

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this Chapter I, several sub-sections will be discussed, including the following: background of study, research question/research objective, research limitation, research significance, dan definitions of the key.

A. Background of Study

Higher education systems encounter the challenge of addressing diverse needs. Presently, education in Indonesia grapples with numerous challenges. The quality of education in the country falls short of expectations, attributed to disparities in access and education among regions, an uneven distribution of teachers, and suboptimal graduate quality. Consequently, education in Indonesia necessitates innovative solutions to cultivate graduates who are well-prepared to enter the workforce. The active participation of the business and industrial sectors is crucial to align perceptions with contemporary professional trends and meet the competency requirements of human resources. This involvement, particularly at the higher education level, remains an area that requires enhancement. Currently, the Ministry of Education and Culture has launched several programs aimed at improving the quality of education in universities. A prominently implemented initiative is the *Kampus Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) program.

Kampus Merdeka is part of the Free Learning policy introduced by Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, Nadiem Makariem. This policy allows students to enhance their skills according to their personal interests and talents. The provision allowing students to pursue three semesters outside their designated study program is a key feature of the *Kampus Merdeka* policy. Under this program, students are granted the flexibility to engage in learning experiences beyond their designated study program. This includes the option to spend one semester, equivalent to twenty credits, pursuing studies outside their program within the same university. Moreover, students have the chance to spend up to two semesters, totaling forty credits, either studying within the same program at various universities or exploring different study programs across multiple institutions.

The program also facilitates learning experiences beyond the traditional college setting. The program is governed by various regulations and legal frameworks in higher education, all aimed at improving the quality of learning and cultivating highly skilled graduates. Siti Mustaghfiroh (2020) elucidated that the concept of independent learning aligns with the principles and objectives of John Dewey's progressivism educational philosophy (Mustaghfiroh, 2020). Both share the core concepts of independence and flexibility, providing educational institutions with the latitude to fully explore students' potential in accordance with their individual interests and talents.

The Practitioner Program is a crucial part of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) initiative under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia. This program establishes connections between Indonesian students and teachers within an educational unit, documented in the Basic Education Data (Dapodik), linking proficient practitioners with academic collaborators. The primary objective is to facilitate collaborative courses, enabling participants to acquire knowledge and skills that align with the demands and challenges of the contemporary workforce. Within this program, courses are collaboratively designed and administered by both lecturers and practitioners. This collaborative approach ensures that students experience comprehensive learning that integrates theoretical knowledge with practical field experience, fostering a well-rounded mastery of competencies. The aim is to equip students with enhanced readiness for the professional realm, empowering them to emerge as future leaders in diverse career paths aligned with their individual interests and potentials.

Lectures within higher education institutions benefit significantly from the involvement of practitioners capable of sharing firsthand experiences regarding best practices. The *Praktisi Mengajar* Program facilitates collaboration between lecturers and practitioners from diverse industries, aligning with their respective competencies and areas of expertise. This collaborative effort extends to co-teaching in a classroom setting for a duration of one semester, thereby enriching the learning

experience with practical insights and real-world perspectives. Within this collaborative classroom setting, both lecturers and students benefit from diverse best practices derived from the wealth of experience offered by seasoned practitioners in their respective fields. Moreover, the *Praktisi Mengajar* Program serves as a conduit for study programs and lecturers to engage in a comprehensive review and update of the existing curriculum. This process is instrumental in bridging the gap between skills acquired through education and the evolving demands of the professional landscape, ensuring that the curriculum remains pertinent and beneficial in meeting the needs of the workforce.

The learning process involving lecturers, practitioners, and students can be conducted through online, offline, or hybrid modalities. In this study, the author will explore and analyze the perspectives of students engaged with educational practitioners at Nahdlatul Ulama University in South Kalimantan. The rationale for selecting Nahdlatul Ulama University in South Kalimantan as the research site is the absence of prior studies on this specific aspect within the university, particularly given that the independent campus program represents a relatively recent initiative. This research delves into the influence of learning on the academic performance of higher education students at Nahdlatul Ulama University of South Kalimantan, particularly focusing on learning outcomes throughout the program. The primary objective of this study is to discern the perceptions of English

language students regarding the *Praktisi Mengajar Program Kampus Merdeka* from their subjective standpoint.

