 2016). Moreover, it has gotten more attention since the COVID-19 pandemic has been altering the way of education (Dhawan, 2020; Veletsianos & Houlden,

2020).

The Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program is launched by the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Higher Education. It aims to encourage students to master various sciences to prepare them to enter the world of work (Kamalia & Andriansyah, 2021). In this program, students get the opportunity for one semester (equivalent to 20 credits) to study outside the study program at the same university; and a maximum of 2 semesters or equivalent to 40 credits to study in the same study program at different universities, study in different

study programs at different universities; or learning outside the university (Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi Kemendikbud RI, 2020). Students are expected to acquire additional competencies outside their study program so that later they will have the provisions to face the changing dynamic industrial world (Kodrat, 2021). The learning process carried out outside the study program is expected to provide additional competence for students, especially in dealing with the world of work (Krishnapatria, 2021; Rodyyah, 2021).

The learning process at the Faculty of Economics and Business before the MBKM program policy is mainly carried out through the face-to-face method in the class, like learning in lectures in general. One learning process outside the classroom or the study program is through Internship courses conducted at partner companies for 30 working days and recognized as many as two credits. Another activity is student exchanges that have been carried out in collaboration with partner universities both at home and abroad to recognize courses that have been agreed upon by both parties. Apart from these courses, learning activities outside the classroom are carried out through the involvement of students in the Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi program carried out by lecturers, such as being a lecturer assistant, research assistant, and support staff for community service activities. The involvement of students in these activities has yet to be recognized in the curriculum. The recognition for that activity is in Student Academic Transcripts (TAK) and student certificates of diploma companions (SKPI).

The MBKM policy allows study programs to recognize their curriculum related to various activities carried out by students in obtaining additional competencies. Various facilities and support for implementing the MBKM program encourage students to be actively involved in this program. The MBKM program carried out mainly within the Faculty of Economics and Business, Telkom University, needs to be evaluated for continuous improvement in the future. In this regard, the Faculty of Economics and Business, Telkom University, has conducted a study to determine awareness and implementation of the MBKM Program.

The research aims to examine the awareness and implementation level of the MBKM program in the faculty, including students, lecturers, and academic staff. Hopefully, the result should generate feedback to improve the MBKM program in the following year(s). Specifically for the implementation in Telkom University, without denying the opportunity for it to be used by the government body to improve the MBKM policy.

METHODS

The research applies a quantitative-descriptive method with a survey model, where data and information are collected by distributing and filling out questionnaires in the Online Learning System

(SPADA) of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia. Descriptive research is the primary research method that examines the situation in its current state (Williams, 2011). The population in the research consists of students, lecturers, and education staff at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Telkom University.

The data obtained are then processed through several analytical techniques, namely descriptive statistics using rank order and text processing and analysis. Rank order is used to measure the average implementation value of several indicators adjusted to the indicator measurement scale (Paudel et al., 2009), as shown in Table 1. Meanwhile, text processing and analysis are used to analyze the survey answers to open-ended questions (Eler et al., 2018; Redhu, 2018). The results of the data analysis are then be presented descriptively to obtain an overview and assessment of the implementation of the MBKM from groups of students, lecturers, and educational staff within the Faculty of Economics and Business.

Table 1 Percentage Criteria for Each Scale

Criteria	3 Scale	4 Scale	5 Scale
I	33,33% - 55,55%	25% - 43,75%	20% - 36%
II	> 55,55% - 77,78%	> 43,75% - 62,50%	> 36% - 52%
III	> 77,78% - 100%	> 62,50% - 81,25%	> 52% - 68%
IV	-	> 81,25% - 100%	> 68% - 84%
V	-	-	> 84 - 100%

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research results are presented and discussed from three point-of-views: the students, the lecturers, and the educational staff. Table 2 summarizes the overall results from the survey for the students' group. The summary in Table 2 illustrates that students have sufficient knowledge of general information about MBKM. Meanwhile, detailed information still needs to be fully understood, such as the number of semesters and the total credits taken outside of tertiary institutions, as indicated by the percentage below 50%. Lack of understanding is an input regarding the importance of continuity of information dissemination through existing media sharing. They understand that the activities offered by faculties and universities are related to the MBKM program, and the internship program is the primary choice. An internship program is a driving factor for the need to increase industry partners who are willing to become student interns and jointly implement the policy of independent learning on an independent campus. Students also believe that participating in MBKM activities will improve

their competence and broaden their perspectives, as indicated by a percentage above 80%. With an interest rate of almost 90%, it is a sign that students strongly support the sustainability of the MBKM policy launched by the government and program implementation by all stakeholders, including universities and industry. Continuous coordination needs to be carried out by each stakeholder to avoid mismatches in implementing MBKM, which will create confusion on the student side.

