



University Readiness, Involvement and Lecturers' Knowledge for Implementing Newest Curriculum in Indonesia: A Survey in an Islamic University in Indonesia

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Abstract

Recently, Indonesian Government published the latest curriculum in higher education namely, MBKM curriculum. However, it is highly noted that the less preparation of implementing curriculum can influence all the participants who run the new curriculum such as less knowledge of the new curriculum, the involvement of the new curriculum and the readiness of university. In this article, description of lecturers' knowledge of MBKM program, lecturers' involvement, and the readiness of university in implementing MBKM program are explored. A descriptive, quantitative study based on survey by SPADA DIKTI was designed using descriptive quantitative as research method. The valid subject of the research were 309 lecturers at University of Islam Malang. The result of this study develops the previous study that to implement the new curriculum demanding all the academic staff in university not only have sufficient information about the new curriculum, but also directly involved to develop the curriculum. On contrary, the publication of new curriculum not only put the direction of national education but also indicates all the academic staff in university is ready to reach the aim of the new curriculum.

Keywords: *University Readiness; New Curriculum; Lecturer Involvement; Lecturer Knowledge; Survey*

Introduction

In the age of globalization, transformation of curriculum has become a global trend (Waks, 2003, Yin, 2003; Sparapani et al., 2014). Most of country redesign their curriculum to fit with the global demands. In United States of America, Europe, East Asia, and sub-Saharan African countries which develop their new curricula by cause of social, political, and technological advancement (Yeung and Lam, 2007; Altinyelken, 2010; Kolmos et al., 2016). For decades, curriculum studies have examined the moral, political, and idealistic goals of various curriculum concepts (e.g., Grundy 1987; Kelly 2009; Stenhouse 1975; Pinar *et al.* 1995; Pinar 2004). So, mostly a country transforms their curriculum dealing with the political and globalization impact.

As stated by Gwarinda (2002) define the term of curriculum as an educated and learning program officially planned and selected for schools, including desirable learning outcomes, learning areas,

teaching-learning methods, infrastructure requirements, and assessment procedures. Curriculum is the essential matter for run the school for implementing ideas particularly for higher education. As mentioned by Barnett and Coate (2005) that the curriculum is the basis of “the well-being and effectiveness of higher education”.

Over the last decade, the scope of higher education curriculum work has shifted from subject related changes to university-wide reforms (e.g., Blackmore & Kandiko, 2012; Karseth & Solbregge, 2016; Yates et al., 2017). This matter was caused by the technological advancement and globalization in 21st century which demanded all the education institution including university to transform their curriculum. Furthermore, fundamental changes in higher education must take place across all disciplines and research levels (Barth and Reickmann 2012; García-González et al. 2017).

Nowadays, the students are expected to learn all subjects not only their chosen department because all discipline may also connect each other's. Likewise, the students need to be able to transfer the information they learn in the class into a real-life experience that is contextual (Carnevale et al., 2011; Schmidt et al., 2012). Students should have any experiences outside the class to implement their knowledge in a practical way. Additionally, curriculum in higher education as a central tool for implementing the university concept into practice (Barnett, 2009). However, this concept has been outlined in the latest curriculum that has been applied by Indonesia namely MBKM.

MBKM (*Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka*) is one of the most important curriculum goals at the university level in today's curriculum development in the Indonesian context (Rahmattullah & Syamsu, 2021). MBKM program is a program which invented by ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) expected to support the students to be able to meet the challenges of the technological era that provides many opportunities for them to continue to advance and develop both inside and outside the campus (Directorate General & Higher Education of Indonesia, 2020).

Besides, MBKM has basically become a new concept that allows students to have the freedom to study in the college (Leuwol et al., 2020; Muhsin, 2021; Wijayanto, 2021). Freedom in this context is students may study inside the university with different departments and outside the university during three semesters. Moreover, it is necessary to make a breakthrough in the field of education namely MBKM in the hope of being able to develop soft skill and hard skill that are ready to face the challenges of the times (Dayanti et al., 2020). The objective of MBKM is to encourage the students to master various fields of knowledge according to their field of expertise, so that they are ready to compete in the global world (Baharuddin, 2021; Fatmawati, 2020; Tohir, 2020).

