

Implementation of Internship Program in MBKM Activities at Eight-Semester of English Department University of Pasir Pengaraian

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A B S T R A C T

This study aims to describe the implementation of the MBKM (Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka) internship program at the eighth semester of the English Department, Universitas Pasir Pengaraian. The internship program is a core component of MBKM, intended to provide students with real-world professional experience outside of campus. Using a descriptive qualitative method, data were collected from nine eighth-semester students through questionnaires and interviews. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that the MBKM internship program was generally well implemented in terms of planning, guidance, evaluation, and relevance to students' academic backgrounds. There are still issues, though, like uneven supervision and internship assignments that are not relevant to the field of English education. In order to guarantee that internship activities are in line with students' academic and professional competencies, the study emphasizes the necessity of improved coordination between universities and partner institutions.

Keywords: MBKM, Program Execution, Internship, and English Instruction

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INTRODUCTION

The Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy introduced by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology aims to provide higher education students with broader learning opportunities beyond the classroom. One of the key implementations of MBKM is the internship program, which seeks to bridge academic theory with real-world professional practice. This shift emphasizes the importance of experiential learning, allowing students to apply their knowledge in practical environments that enhance both their academic and career development.

In the context of English Education, internships provide valuable platforms for students to develop pedagogical, communicative, and organizational skills in authentic settings. By participating in MBKM internships, students are expected to gain a deeper understanding of their roles as future educators and contributors to society.

At University of Pasir Pengaraian, the English Education Study Program has implemented the MBKM internship program for eighth-semester students. However, as a relatively new initiative, it is crucial to assess how effectively this program has been executed. Understanding student perceptions, experiences, and challenges can provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the current implementation. These insights are essential for improving the quality and impact of the program in the future.

MBKM, introduced by (Kusumawardani et al., 2024). One key aspect of MBKM is the internship program, which provides students with off-campus professional experiences that

develop their competencies in accordance with the Indonesian National Qualification Framework (KKNI). According to Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Internships align with this theory by offering practical engagement that supplements academic learning.

Previous studies have examined MBKM implementation across disciplines. Kurniawati et al. (2023) reported successful implementation of the MBKM internship program in Sociology, highlighting the importance of mentor guidance. (Lestari, n.d.) found that certified internships improved students' 21st-century skills. However, few studies have specifically analyzed MBKM internships in English Education programs, especially at regional universities. This study addresses that gap.

According to Parveen & Mirza, (2012) An internship is a special kind of education that combines coursework with organized, performance-based experiences. It is often created to help young, unemployed graduates and postgraduates who have finished their fourteen to sixteen years of schooling worldwide. Developing and strengthening students' abilities and preparing them for the workforce are the main goals of the internship program. In addition to giving new applicants financial help, many internship programs seek to maintain their interest and engagement in learning more about the field they hope to pursue in the future. Both new applicants and government agencies benefit from the internship program. It gives new hires a chance to experience the demands of today's professional business environment and working conditions. Therefore, it may be claimed that it gives the student a better grasp of the requirements and qualifications of the workplace. It enables them to comprehend the relationship between theory and practice, which improves the student's understanding of his capacity to meet the objectives specified for different professions. As a result, the internship program is very important since it guarantees students' professional preparation in a number of ways, including their comprehension of the desired profession and their future possibilities for working circumstances in that field.

According to Rochmayanti et al., (2022), school agencies and institutions have structured the internship program in an integrated manner as a follow-up to learning after college in order to gain knowledge, develop skills, shape positive attitudes or personalities, broaden students' experience, and build a network of relationships. The internship program is an activity that enables students to gain real-world work experience through placement in a company, institution, or organization; students learn theory in class, but they also apply that knowledge in professional settings; the program aims to develop practical skills, expose students to the work environment, and help them prepare for careers after graduation; in addition, internships give students the chance to build professional networks and gain an understanding of the demands and culture of the workplace. Students are typically assigned tasks or assignments related to their field of study throughout the internship program, which enables them to get a deeper grasp of and become more proficient in their field. Additionally, internship programs can expose students to a variety of work-related topics that they might not learn in the classroom, like organizational dynamics, workplace culture, and the needs of the industrial world.