To expedite the implementation of the MBKM policy, students also give criticism and suggestions to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. The student answers open-ended questions with the results in Figure 1.

The answers are then grouped into four main points as shown in Figure 2, (1) namely socialization and dissemination of information that does not utilize various media by 54,54%, (2) MBKM rules are less clear by 22,72%, (3) MBKM programs

Table 2 Summary of Student Survey Result

No	Aspects	Assessment
1	The level of knowledge about the MBKM	Good 64,57%
2	Percentage who answered correctly regarding the number of semesters of MBKM activities outside of Higher Education	42,17%
3	The percentage who answered correctly regarding the number of semesters and how many credits can be equated with the form of MBKM activities outside of Higher Education	5,74%
4	Information media to increase understanding of the Independent Learning Policy-Independent Campus Offline/online socialization activities organized by universities	College's online/offline socialization (62,37%)
5	Three choices of information media to increase understanding of the Independent Learning-Independent Campus (MBKM) policy	1. Offline/ online socialization activities organized by universities 2. Kemendikbud online channel (website/ website, social media) 3. College online channels
6	Answers about the existence of previous programs that are following the form of the MBKM activity	Yes (69,13%)
7	Pre-owned MBKM form	Internship, student exchange, teaching assistant, humanitarian project, entrepreneur project, independent research, community development
8	The highest choice of pre-owned MBKM activities	Internship (31,76%)
	The highest choice of forms of learning activities outside the study program to be chosen	Internship (58,82%)
9	The existence of curriculum documents, guidelines, and operational procedures for participating in MBKM activities	Yes (45,16%)
10	Level of self-preparation to be part of MBKM activities	High (79,62%)
11	The implications of learning outside the study program for the study period	Still on time (59,99%)
12	There is additional competence for learning activities outside the campus.	Yes (81,92%)
13	Studying in another program will broaden students' perspectives and provide additional competencies.	Yes (80,56%)
14	Things that need to be prepared so that MBKM runs optimally	Being proactive and follows the selection process (76,21%)
15	The level of benefit of participating in MBKM activities in developing competencies/ skills as a provision for work after graduation	Very High (91%)
16	The level of improvement in soft skills obtained after participating in MBKM activities to competency/ skill development	High (75,80%)
17	The level of importance of MBKM activities for preparation for the post-campus period	High (80,80%)
18	Worries about taking lessons off-campus	Lack of information (40,09%)
19	The level of suitability of MBKM activities for higher education with the needs of future graduates	High (76,1%)
20	The level of interest in the MBKM program held by the Directorate General of Higher Education, Research, and Technology	High (89,23%)
21	Possibility of recommending the MBKM program	Very recommended (87%)

need to be opened for all semesters by 13,64%, and (4) the implementation discrepancy with the initial information is 9,09%.

The keywords that appear are related to (1) detailed information, (2) do not understand, (3) confusion, (4) lack of information, (5) simplify information, (6) thorough preparation, (7) improve the website, (8) procedures, (9) Instagram, (10) youth portal, (11) guidebooks, (12) social media, (13) direct seminars, and (14) more companies are grouped into the main points “Socialization and dissemination of information do not utilize various media.” Various media consider dissemination and information dissemination underutilized as suggestions and criticisms that students mainly convey. The results mean that students still do not understand and are confused. Furthermore, various social media, youth portals, and live seminars are used for socialization channel recommendations. Students’ misunderstanding and confusion can be overcome by socializing the procedures through guidebooks and improving the website. In addition to students, socialization and dissemination of information can increase the number of companies that become MBKM partners.



Figure 1 Criticism and Suggestions from Students for Implementation of MBKM Policy

The keywords that appear are related to (1) policies, (2) credit conversion, (3) complicated administration, (4) complicated regulations, (5) pocket money, (6) student financing, (7) simplifying requirements, and (8) the clarity of the rules are grouped into the main points “MBKM rules are not clear”. MBKM rules that are unclear are related to policies, SKS conversion rules, administrative processes, complicated rules, and policies for pocket money or MBKM program financing.