B. Research Question/Research Objective

Building upon the provided background information, the following questions emerge:

1. How do English students perceive the importance of the *Praktisi Mengajar Program*?
2. What are the perceptions of English language students regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the *Praktisi Mengajar Program*?
3. How do English students perceive the difficulty of adapting during the *Praktisi Mengajar Program*?

C. Research Limitation

Research limitations necessitate careful consideration, guided by the need to confine the study to specific contexts and phenomena (Yin, 2018). Primarily, achieving an exact response rate may prove challenging. Additionally, the researcher may encounter constraints in documenting all information acquired through the questionnaire in the form of transcripts or written data. Potential response bias and a tendency for respondents to provide socially acceptable answers could be present. The interpretation of results requires meticulous attention, recognizing that the findings may not be universally applicable to all contexts and situations.

D. Research Significance

The significance in this study are, as follows:

1. Theoretical Control:

This research contributes to the documentation of positive aspects within the *Praktisi Mengajar* Program, highlighting self-development through online learning facilitated by teaching practitioners from external institutions. The study underscores the enhancement of skills, knowledge, and attitudes acquired through direct engagement in the learning process.

2. Practical Control:

The presence of the *Praktisi Mengajar* Program within the *Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) framework is anticipated to serve as an evaluation or reference point, aiming to enhance the overall quality of the program.

E. Definitions of the Key

1. *Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) is an initiative introduced by the Minister of Education and Culture, designed to motivate students to acquire diverse knowledge and skills in preparation for entering the workforce.
2. The *Praktisi Mengajar* Program is an integral component of the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) program, initiated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the

Republic of Indonesia. The program is designed to enhance the preparedness of university graduates for the challenges of the workforce.

3. Student learning perception refers to a student's perspective on the material they receive during learning activities. This perception encompasses how students interpret and react to subject matter delivered through the learning process. Based on the problem formulation, my investigation will focus on the following areas: English students' perception of the significance of the *Praktisi Mengajar* Program, their views on the program's benefits and drawbacks, and their perception of the challenges associated with adapting to the *Praktisi Mengajar* Program.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Following the distribution of perception questionnaires to students of Nahdlatul Ulama University of South Kalimantan who participated in the *Praktisi Mengajar* Program batch 4, the researcher derived several conclusions and suggestions, which will be detailed in this chapter.

A. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the research presented in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that:

- a) Students' perception of the importance of the *Praktisi Mengajar* Program received a score of 72%, indicating a positive assessment.
- b) Students' perception of the shortcomings they felt during the program had a 62% disagreement score, indicating that they did not feel lacking in the teaching provided by the *Praktisi Mengajar* Program.
- c) Student perception of the advantages of the *Praktisi Mengajar* Program received a score of 68%, indicating that students believe the program has a positive impact on both themselves and the campus.
- d) Students' perception of difficulties in adapting had a 65% disagreement score, meaning that they are able to adapt to the learning schedule and interact well with peers from different semesters.

Based on these results, there is an average score of 67%, indicating that the majority of English education students at Nahdlatul Ulama University of South Kalimantan perceive a positive impact from the *Praktisi Mengajar* Program.

B. Suggestions

Researcher may offer the following suggestions for future consideration:

- a) For students, some students experience difficulty with networking during online classes. The researcher recommends that students take the initiative to find locations with strong network connections to enhance their online learning experience.
- b) For lecturers, it is advised to pay closer attention to the progress of program activities. One of the suggestion is to allocate a brief period after class to discuss the day's lesson content with students. This practice can help ensure clarity and minimize misunderstandings regarding the provided material.
- c) For practitioners, it is recommended to present materials in an engaging manner to capture students' interest and prevent boredom. Additionally, practitioners should avoid speaking too quickly when explaining the material, ensuring that it is presented in an easy-to-understand manner.

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