Fully Independent and Semi-Independent Models in the Implementation of Independent Learning at Islamic Religious Colleges

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ABSTRACT: This research is a research based on analyst theory and evaluation of education policy. The aim is to photograph the practice of Merdeka Belajar and evaluate its success. The research method used is qualitative evaluation. Data was collected through documentation techniques and interviews. The collected data were analyzed by qualitative evaluative analysis techniques. PTKIN responds to the policy regulations of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religion related to Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) by conducting intensive internal discussions and then making MBKM Guidelines with the Rector's Decree. The form of MBKM chosen refers to MBKM regulations in the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Agriculture, its implementation is adjusted to the potential and conditions in each PTKIN. This policy evaluation provides valuable input for policymakers to make improvements or policy adjustments related to curriculum development and implementation at PTKIN.

KEYWORDS: Curriculum, curriculum implementation policy, independent learning independent campus, Islamic religious college.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of Free Learning in higher education units is intended to prepare alumni to be able to adapt to changes and developments that are so fast as well as master competence of the study program. In addition, Merdeka Belajar will be able to equip skills beyond the main competencies so that alumni are better prepared to enter the world of work that is not always linear with the knowledge learned in the study program (Mariati, 2021).

Freedom to learn develops student competencies outside the boundaries of their study program so that they will have a broad mastery of various knowledge. Merdeka Belajar gives them a competitive advantage and the flexibility to adapt to the needs of the ever-changing job market. Freedom of learning provides flexibility in choosing courses according to their interests and talents, which has an influence on changes in the academic atmosphere in higher education (Simatupang &; Yuhertiana, 2021; Wijiharjono, 2021).

Merdeka Belajar gives students the freedom to choose the courses they need, allowing them to explore their interests and talents more deeply. By taking courses that suit personal interests, students will be more motivated in the learning process. In addition, this condition affects the academic atmosphere in higher education, students will be actively involved in the search and development of knowledge independently, creating a more dynamic and creative environment.

The freedom to choose courses can explore students' interests more broadly and they gain a more holistic understanding of various fields of study. In addition, independent learning also encourages students to be active in participating in off-campus activities, such as internships or participating in self-development programs. This will improve social and professional skills students, as well as providing real experience in the world of work that will enrich their perspectives and insights (Simatupang &; Yuhertiana, 2021; Wijiharjono, 2021). Through independent learning, students are not only limited to learning in the classroom but are also encouraged to take part in off-campus activities. For example, they can take an internship program or take a self-development program that is relevant to their interests and talents. By participating in off-campus activities, students will have the opportunity to develop social and professional skills, as well as gain practical insights into the world of work that will help them prepare for their future careers.

The implementation of Independent Learning at various State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN) in Indonesia has a variety and style. Each PTKIN implements a number of policies in practicing Merdeka Belajar. These practices form their own

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uniqueness that shows the focus of each.

This article raises the practice of Merdeka Belajar developed by four PTKIN in Java and Sumatra, to fill the gap in information and research in the field of Merdeka Belajar that has sprung up before. This article focuses on PTKIN's models in practicing the Merdeka Belajar program.

METHOD

Research is policy evaluation research. Policy evaluation research is a type of research that aims to evaluate the success or failure of a policy that

has been implemented (Toriqul Arif, 2019). This research analyzes the Freedom of Learning policy at PTKIN in achieving the goals it set.In the context of curriculum evaluation in higher education, the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model can provide a comprehensive framework (Stufflebeam, Shinkfield, 2007). In the context step, the evaluation will consider external factors that affect curriculum implementation, such as job market needs or accreditation requirements (Rezvani, 2018). This allows colleges to evaluate the extent to which their curriculum fits into existing demands and contexts.In the input step, the evaluation will evaluate the resources and supporting factors used in the implementation of the curriculum (Gonzalez, Skovholt, 2018). This evaluation will ensure that universities have adequate resources, such as physical facilities, textbooks, and qualified teaching staff. In addition, the evaluation will also consider the suitability of these inputs with the goals and competencies to be achieved through the curriculum.

The next step is the process, where the evaluation will focus on implementing the curriculum (Kellaghan, Stufflebeam, 2020). This evaluation will involve an assessment of teaching methods, learning strategies, and interactions between lecturers and students. In this evaluation, universities can evaluate the effectiveness of the learning process and identify areas of improvement to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Finally, the product step will evaluate the results or the impact of the curriculum that has been implemented (Lionarakis, Pratiwi, 2020). This evaluation will look at the extent to which the curriculum achieves the learning objectives set and whether the student has developed the expected skills and knowledge. This evaluation will also consider the sustainability of the curriculum and whether there is a need to make adjustments or improvements.