The keywords that appear related to (1) increasing quotas, (2) many competitors, (3) fine selection, and (4) routine programs are grouped into the points “MBKM program needs to be open for all semesters”. Students suggest that the MBKM program be opened for all semesters, which is expected to become a routine program.

The keywords that appear related to (1) misunderstanding and (2) confusion are grouped into the main point, “Inconsistency of implementation with initial information”. Students convey these criticisms because of the discrepancy in the implementation of MBKM with the initial information submitted during program implementation with stakeholders, causing misunderstandings.

From this point on, the awareness and implementation of the MBKM program from the lecturer’s point of view will be discussed. Based on the data processing results from all question items, the summary of survey results for groups of lecturers is in Table 3.

The level of knowledge of lecturers regarding MBKM policies is high, obtained through three media choices: online college channels, offline/online socialization organized by universities, and the Ministry of Education and Culture online channel. In addition, lecturers also study the MBKM guidebook. Lecturers also understand previous programs under MBKM, including internships/work practices, student exchanges, teaching assistance, research, humanitarian projects, entrepreneurial activities, independent studies/projects, and village building, with internships as the most implemented programs. Moreover, with

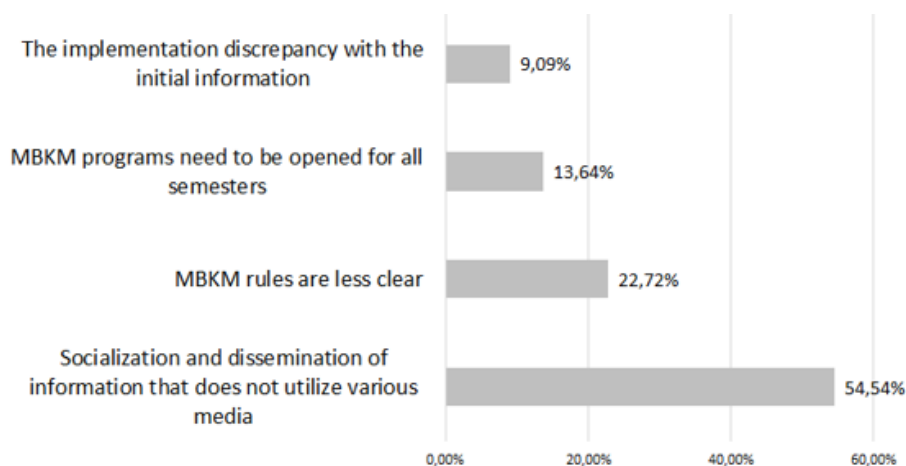


Figure 2 Main Points of Student Criticism and Suggestions

Table 3 Summary of Lecturer Survey Result

No	Aspects	Assessment
1	The level of knowledge about the MBKM	High (87,5%)
2	The percentage who answered correctly regarding the number of semesters of MBKM activities outside of Higher Education	81,82%
3	The percentage who answered correctly regarding the number of semesters and how many credits can equate with MBKM activities outside the university.	73,53%
4	Source of information regarding the MBKM policy	Online channel (59,09%)
5	Choice of information media to increase understanding of the MBKM policy	Ministry's online channel and offline/online socialization
6	Answers about the existence of previous programs that are under the form of the MBKM	Yes (93,64%)
7	Pre-owned MBKM form	Student exchange, internship, teaching assistant, research, humanitarian project, entrepreneur project, independent research, community development
8	The number of credits for courses that are recognized/ equalized with the form of MBKM Learning Activities	10-20 credits (85,45%)
9	The existence of curriculum documents, guidelines, and operational procedures for participating in MBKM activities	Existed and published (90%)
10	Involvement in MBKM implementation	Contributed in meetings/ workshop/ preparation of MBKM (90,91%)
11	Involvement in being a KKN field supervisor or student entrepreneurial activity supervisor or internship supervisor, or student exchange supervisor before the MBKM Program	Yes (91,74%)
12	Involvement in compiling CPL (Graduate Learning Outcomes) or calculating/equalizing credits?	Yes (88,99%)
13	Studying the Guidebook for MBKM	Yes (90,83%)
14	Participation in the socialization of driving lecturers either directly or through the Directorate General of Higher Education's YouTube channel	Yes (92,66%)
15	Level of Willingness and readiness to become a supervising lecturer in MBKM activities	High (96,02%)
16	The level of activity suggests/encourages students to take MBKM activities.	High (96,94%)
17	Things that need to be prepared so that MBKM implementation runs optimally	Designing MBK with partners (55,88%)
18	The mechanism of equalization and weighting in the curriculum of the study program	Hybrid form
19	The level of impact of MBKM on the student learning process	Very Good (88,44%)
20	The level of impact of MBKM in improving students' hard skills and soft skills	Very High (89,9%)
21	The level of implementation of the MBKM program plays a role in increasing the capacity of lecturers.	Very High (90,10%)
22	The level of usefulness of MBKM implementation to fulfill Graduate Learning Outcomes	Very High (94,95%)
23	Possibility of recommending the MBKM program to be followed by students in the PT environment	Very Recommended (93,58%)
24	Barriers to study programs in curriculum adjustments	Regulations (43,37%)

