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Merdeka Belajar in Basic Mathematics Lectures: Perspectives of Prospective Elementary School Teachers

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ABSTRAK

Dalam penilaian program Merdeka Belajar bagi mahasiswa khususnya calon guru Sekolah Dasar, justifikasi dalam menilai keberhasilan harus berdasarkan penelitian terkait data ilmiah dan empiris. Tujuan penelitian ini untuk memahami pengalaman yang diperoleh mahasiswa setelah menerapkan Merdeka Belajar di perkuliahan. Metode penelitian yang digunakan kualitatif untuk memberikan gambaran tentang bagaimana persepsi dikonstruksi oleh siswa. Instrumen penelitian ini menggunakan instrumen penelitian MBKM yang disediakan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan yang diuraikan oleh peneliti. Teknik pemilihan subjek menggunakan purposive sampling karena hanya melibatkan siswa yang mengikuti program MBKM secara aktif. Analisis data menggunakan ide pemetaan yang dibuat berdasarkan transkripsi dan tertulis dalam Google Form yang telah dikumpulkan untuk dijadikan kode. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat dampak positif bagi siswa dalam pembelajaran berbasis MBKM pada aspek sosial. Pengalaman mahasiswa dalam perkuliahan MBKM dirasa sangat dibutuhkan khususnya yang melakukan program magang, meskipun dari aspek kognitif masih jauh dari harapan karena kurangnya kemampuan mengajar di lokasi magang.

ABSTRACT

In the assessment of the Independent Learning program for students, especially prospective elementary school teachers, the justification for assessing success must be based on research related to scientific and empirical data. The aim of this research is to understand the experiences students gain after implementing Merdeka Belajar in lectures. The research method used is qualitative to provide an overview of how perceptions are constructed by students. This research instrument uses the MBKM research instrument provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture as described by the researcher. The subject selection technique used purposive sampling because it only involved students who were actively participating in the MBKM program. Data analysis uses mapping ideas created based on transcriptions and written in Google Forms which have been collected to be coded. The research results show that there is a positive impact for students in MBKM-based learning on social aspects. It is felt that student experience in MBKM courses is very much needed, especially those undertaking internship programs, although from a cognitive aspect it is still far from expectations due to the lack of teaching ability at the internship location.

1. INTRODUCTION

The application of learning in lectures based on Merdeka Belajar and Independent Campus activities has presented various innovations in learning perspectives (Ainia, 2020; Daga, 2021; Wulandari et al., 2021). Learning innovations designed to meet future needs. The learning process is designed to fulfill various elements both practical, theoretical and implemented in elementary schools. This requires lecturers to not only be creative in designing the learning process, but also critical in understanding various existing problems so that they can be created as a form of lecture activity for students (Sinclair et al., 2011).

Several studies state that the Merdeka Belajar program that has been implemented is based on four major concepts, namely implementation of quality technology-based learning, exploration of educational problems, understanding student psychology, and implementation of continuous

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evaluation (Juita & Yusmaridi, 2021; Loisa et al. , 2022; Marjan Fuadi, 2022). The success of the independent learning program which has been reported in various journals shows how students' cognitive and affective development grows. Students' critical spirit and self-confidence have contributed to students' more effective and efficient communication skills (Juita & Yusmaridi, 2021; Mudrikah et al., 2022; Wulandari et al., 2021).

However, none of these studies have specifically discussed the perspectives of mathematics education students regarding the MBKM program (Arjanto et al., 2022; Laga et al., 2021). The majority of research reported is still oriented towards program success and presentations of how the MBKM program works (Arjanto et al., 2022; Baharuddin, 2021). This is in line with research which reveals that MBKM not only provides valuable experience but also contributes to building a wide network (Laga et al., 2021; Loisa et al., 2022). Apart from the empirical data that has been put forward by researchers, it is also necessary for stackholders to understand students' perspectives about the MBKM program.

Facts on the ground show that the successful implementation of the MBKM program lies with the students. This is because the majority of activities carried out by the MBKM program require students to become more independent in various matters, both academic and non-academic (Ainia, 2020; Wulandari et al., 2021). Students not only have to understand the material being taught but also have to be able to build good communication with different friends. This is because the MBKM program positions students in lectures, not on campus, so they need time to get to know their friends better. Several experiences of mathematics education students also show that there are non-academic technical matters that also contribute to obstacles, so it is important to understand the student's perspective.

Therefore, the main aim of this research is to develop an evaluation that discusses the perspectives of mathematics education students who take part in the Independent Campus program more comprehensively. The empirical data that will be obtained will be very useful for stackholders in making more precise and efficient policies. Evaluation is required as a necessary material in the stages of independent campus activities in the following academic year.