Furthermore, universities are expected to be committed to providing and facilitating the MBKM program as mandated by Permendikbud RI No. 3 of 2020 as well as those described in guidebook of MBKM published by Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC). There are nine programs in MBKM namely (1) Student exchange, (2) professional work practice, (3) teaching assistance in education units, (4) research (5) humanitarian project, (6) entrepreneurial activities, (7) independent study/project, (8) Village Development project, and (9) national defense training. Nevertheless, Kurniawan, Saputra, Daulay, and Zubaidah (2020) show that the paradigm in the implementation of MBKM policy is not fully implemented due to various issues. Mostly the issues are regarding to the readiness of universities, comprehension of lecturers towards MBKM programs and the involvement of lecturer to support MBKM programs.

On the other hand, Teachers or lecturers who do not have sufficient information about the curriculum will not be able to implement the curriculum properly (Uiseb, 2007). Weiner (2009) found that the willingness of individuals and groups in an organization (universities) to implement changes (new curriculum) affects many factors including program awareness, attitude, motivation, knowledge, and ability to implement the program and their ability to implement it. Besides, teachers, or lecturers to be the

most notable person in the curriculum implementation program and emphasizes the need to involve teachers at all stages of the curriculum process (Mkpa, 1987). This term along with the lecturers as an individual who implement the curriculum directly should be aware with the MBKM programs then to be able to implement it.

Further, Bandura (2012) states that the belief and ability to do something (implementing the curriculum) known as self-efficacy can determine the effectiveness of implementing the program (curriculum). Because as indicated by Mashele (2005) implementation requires a lot of energy with the aim of changing the current way of doing things, we need to consider the individuals who must participate in order to properly influence their state of mind. So, lecturers' awareness of MBKM programs to be one of a concern in this study. Bandura (2012) states that if an institutional individual (lecturers) is more motivated to implement a program change (curriculum), the individual will make more efforts to implement the program and be more supportive and claims to have a tendency to act on it leads to effective implementation. So, as Fullan (1991) found that the level of teacher participation as the center of curriculum development leads to effective accomplishment of education reform.

From all those issues mentions above, the researcher tries to figure out the readiness of university particularly at University of Islam Malang in implementing MBKM curriculum, the lecturers' comprehension of MBKM program, and the involvement of lecturers towards MBKM program.

Method

To observe the readiness of university (University of Islam Malang), the knowledge of lecturers regarding with implementation of MBKM and the involvement of lecturers to implement the program, the result of SPADA (Indonesian Online Learning System) Survey used as primary resources in this research. The method used in this research was descriptive quantitative method. As a survey research, descriptive quantitative method is a useful way to descriptively examine the data of the quantitative research.

Survey research is one of the most widely used methods in the social sciences. Survey studies refers to the set of strategies used to collect statistic data in a scientific manner from a number of individuals, organizations, or different parts of interest (Given, 2008). Questionnaire, interviews, and observation included as kind of survey research in this method. However, this research used by combine the open and closed questionnaire made by SPADA DIKTI. SPADA is abbreviation from Indonesian Online Learning System which is one of programs from Directorate General of Learning and Student Affairs of the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education to improve equitable access to quality learning in higher education. The subject of this research were 309 lecturers at University of Islam Malang. The data were analyze descriptively based on the lecturers' response on SPADA survey.

Finding

The Lecturers' Knowledge of MBKM programs (N=309)

This study is aimed to identify the lecturers' knowledge of MBKM program, the involvement of MBKM programs and the readiness of University of Islam Malang in implementing MBKM program. The first part of the survey demonstrated that the number of lecturers' comprehension towards MBKM programs at University of Islam Malang including as a good comprehension.

Table 1 Lecturers' Comprehension of MBKM Curriculum

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sufficient	132	42.7	42.7	42.7
	Good	177	57.3	57.3	100.0
Total		309	100.0	100.0	

It is interesting to highlight that the lecturers at University of Islam Malang as components to implement the curriculum has good knowledge of MBKM program. Based on the data above, 57.3% of the valid respondents (lecturers) stated that they already know the MBKM program. Many sources of their understanding towards MBKM programs through any kind of media. Their comprehension of MBKM program mostly from MBKM program socialization conducted by University of Islam Malang. However, it is highly noted that the difference between "Good" and "Sufficient" answer only 14.6%. It means the difference between respondents who comprehend the MBKM program small variance.

