

The Implementation of Student Exchange Program in Higher Education: The Study in a University in Indonesia

Lodya Sesriyani¹, Saiful Anwar², Rusmaini³

¹ Universitas Pamulang, Indonesia; dosen01852@unpam.ac.id

² Universitas Pamulang, Indonesia; dosen00902@unpam.ac.id

³ Universitas Pamulang, Indonesia; dosen02066@unpam.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the implementation of Program Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) which was implemented in one of the private universities in Indonesia. The focus of this research was the implementation of Program Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka (PMM), where in this program students temporarily exchange to run courses at partner universities. This research is expected to answer what must be evaluated in the program Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka (PMM). The subjects in this study were all students in the PMM program activities in the 'Perkembangan Peserta Didik' course. Observations were made for nine meetings conducted online both on Google meet and on the Spada Dikti dashboard. There were sixteen students whose activities were observed and two lecturers who taught courses. During the observation, information was found regarding timeliness of students and lecturers in starting and ending lectures, students' discipline when collecting individual and group assignments, signal problems that often occur, effectiveness of the Dikti dashboard, to the final conversion of students' grades at their respective universities.

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Corresponding Author:

Lodya Sesriyani

Universitas Pamulang, Indonesia; dosen01852@unpam.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education in Indonesia has 7 main indicators of problems that require special attention, namely; (1) people are increasingly critical of the quality of higher education, which is reflected in their choice to focus more on universities that have accreditation when choosing to continue their education, (2) the number of new universities is not in line with the gross enrollment rate (GER) when compared to other countries. - other Asian countries, (3) the higher costs of higher education, (4) the technological revolution in education that is not in line with the readiness of human resources, (5) higher education has been entered by parties that focus on commercial education, (6) the reduced support politics and finance towards higher education, and (7) graduates who can respond to market needs.

In facing these challenges, the collaboration between fellow universities is needed to realize an increase in the competitiveness of graduates nationally and globally. In addition, cooperation also needs to be carried out for equal distribution of education quality. In the end, this collaboration also has an impact on students in increasing synergy, increasing research linkages and building togetherness to jointly increase the nation's competitiveness.

The Covid-19 that hit the world and affected the implementation of education (Fuadi & Aswita, 2021), especially higher education, did not make education have to move backwards. One of the programs that has begun to be carried out is Program Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) (Anwar, 2021), (Sunismi et al., 2022). There are several excellent programs (Make et al., 2022), (Baharuddin, 2021), (Krishnapatria, 2021) in this program, one of which is Program Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka (PMM).

PMM focuses on how students can understand the diversity of cultures that exist in Indonesia. Students are also expected to have a good insight into the archipelago after joining this program. In addition, this program also focuses on enabling students to experience studying at other campuses for one semester. Students are given the freedom to take one to three semesters of study at the campus they want in order to develop their knowledge and broaden the scope of their competence. Students can choose a campus that excels in certain competencies, which are expected to hone students' creativity. This can further train the leadership skills that students get from their ability to get along with other students throughout Indonesia. In the end, this program is expected to improve the quality of education in general.

In early 2014, Program Pertukaran Mahasiswa Tanah Air Nusantara (PERMATA) was actually implemented, this program was the forerunner of Program Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka (PMM) which had been perfected and its capacity increased. In the implementation of PMM, students conduct online lectures at partner universities located on different islands from their home campus for a maximum of 20 credits.

At Pamulang University, there are 12 courses that are opened in the odd semester of the 2021/2022 academic year, one of which is *Perkembangan Peserta Didik* course which 3 credits, this course is taught by two lecturers and attended by sixteen students from various campuses in Indonesia. This course emphasizes how students understand the stages of development and growth of students and how the implications of both in education. There are 18 activity modules in this course including UTS and UAS.

Departing from this; researchers are interested in taking pictures of the implementation of the PMM program in order to see firsthand the opportunities and challenges of this program. It is hoped that in the next program the implementation will be much better and can help education recover faster. Previous research conducted by (Faiz & Purwati, 2021), they discussed how the MBKM curriculum could be distinguished from the previous general curriculum, and how the implementation of PMM in the MBKM curriculum. As a result, they found that there would be a slick collaboration between various fields of science in PMM. Another similar study was conducted by (Fuadi & Aswita, 2021), they described the obstacles faced by universities in Aceh in implementing PMM. As a result, they explained that policies that had not been properly socialized caused the lack of distribution of PMM information there.