Independent Learning–Independent Campus, is the policy of the Minister of Education and Culture, which aims to encourage students to master various sciences which is useful for entering the world of work. Independent Campus provides opportunities for students to choose the courses they will take. The Independent Learning Policy - Independent Campus is in accordance with Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 3 2020 concerning National Higher Education Standards, in Article 18 it is stated that fulfilling the study period and load for undergraduate or applied undergraduate students can be implemented: 1) following the entire learning process in the study program at universities according to study period and load; and 2) following the learning process in the study program to fulfill part of the study period and load and the remainder take part in the learning process outside the study program.

Through Merdeka Belajar – Merdeka Campus, students have the opportunity to 1 (one) semester or the equivalent of 20 (twenty) credits of learning outside the program study at the same university; and a maximum of 2 (two) semesters or equivalent 40 (forty) credits studying in the same study program at the University Different heights, studying at different study programs in higher education different; and/or learning outside of higher education. Learning on the Independent Campus provides challenges and opportunities for development of creativity, capacity, personality and student needs, as well as develop independence in seeking and finding knowledge through realities and dynamics of the field such as capability requirements, real problems, social interaction, collaboration, self-management, performance demands, targets and achievements.

Basic mathematics is one of the mandatory subjects in the elementary school teacher education (PGSD) study program at Universitas Sains Cut Nyak Dhien.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This type of research is included in the qualitative research category with a descriptive approach because this research will provide an overview of the perspectives of elementary school teacher education students towards MBKM activities. This research begins by determining indicators that have been elaborated so that research activities become more focused. Furthermore, creating a structured question instrument is important to prepare as a tool to explore student perspectives. The transcriptions obtained are coded to produce more comprehensive information. Therefore, this research focuses more on providing results in the form of code-based mapping and descriptions produced from transcriptions to be processed into information that is easy to understand.

The population of this study was 30 Cut Nyak Dhien Science University students who took part in the MBKM program. This database was taken with the aim of knowing specifically the students who are active, registered and participating in the MBKM program. The data is based on gender, namely there are 8 male students and 22 female students.

Table 1. Research subject demographics.

Category	Sub Category	Total	%
Gender	Male	8	26,7%
	Female	22	73,3%
Semester	Five	13	43,3%
	Seven	17	56,7%
Academic grades	High	15	50%
	Medium	10	33,3%
	Low	5	16,7%

Research data collection was carried out by registering data on students who were directly involved in MBKM activities based on data from forlap.dikti.go.id. Students are interviewed in depth with structured questions with the aim of building a comprehensive perspective according to the student's views. Interviews are conducted by providing a meeting link either via Zoom or Google Meeting. This was done because research was limited by regulations regarding community restrictions implemented by the Indonesian government. The interview instrument uses indicators that have been determined by the Ministry of Education and Culture, including student independence, critical thinking, analytical skills and communication skills (Ainia, 2020; Jati et al., 2022; Sabatini et al., 2022). From these indicators, researchers collaborate with researchers' needs in understanding how students build perspectives related to MBKM by adding, among others; students' experiences, ideas, self-confidence, and level of readiness in participating in the MBKM program. This is needed to explore the perspectives that students want in the MBKM program.

The research data that has been obtained is the question form and video recording of the interview. The resulting recordings were then transcribed using Google Text. The resulting data from Google Text is then checked for conformity between the writing and the recording. Data analysis was carried out to provide codes for the interview transcription. Codes that have the same characteristics are collected into comprehensive information so that it is easier to draw conclusions. Separation between codes that have the same and different characteristics is important in qualitative research so that it can provide a strong foundation for drawing conclusions. The same codes are then constructed into an idea mapping that describes the overall student perspective regarding the MBKM program.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In understanding how students form their perspectives regarding learning experiences in the MBKM program. Researchers ask structured questions and collaborate when necessary. What is your view regarding MBKM learning? Understand the perspective of the most appropriate MBKM learning actors, namely students. Students' views regarding the MBKM learning model will provide a very valuable perspective for researchers (Daga, 2021). Interview data shows that students feel that MBKM-based learning provides an unusual experience. Students can directly experience how the theory works learned is very appropriate to the reality in school. For example, in theory, grade 1 elementary school students are still in the concrete operational stage, so the mathematics lessons given will be easier to understand better if students are taught mathematics using objects. This is in line with research which reveals that elementary school students easily understand mathematics learning if they are assisted with concrete objects (Csíkos et al., 2012; Dwi Susandi et al., 2019). Even though there are differences between theory and practice, students feel that the lectures given provide sufficient provisions for them to develop academically and emotionally.

MBKM learning provides students with the opportunity to practice the lessons they have learned (Ainia, 2020; Juita & Yusmaridi, 2021). Students can explore the extent of the abilities and skills they already possess so as to prepare them for future needs. Students also encounter various obstacles in practice where students are required to understand the psychology of the students being taught. This provides invaluable knowledge and experience in preparing themselves for the world of work. This is in accordance with the opinion of several researchers that learning with theoretical application provides very valuable opportunities for students (Hastuti et al., 2021; Ike & Suhendri, 2021). The skills learned in lectures are very helpful. MKBM activities provide opportunities and space for the development of various abilities needed when experiencing work (Everingham et al., 2017; Maf et al., 2017; Yeh & Chen, 2019). The interesting thing from the perspective of students is starting to understand that collaboration between co-workers is a necessity. The trust that grows between colleagues provides comfort in building team solidity. Students also think that MBKM activities provide a lot of emotional and psychological management so that they are able to develop.