The Involvement of Lecturers' towards MBKM Programs (N= 309)

Table 2 Lecturers' Involvement of MBKM Curriculum

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sufficient	45	14.6	14.6	14.6
	Good	264	85.4	85.4	100.0
Total		309	100.0	100.0	

Based on the table above, 85.4% of the respondents were indirectly involve towards MBKM program. The involvement of lecturers can be seen from their contribution in joining discussion, meeting, and workshop of preparation to implement MBKM programs. Additionally, most of lecturers also including as a team for implementing MBKM program at University of Islam Malang. However, still there are several lecturers through 14.6% who do not know about the activity of preparation in implementing MBKM programs.

The Readiness of University in Implementing MBKM programs (N= 309)

Table 3 The University Readiness in Implementing MBKM Curriculum

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Out of knowledge	12	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Not Exist	4	1.3	1.3	5.2
	Just a draft of MBKM curriculum	41	13.3	13.3	18.4
	Already published	252	81.6	81.6	100.0
Total		309	100.0	100.0	

Generally, the majority of lecturers (81.6%) were agreed that MBKM Curriculum already published by University of Islam Malang. In actual fact, University of Islam Malang incidentally applied

any program as MBKM programs such as students exchange, practice teaching, and community service program. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that 14.6% of lecturers assumed that MBKM Curriculum only in a draft paper and even more not existed. In contrast, MBKM Curriculum was officially published at University of Islam Malang through Rector Decree in February 2021.

Discussion

The data show that the knowledge of lecturers regarding to MBKM Curriculum is high. This high comprehension of MBKM curriculum is due to, first, lecturers' contribution in joining any discussion, meeting and workshop dealing with the preparation of the MBKM curriculum implementation. Along with the announcement of latest curriculum by Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), most of university conduct any discussion related to the enforcement of MBKM curriculum. Secondly, mainly faculty at University of Islam Malang got research grant from Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) to reconstruct their curriculum into the latest curriculum (MBKM Curriculum). So, mostly of lecturers was involved as a team to reform the curriculum in their faculty. The lecturers' understanding of MBKM Curriculum can influence their ability to implement the curriculum appropriately. As stated by Uiseb (2007) lecturers will not be able to implement the curriculum properly if they do not have sufficient information. Predominantly, the understanding of lecturers concerning MBKM curriculum is obtained from discussion, meeting and workshop and directly involved as a team to reform the curriculum. So, this research is improving the previous research which show that to implement the new curriculum not only have sufficient information about the new curriculum but also directly involved to develop the new curriculum.

On the other hand, the vast majority of lecturers agree that University of Islam Malang is ready to implement the latest of new curriculum based on the survey result. Most of lecturers (81.6%) presumed that university already published the MBKM curriculum document through the rector decree on the beginning of 2021. The existence of MBKM curriculum documents determine the readiness of university in implementing the new curricula. This issue related with the previous research in New Zealand that the publication of curriculum draft put forward the national direction of education (MoE, 2006). With the existence of MBKM curriculum documents, it means the university already prepare all of the supporting documents to implement the latest curriculum because to create a new curriculum takes time and energy. The curriculum that has been published at university level indicates that the university is ready to implement the new curriculum. So, the publication of curriculum not only put the direction on education in a country, but also indicates all the academic staff in education institution are ready to reach the aim of the new curriculum.

Conclusion

This research was emphasized on three main problems. The first is the comprehension of lecturers towards MBKM curriculum, The involvement of lecturers and the readiness of university. Related with the lecturers understanding of MBKM curriculum, the researcher found that to implement the new curriculum, the lecturers are demanded to have sufficient information of the latest curriculum and to be involved directly to develop the new curricula. The knowledge of the lecturers towards the new curricula has a positive impact in implementing it. Moreover, the involvement of them also strengthens their knowledge about the latest curriculum.

Secondly, the presence of curriculum document in a university put the direction forward on national education in a country. In this context, university of Islam Malang already published the MBKM curriculum through the rector decree in the beginning of 2021 which indicates that all the academic staff in university are ready to implement the latest curriculum and to achieve the goals of the new curriculum.

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