



The Influence of *Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka* to Improve the Quality of Graduates in Higher Education: A Reflective Analysis

Paisal Manurung¹, Hamidah Sidabalok², Muhammad Sepristiwanto³,
Cindy Purnama Sari Az Zahra⁴, Nur Rahmana⁵
^{1,2,3,4,5} Universitas Asahan, Kisaran, Indonesia



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ABSTRACT

Objective: Higher education is vital in producing qualified graduates ready to face work challenges. This research used a case study approach at Asahan University. This study aimed to analyze the effect of the *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* program at Asahan University. **Method:** The approach was used as an experimental research approach. The respondents constituted students and lecturers at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at Asahan University, which accounts for 26 participants. In sampling from the population, researchers used purposive sampling with sample characters, namely students and lecturers of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, students and lecturers involved in the MBKM program batch 1 to batch 6. Data collection was carried out using 20 questionnaires, which were analyzed using a Likert Scale. The data was collected using the Google form integrated with Internet-Based Data Analysis (IBDA) and analyzed using the Microsoft Office Excel formula. **Results:** Therefore, based on the questionnaire distributed using Google Forms, it was found that the program MBKM that Asahan University has carried out affects the competence of graduates involved in the program, with a significance of 64.4% with significant criteria. **Novelty:** Based on the analysis and discussion results, the Learning Management System integrated the MBKM program to require a clear, structured concept and scientific transparency in all aspects to increase the number of graduates who contribute to the development of *Indonesia Maju* 2045.

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and the rapid development of information technology, universities must continue to innovate to produce competent and adaptive graduates (Andrian et al., 2022; Wahyu et al., 2022). For this reason, the concept of *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) (a freedom learning-freedom campus) was introduced as an effort to improve the higher education system in Indonesia (Ramadhani, 2023; Sumani et al., 2022; Vhalery et al., 2022). This study aimed to analyze and identify efforts to improve the quality of college graduates based on MBKM. Thus, implementing the MBKM program promoted by the government can improve the quality of university graduates. The contribution of this article is an introspection for universities, especially private universities, in managing the MBKM program (Fauzi, 2019; Rachmawati, 2022). The results of previous research showed that the results of the MBKM program implemented by universities improve the quality of learning (Ananda et al., 2023), which can be an illustration that can affect the quality of graduates. In another article, it is stated that the contribution of the MBKM program in improving the quality of Cooperation will be more optimal. Therefore, synchronizing the MBKM program and the college curriculum can facilitate for students to improve the quality of graduates outside the study program (Dano, 2023; Gusdini et al., 2022)

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