Overall, the MBKM internship program represents an important innovation in Indonesian higher education. For English Education students, it offers the chance to refine pedagogical and communicative skills in authentic contexts while building professional networks and gaining workplace experience. As a relatively new policy, its effectiveness must continue to be evaluated to ensure it meets both institutional and student needs. Ultimately, a well-structured internship program strengthens the bridge between theory and practice, preparing graduates to succeed in their future careers as competent and adaptive educators.

METHODS

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach to describe in depth the implementation of the internship program in MBKM activities for 8th semester students of the English Language Education Study Program. This approach was chosen to understand the

Implementation of Internship Program in MBKM Activities at Eight-Semester of English Department University of Pasir Pengaraian experiences, challenges and impacts of the internship program implemented. The qualitative descriptive approach used in this study makes it easier to thoroughly examine the complexities of social processes. Descriptive research, according to Arikunto (2007), aims to accurately and impartially portray unique factors, symptoms, or circumstances without attempting to prove a specific hypothesis. This strategy was chosen because it is pertinent to the study's goal, which is to investigate how the MBKM program is being implemented in Universitas Pasir Pengaraian at English Study Program. Data were collected by using questionnaire, interview and documentation

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Students generally reported a positive implementation process: objectives were clearly explained, internship procedures were well-structured, and support was provided. However, relevance varied:

High relevance: Kampung Inggris, where students taught English and developed teaching materials

Moderate relevance: Department of Tourism and Culture, with document translation and public communication

Low relevance: Ombudsman, PT Tom Burger, and Bank BSI, with mostly administrative/customer service tasks unrelated to English Education

Supervision and evaluation also differed across institutions. Students placed in educational settings received better mentorship aligned with academic competencies. One respondent shared, "At Kampung Inggris, I was able to apply teaching strategies I learned in class directly to real students." Meanwhile, another student at the Ombudsman stated, "I worked mostly in clerical tasks that had no connection to English education."

Additionally, students appreciated institutions that held regular evaluations and feedback sessions. The Department of Tourism and Culture, for example, scheduled weekly discussions to reflect on progress. In contrast, students at business institutions like PT Tom Burger reported a lack of structured mentorship. "There were no clear learning objectives, and I was mostly treated like a regular employee," noted one participant.

Discussion

The findings highlight how crucial it is to match internship duties to students' academic specializations. The diverse experiences demonstrate how student learning results are greatly impacted by institutional setting. Pupils who were put in educational settings were more likely to participate in pedagogical activities, which strengthened their English teaching abilities. Kolb's theory, which stresses learning by reflection on doing, is in line with this.

The favorable opinion of Kampung Inggris confirms the findings of (Kurniawati et al., 2023), who highlighted the importance of mentoring and academic relevance for fruitful internships. In a similar vein, (Lestari, n.d.) emphasized that internships that are well-structured improve employability skills. This study, however, adds nuance by pointing out content inconsistencies in internships. Students in banking or hospitality settings encountered difficulties putting their academic knowledge to use, which decreased their level of engagement and learning.

These findings imply that internship success is not merely a result of placement availability but also of alignment between the host institution's tasks and the students' academic profile. For English Education students, tasks such as language instruction, translation, material development, and communication-based roles are far more effective in achieving MBKM's learning goals.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from both the questionnaire and interview data, it can be concluded that the implementation of the MBKM internship program for eighth-semester students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Pasir Pengaraian has

generally been effective in providing valuable and relevant experiences that enhance professional and interpersonal skills, although several aspects still require improvement. The planning phase was appreciated for its structured briefings and orientations, yet some students suggested the need for more in-depth pre-internship training to better prepare them for professional environments. During execution, most participants found the assigned tasks appropriate and aligned with their academic background, with opportunities to apply knowledge in teaching, communication, writing, and professional interactions across diverse placements such as schools, government offices, and private companies. These experiences broadened students' perspectives on career paths and strengthened their transferable skills. Overall, the program has proven to be a meaningful platform for academic and career development, but enhancements in preparation, supervision, and coordination are necessary to maximize its impact. Continuous evaluation and improvements based on student feedback will ensure the program remains sustainable and responsive to both educational goals and workforce demands.

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