Using the CIPP evaluation model, universities can conduct an in-depth analysis of all aspects of the curriculum, from context to results achieved. This model provides a systematic and holistic framework for conducting curriculum evaluations, which can help universities to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas of improvement in curriculum development.

RESULTS OF DISCUSSION

From the results of the study, two models of Merdeka Belajar were found practiced by PTKI in Indonesia, namely the full-independent and semi-independent models. The two models demonstrate a number of activities in the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar program which has a front of the tactical program concept.

In substance, the two models above show the meaning of independence of learning activities given by each PTKI to the participants. These two models help us understand the reality of implementing the concept of the Merdeka Belajar program at PTKI.

A. Model Full Independent

The full independent model is the implementation of Merdeka Belajar independently, that is, participants can independently determine any program proposed for its implementation, even without supervision from PTKI. This process helps the participant take full responsibility for his or her prescribed program.

This model gives participants the flexibility to take initiative, make good decisions, and think independently without assistance. When participants carried out MB independently, they became more in control of their time. Where and when participants decide to use it is their prerogative. Growing a self-directed program can be a powerful motivating factor, especially when participants begin to see progress in their academic field. Despite this, participants were still controlled at the end to measure the success of the program.

In the full independent model, participants determine what lessons will be learned. But these things are also limited to what is determined by the curriculum, which is limited time and scope.

The consequences of this model include:

1. Participants leave the information received as it is without attempting to conduct more extensive research on it.
2. Some participants may have noticed weaknesses in lessons in certain subjects. This ultimately motivates them to study personal learning on their own time.
3. Participants can find knowledge they really like. As a result, they devote time and energy to studying it further, outside of their study program.

In practice, the full independent model is practiced in the Student Exchange Program (PPM), namely through PTKI student

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learning activities outside the home campus, in the form of intercampus student exchange programs and/or student learning activities outside the study program at the home campus. The purpose of student exchange programs is to form attitudes on the diversity of cultures, views, religions, and beliefs, as well as the original opinions or findings of others. Work together and have social sensitivity and concern for society and the environment in order to strengthen the competence of graduates.

Activities carried out in the student exchange program are lecture activities and curricular activities whose final results can be assessed as learning outcomes in the form of semester credit units. Student exchange programs are carried out between students of Islamic Religious Universities (PTKI), both public and private, as well as between PTKI students and General University students (PTU) or between PTKI and universities abroad. PTKI and/or PTU criteria for program implementation are determined based on the accreditation value rating of the destination PTKI or PTU.

In practice, students include student exchange programs in the study plan, with a special code MBKM, signed by the supervisor and head of the study program. Procedurally, several conditions must be fulfilled in the exchange program

(1) Interested students submit a certificate of acceptance for the student exchange program from the destination campus to the dean to be issued a certificate of approval, (2) The assessment of learning outcomes by the destination campus or study program does not constitute final assessment and can be without value for a particular exchange program, (3) Students report the implementation of the student exchange program to the dean and attach the results of the study assessment from the destination campus. Furthermore, the full independent model is implemented in the Internship or Work Practice Program, which is direct learning carried out by PTKI students in the world of work, industry, offices, and the service sector in accordance with the fields of expertise and skills students learned at the campus. Internship/practice objectives work to Apply Scientific skills as well as to gain additional new skills relevant in order to strengthen the competence of graduates.The duration of the internship or term work practice is determined not less than 6 months and evaluated every three months. The internship/work practice program with the duration of time can be converted with the recognition of credit weights of between 4-20 credits.

The provisions of the internship program are that students include internship / work practice program activities in the study plan with a weighting of between 4-20 credits signed by the supervisor. Students submit internship/work practice program proposals to the faculty for approval or rejection. The Faculty appoints supervisors for the implementation of internship/student work practice programs at least one lecturer outside the academic supervisor.

Furthermore, after completing the activity, interested students report the final results of the internship/work practice program and are proven by a certificate of competence from the internship place to the dean. Competency certificates can be used to replace KKN and/or PPL activities and can be attached as SKPI documents.The assessment mechanism for internship programs/work practices is carried out through performance assessment mechanisms, *project* assessments, product or work results assessments, portfolio assessments, attitude assessments, and written test assessments.The full independent model is also applied in the Teaching Assistance program, which is teaching and learning activities by interested students in educational units. The purpose of this program is to provide experience to interested students to form knowledge transfer skills in order to strengthen the competence of graduate learning outcomes.