the current MBKM program, lecturers have a very high involvement by contributing to discussions, meetings, or workshops for MBKM implementation, as supervisors and preparing CPL (Graduate Learning Outcomes) for MBKM activities. The lecturer states that the MBKM program has helped improve student learning in terms of hard and soft skills

and the fulfillment of CPL, so lecturers will always encourage and recommend students to participate in the MBKM program. According to the lecturer's perception, the biggest obstacle faced by the study program is the regulation that regulates the technical rules for implementing MBKM programs related to this. Lecturers provide suggestions, including easy

access to working groups at KemenDikBudRisTek to coordinate on technical matters and regularly socialize and evaluate MBKM rules as a form of risk mitigation considering the diverse MBKM program and the need for coordination with stakeholders to facilitate operational processes in the field.

In order to improve the quality of implementation of the Independent Learning-Independent Campus policy, lecturers provide criticism and suggestions to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. The lecturer's answers to the open questions are processed with the results, as shown in Figure 3.

The answers are then grouped into three main points as shown in Figure 4: the need for easy access to working groups at the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology by 78,78%, socialization, and periodic evaluation of MBKM rules as a form of risk mitigation by 18%, and need to coordinate with stakeholders to equalize the perception of 3,03%.

The keywords that emerged related to (1) easy access to working groups, (2) technical assistance for program coordination, (3) program accessibility, and (4) technical assistance are grouped into the main points "Needs easy access to working groups at KemenDikBudRisTek". Lecturers provide advice on the need for easy access (accessibility) of working groups at the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology in the form of technical assistance for program coordination so that the implementation of MBKM policies at the operational level runs smoothly.



Figure 3 Criticism and Suggestions from Lecturer for Implementation of MBKM Policy

There is the socialization and dissemination of program information through guidebooks for lecturers. The keywords that appear related to (1) information is not optimal, (2) socialization, (3) program details, (4) guidebook, and (5) program information are grouped into the main points "Socialization and evaluation of MBKM rules periodically as a form of risk mitigation". Lecturers suggest that the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology should conduct periodic socialization and evaluation of MBKM rules related to implementing the MBKM program in the field. The criticism submitted by the lecturer is that the information obtained is still not optimal, lacks detail, and lacks detailed program information. One example of information that lecturers have not maximally conveyed is related to the number of credits or the equivalent credits of the MBKM program.

Lecturers expect effective coordination in program implementation with all stakeholders. In addition, it is also necessary to understand the competence of the study program so that the program chosen by students is under the Graduate Learning Outcomes (CPL) study program. The keywords that appear related to (1) understanding the competence of study programs and (2) effectiveness of coordination are grouped into the main point, "Need coordination with stakeholders for common perception".

Lastly, the awareness and implementation of the MBKM program from the education staff's perspective will be discussed. Based on the data processing results from all question items, the summary of survey results for groups of lecturers is in Table 4.