In this study, the authors focus on the portrait of the implementation of PMM in *Perkembangan Peserta Didik* course in the Economic Education Study Program, Pamulang University, by looking at the portrait, it is hoped that PMM will run better in the future.

2. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to photograph the implementation of PMM in *Perkembangan Peserta Didik* course at Pamulang University. The data in this study were taken using observations and interviews that were carried out thoroughly and continuously in order to photograph directly the implementation of PMM which was carried out fully online. This study involved sixteen students, two lecturers and an observer. Learning activities were observed for nine meetings consisting of synchronous and asynchronous meetings. The total duration of observations was carried out for nine weeks or for two months running.

To observe the implementation of PMM in class, researchers focused on student activity in class, punctuality of students and lecturers in starting and ending lectures, student discipline when collecting individual and group assignments, student motivation in participating actively both during learning on the higher education dashboard. as well as virtual meeting lectures using Google Meet, the obstacles faced by students and lecturers, the effectiveness of the Dikti Spada dashboard, to the final conversion of student scores. After making in-depth observations about the things mentioned above, to strengthen the findings, the researchers conducted interviews with students and lecturers.

Interview results repeat with steps as following; (1) interview data typed in field notes (field note), each finding is reflected and interpreted by the researcher, (2) reduction data, i.e., process analyze, select, focus and throw things away which is irrelevant to what become the topic of research, last given code (coding), (3) presenting data, compiling information descriptively or narratively related to the formulation of the problem this study, (4) Draw conclusions and verification.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of PMM at Pamulang University in Perkembangan Peserta Didik course which can be illustrated in the results of the research below. This research aims to display the portrait of PMM Program in Perkembangan Peserta Didik course as follow:

3.1. Punctuality of Students and Lecturers in Starting and Ending Lectures

Lectures on perkembangan peserta didik courses are scheduled on Wednesday at 13.00, when online learning uses the Dikti Spada dashboard, students are given twenty-four hours to participate, both in reading the lecture provisions at the meeting, downloading digital modules, filling out discussion forums and even there are several modules that require students to work on structured assignments that have been prepared by the lecturer.

In virtual learning using Google Meet, lectures should also start at 13.00, but only 10 percent of students join the class at 13.00, the rest they join no later than fifteen minutes after learning begins.

Excerpt 1:

Observer : What time does class start? did you come on time?

Student 1 : The class starts at 1, when I take online classes using gmeet sometimes I am late because there is a signal problem when I join

Student 2 : The class starts at 13.00, I come on time because the lecturer is always on time to start learning

Signal constraints are described as one of the reasons why students are late to join virtual classes (Daly, 2011). In the second student's answer, it can be seen that the lecturer always opens and closes the class according to the time during the virtual meeting. Learning in this course is not carried out using Google Meet for each module, there are only three virtual meetings using Google Meet in one semester, this is to make variations of learning activities in the module so that students can understand the material easily (Komsiyah, 2021)(Gómez, J. I. A., & Vicente, 2011).

In online learning using the Dikti Spada dashboard, lecturers open classes according to their time, even activities are provided the day before the schedule. Students have twenty-four hours to complete the activities in each module scheduled online. The activities opened by the lecturer can be seen in the image below.