Education units where teaching practices can be located in districts/cities or in certain areas. Procedurally, students include the teaching assistance program in a study plan signed by the supervisor with a maximum weight of 20 credits.

Teaching assistance activities can be followed by interested students from all study programs and guided by study program lecturers appointed by the dean and civil service teachers of the destination education unit. For the implementation of teaching assistance, the study program and/or faculty first collaborate in partnership with the unit and/or education office at the destination. In order to implement teaching assistance, the original study program formulates a measure of learning outcomes that have been set for a maximum credit weight of 20 credits.

The implementation of teaching assistance activities is carried out for a minimum of 6 months to be converted into a maximum of 20 credits.Students report the achievements of the implementation of the teaching assistance program to the dean. The assessment mechanism for teaching assistance programs by the home university is carried out through performance assessment mechanisms, project assessments, product or work assessments, portfolio assessments, attitude assessments, and written test assessments.

The full independent model is applied by PTKI in the Research Program, namely the activities of interested students in the form of internships in laboratories, at research sites, and/or as lecturer research assistants as evidenced in an official statement. The purpose of the research program is for students to be trained in applying research methods, and building the ability to think critically, logically, systematically, rationally, and scientifically related to the scientific families studied.

Research activities can be carried out outside the PTKIN campus, such as at scientific institutions or other agencies located in provinces and districts/cities, both public and private. The period of implementation of the research program is at least 6 months.

Procedurally, interested students enter the research program into a study plan signed by the supervisor with a maximum weight of 20 credits. The original faculty appoints supervisors for research programs in addition to academic supervisors. The implementation of research programs carried out for at least 6 months can be equivalent to 20 credits with evidence of written reports and/or research output achievements.The original study program formulates learning outcomes through research assistance activities set for a

maximum weight of 20 credits. The study program makes guidelines for the implementation of research assistance activities in the framework of quality assurance. Research reports can be used to replace writing final projects other than theses. The assessment mechanism for research programs by the home university is carried out through performance assessment mechanisms, *project assessments,* product/research results, portfolio assessments, and written test assessments Furthermore, the full independent model is also applied *in humanitarian project programs, namely the program of involving interested students in voluntary humanitarian project activities (Voluntary)*, within one or two semesters and can be equivalent to 20 credits. This program is implemented in order to train interested students to have social sensitivity to explore and explore problems in society, as well as teach interested students to provide solutions to problems that occur in society, according to their respective interests and expertise. Procedurally, students include humanitarian projects in a study plan approved by their academic supervisor. Students submit humanitarian project proposals to the faculty that have been approved by the academic supervisor and study program. Furthermore, the Faculty provides field supervisors in accordance with expertise in the proposed humanitarian projects and involves lecturers who teach converted courses.

The original study program conducts monitoring and evaluation on the humanitarian projects implemented. Interested students submit reports on humanitarian project activities to the faculty through the study program. The assessment mechanism for humanitarian project programs by the home university is carried out through the mechanism

Performance *assessment*, product appraisal, and portfolio appraisal.

B. Model Semi-Independent

The semi-independence model is a process of Merdeka Belajar in which participants have control over their learning so that they can direct, organize, and assess their own learning while remaining administratively responsible. The semi-independence model provides participants with the ability to set goals, make choices, and make decisions about how to meet their learning needs, take responsibility for building and implementing their own learning, monitor progress in achieving their learning goals, assess their own learning outcomes, and report them.The semi-independent model is a form of Merdeka Belajar that participants practice independently, but sometimes directed with little supervision, in various Merdeka Belajar programs, such as student exchange programs, internships, village building, and other programs. Usually, participants and lecturers at PTKI agree on a topic to be researched by students with guidance from lecturers for the agreed number of credits.The semi-independent model provides a way for well-motivated participants to pursue topics of interest that are not necessarily in accordance with the academic curriculum of the original study program. It is a way for students to learn specialized material or gain research experience.The semi-independent model gives participants the opportunity to explore their interests more deeply and take important decisions about how and where they will direct their talents in the future, with little direction from their lecturers or supervisors. The semi-independent model is widely practiced through self-study but with the necessity to report results periodically. Lecturers and participants are linked through something like worksheets, essays, or websites on the internet.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Independent Learning at various State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN) in Indonesia has a variety and pattern, which is demonstrated by two models, namely the fully independent and semi-independent models. Each PTKIN implements a number of policies in practicing Merdeka Belajar based on these two models. There are no distinct advantages of the two models, because the measurement uses the parameters of each model, so it cannot be claimed in terms of substance and their respective differences.

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