The level of knowledge of education staff regarding MBKM policies is high, obtained through three choices of media: online college channels, offline/online socialization organized by universities, and the Ministry of Education and Culture online channel. In addition, lecturers also study the MBKM guidebook. Lecturers also understand previous programs under MBKM, including internships/work practices, student exchanges, teaching assistance, research, humanitarian projects, entrepreneurial activities, independent studies/projects, and village building. Education staff does not fully understand MBKM policies, especially

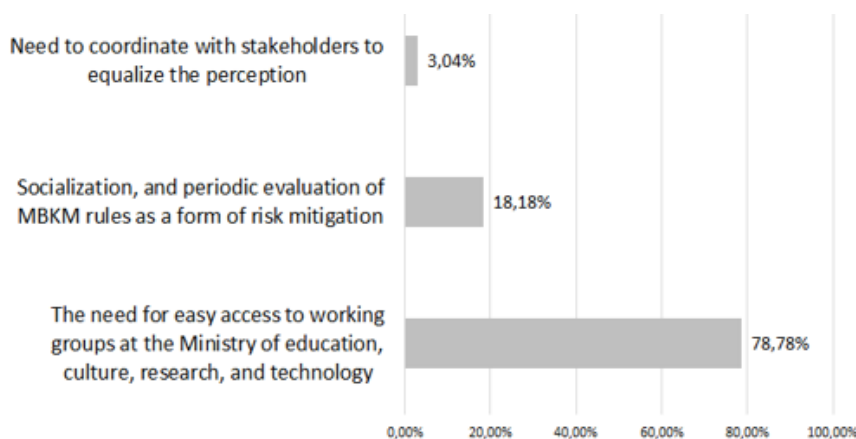


Figure 4 Main Points of Lecturer Criticism and Suggestions

Table 4 Summary of Education Staff Survey Result

No	Aspects	Assessment
1	The level of knowledge about the MBKM	Good (77,8%)
2	The percentage who answered correctly regarding the number of semesters of MBKM activities outside of Higher Education	100%
3	The percentage who answered correctly regarding the number of semesters and how many credits can equate with MBKM activities outside the university.	91,67%
4	Source of information regarding the MBKM policy	Ministry's online channel
5	Choice of information media to increase understanding of the MBKM policy	Ministry's online channel and offline/online socialization
6	Answers about the existence of previous programs that are under the form of the MBKM	Yes (100%)
7	Pre-owned MBKM form	Internship, student exchange, teaching apprenticeship, entrepreneur project, independent research, community development
8	The number of credits for courses that are recognized/ equalized with the form of MBKM Learning Activities	10-20 credits (91,67%)
9	The existence of curriculum documents, guidelines, and operational procedures for participating in MBKM activities	Existed and published (91,67%)
10	Involvement in MBKM implementation	Contributed in discussion/ meetings/ workshop (100%)
11	Involvement in compiling CPL or calculating/ equalizing credits?	Yes (100%)
12	Studying the Guidebook for MBKM	Yes (100%)
13	Participation in the socialization directly or through the Directorate General of Higher Education's YouTube channel	Yes (100%)
14	Level of MBKM concept understanding	High (91,67%)
15	The mechanism of equalization and weighting in the curriculum of the study program	Hybrid form (91,67%)
16	The level of impact of MBKM on the student learning process	Very Good (91,67%)
17	The level of impact of MBKM in improving students' hard skills and soft skills	Very High (91,67%)
18	Socialization and briefing of MBKM program in higher education	Good socialization, which encourages participation, existed (75%)
19	The level of MBKM implementation improved staff capacity and skills	Very High (90%)
19	The level of staff involvement in the MBKM program The scope of staff involvement in the MBKM program	Very High (86,67%) Administrative and technical involvement (66,67%)
20	The level of satisfaction in participating in MBKM program implementation	Very High (89,95%)
21	The level of benefit of MBKM implementation in fulfilling CPL	Very High (93,75%)
22	The significance level of graduate quality improvement	High (79,99%)
23	Possibility to recommend the MBKM program to the students	Very Recommended (91,67%)

technical information obtained through online college channels, Ministry of Education and Culture online channels, and MBKM program socialization. In addition, the educational staff also studied the MBKM guidebooks published. Educational staff also understands that there have been previous programs under MBKM, including internships/work practices, student exchanges, teaching assistance, research, humanitarian projects, entrepreneurial activities, independent studies/projects, and village building with internships, the most common programs. Students implement them. Furthermore, with the current MBKM program, educational staff has stated

that they contributed a lot to discussions, meetings, or workshops for MBKM implementation and assisted in administrative functions. Educational staff provides advice regarding the need for detailed program socialization and technical coordination of implementation to minimize the lack of detailed information and technical coordination regarding the implementation of the MBKM program, which will complicate the operational, administrative, and technical service processes in the field.