What experience did you gain from studying MBKM? Learning by applying theory in practice provides very valuable experience. Applying theory in learning practice directly to schools makes students understand problems well (Drummer et al., 2018; Li & Leon, 2013). The theories that have been studied are not only limited to the classroom, but are broader, namely the implementation of learning in schools. Students no longer memorize a theory, but practice a good understanding of the theory. Students realize that the theory taught in lectures is not just science but is also a very effective tool. The theory taught helps them understand more about student characteristics and skills in teaching mathematics better. Students who have better theoretical knowledge not only increase their knowledge but also their self-confidence also grows and develops. This is because the knowledge they have is very useful and helps them in carrying out the tasks they will be given at school. Therefore, students give very high appreciation for the application of MBKM and the experience is very valuable.

The experience gained by students is not only academic but also emotional (Hastuti et al., 2021; Hendryawan et al., 2017). Students have the opportunity to be involved in lectures at other campuses which also provide very useful experiences. Students can expand their networks and connections to share the possibilities they gain. Another experience that can be gained during MBKM activities is during the implementation of MBKM in the company (Jati et al., 2022; Sabatini et al., 2022). Students feel that USCND is here to provide opportunities for students to work for multinational companies. Students feel that their abilities develop during the internship because they are able to apply the knowledge they have gained.

What are your hopes regarding the implementation of MBKM learning? From the implementation of MBKM-based learning that has been carried out by the study program. Researchers summarize several perspectives constructed by students regarding expectations related to MBKM (Ainia, 2020). There are several perspectives that emerge among students, namely continuation of the MBKM program, conversion of credits as a learning burden, and equivalency certificates from the ministry. In the first perspective, from the statement it can be described that students are very enthusiastic about implementing MBKM in the Primary School Teacher Education study program, FKIP USCND. In this case. USCND really facilitates all activities carried out by students. This can be felt from starting with good and structured planning according to a predetermined schedule.

Students feel that MBKM-based learning provides many opportunities for them to develop academically, emotionally and spiritually (Pohan & Kisman, 2022; Susilawati, 2021). Students felt that the elementary schools they visited during the implementation of MBKM really equipped them with the ability to manage school students (Loisa et al., 2022; Pohan & Kisman, 2022). This opinion is in accordance with previous research which believes that monitoring carried out periodically by supervisors also gives a positive impression from students (Susilawati, 2021). Students feel that the guidance and direction provided by lecturers is no longer limited to theory and lecture material but teaches quality education. This is in accordance with several researchers who say that by providing very constructive guidance if they have deficiencies (Baharuddin, 2021). The lecturers who guide them are also very appreciative of the innovation efforts that have been developed by students (Kosiret et al., 2021; Mudrikah et al., 2022).

Another big hope given by students for the MBKM program within the USCND environment is the provision of equivalency certificates for those who have taken part in activities issued by the ministry. This certificate is an integrated and coordinated form of appreciation by USCND and the Ministry of Education and Culture. This is in line with previous research which states that recognition of MBKM activities needs to be formalized so that it is more beneficial for students (Ainia, 2020; Daga, 2021; Juita & Yusmaridi, 2021). By giving this certificate, students hope that it will be very useful as recognition for the activities they have participated in. This certificate not only has significant value for

students, but also provides appreciation for the student's success in the activities they have participated in. This is in line with research results which show that from an appreciation perspective, one form of appreciation that students may receive is a legal and recognized certificate (Baharuddin, 2021; Sabatini et al., 2022).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The research results are in line with the research objective which is to get an overview of students' perspectives regarding MBKM. The data shows that lecture learning using MBKM gives a positive impression from the student's perspective. The very diverse experiences that have been gained during MBKM-based learning provide students with increased abilities in various things. Students have high hopes that the MBKM program in the USCND environment can be continued and developed so that the theoretical implementation that has been obtained in lectures can be implemented. The alignment between theory and practice framed in MBKM activities provides many opportunities for students to develop not only in academic aspects.

This research was limited to students in the elementary school teacher education study program who took part in the MBKM program at one university. The data obtained does not necessarily describe the results of MBKM at other universities. Especially if the data taken is compared to see more comprehensive results.

Future research needs to evaluate which MBKM activities need to be improved in quality. This research is only limited to MBKM activities as a whole but has not specifically evaluated activities carried out such as student exchange MBKM, Research MBKM. Future research must be more specific, what students expect from various more specific MBKM activities. The input and comments provided by students in the perspective of MBKM activities provide an opportunity for stackholders to take the necessary steps for MBKM activities that are more progressive and in line with the needs of students and graduate users.

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