In order to improve the quality of implementation of the MBKM policy, educational staff provides criticism and suggestions to the Ministry of Education,

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Figure 5 Educational Staff's Criticism and Suggestions for Implementation of MBKM Policy

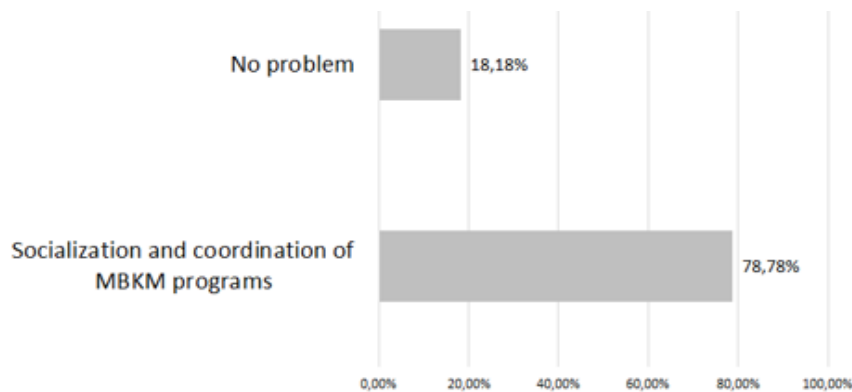


Figure 6 Main Points of Education Staff Criticism and Suggestions

Culture, Research, and Technology. The educational staff's answers to the open questions are processed with the results in Figure 5.

The answers can be divided into one central point: socialization and coordination of MBKM programs is 66,67%, as shown in Figure 6. These main points appear based on related keywords (1) need coordination and (2) information. The educational staff advises on the need for socialization and technical coordination of MBKM programs for academic staff because the socialization and coordination programs address students and lecturers. Hopefully, with the socialization and technical coordination of the staff, the implementation of the MBKM policy at the operational level will run smoothly.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of the research can be seen from three points of view: students, lecturers, and educational staff. It shows that the implementation of MBKM as a flexible learning program in faculty has been satisfactory with adequate awareness. Considering the average 'good' response from students, it is higher than 60% (13 out of 21 indicators); from lecturers, it is higher than 85% (22 out of 24 indicators), and from the educational staff is higher than 85% (17 out of 23 indicators).

Students' level of knowledge regarding MBKM policies is relatively high. Students think that participating in the MBKM program will broaden their perspective and provide additional competencies so that the level of usefulness of the MBKM program

is very high. In addition, participation in the MBKM program will not hinder timely graduation. Finally, the student interest in participating in the MBKM program is high, with the internship program being the highest choice of forms of learning activities outside the campus.

Lecturers' knowledge regarding MBKM policies is high because they already know about the number of semesters and the amount of credit that can be recognized. Most lecturers consider the MBKM program beneficial for both students and lecturers. The MBKM program will increase the capacity of lecturers, hard skills, and soft skills of students and will impact the student learning process.

The level of knowledge of educational staff regarding MBKM policies is relatively high, with half of them already knowing the policy. Most of the educational staff also think that the MBKM program plays a role in increasing the capacity and ability of educators. In addition, the MBKM program also impacts increasing students' hard and soft skills and improves the quality of graduates facing the world of work.

The research improves and refines MBKM program implementation in the Faculty of Economics and Business at Telkom University. There are some suggestions for improving the implementation of the MBKM program that reveal students: (1) the need for socialization and dissemination of information by utilizing various media, (2) the need for more class rules related to the technical rules of MBKM, (3) the opportunity to participate in the MBKM program for all semesters, and (4) synchronization of information at the same time. The lecturers express suggestions:

(1) it is necessary to have easy access to working groups at the Ministry of Education and Culture, (2) to socialize periodically and evaluate MBKM rules as a form of risk mitigation, and (3) to coordinate with stakeholders to share perceptions. The last suggestion from educational staff is to socialize MBKM programs for them with initial registration of its implementation.

The result of the research is limited by the scope of the study and the methods employed. The MBKM program is observed during a year of implementation in the Faculty of Economics and Business at Telkom University. The qualitative method is employed to analyze data obtained from the questionnaire. Further studies should consider a broader scope of observation (perhaps at the university level), a more extended implementation period, or a quantitative method to develop more dynamic results.

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