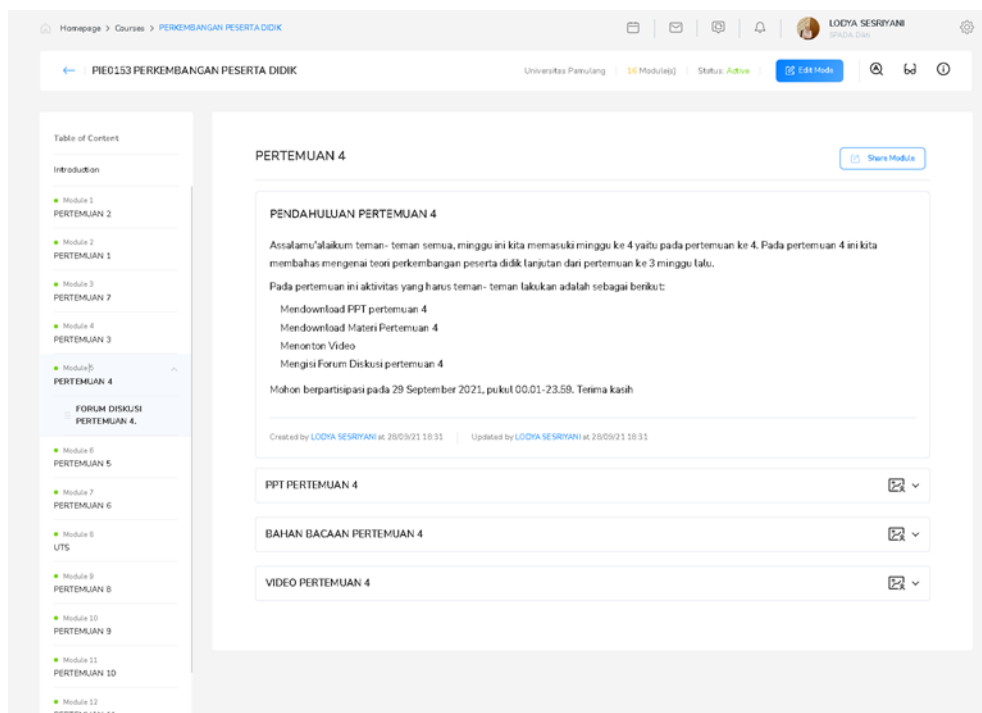


Figure 1. Spada Dikti dashboard activity

3.2. Student Discipline When Collecting Individual and Group Assignments

Student motivation in participating is considered very low, it can be seen that ten out of sixteen students were late when joining the google meet meeting at the first meeting, even though at this first meeting the activities had just started and the lecturers were very enthusiastic in opening the class. This is in line with the research conducted (Lestari & Nugraheni, 2022) at the time of joining the virtual meeting, students also did not open their cameras. Student motivation is also assessed from how punctual they are in submitting assignments. In the Student Development course, there are individual assignments and group assignments which are all recorded on the Spada Dikti dashboard, so that the time and date when students upload their answers will be informed there. The activity of collecting student assignments is illustrated in the image below.

ID	Course Date	Course Time	Topic	Student	Action
2805403977	06/09/2021	13:00 - 23:59	PERTEMUAN 1	15	Detail ✖
2596400070	09/09/2021	00:00 - 23:59	PERTEMUAN 1	6	Detail ✖
3291000432	15/09/2021	00:00 - 23:59	PERTEMUAN 2	15	Detail ✖
3142231544	15/09/2021	00:00 - 23:59	PERTEMUAN 2	15	Detail ✖
199000159	23/09/2021	00:00 - 23:59	PERTEMUAN 3	15	Detail ✖
3423789312	23/09/2021	00:00 - 23:59	PERTEMUAN 3	14	Detail ✖
3359020544	29/09/2021	00:00 - 23:59	PERTEMUAN 4	15	Detail ✖
1634076052	29/09/2021	00:00 - 23:59	PERTEMUAN 4	15	Detail ✖
2284017024	06/10/2021	00:00 - 23:59	PERTEMUAN 5	15	Detail ✖
3346435195	06/10/2021	00:00 - 23:59	PERTEMUAN 5	15	Detail ✖

The picture shows that students are getting less and less motivated in collecting assignments. Sometimes, they submit assignments very close to the deadline for submission which is 23:59. This was confirmed directly to the students which was the reason why their motivation decreased.

Excerpt 2:

Observer : Are there always assignments in PPD courses?

Student 1 : there's always ma'am, because indeed the activities of Spada Dikti have a task menu.

Student 2 : Yes, there are individual assignments and group assignments. Usually it must be uploaded according to the schedule determined by the lecturer.

Observer : Do you complete and submit assignments on time?

Student 1 : Yes, ma'am, you have to be on time, because if it's past the time limit, your presence won't be recorded by the system.

Student 2 : I always upload in the morning on Mother's Day, because I'm afraid that if I upload at night, I will get an error from the Diktinya.

Student 3 : I happen to still have lectures on campus open on Wednesdays, so I often upload assignments near the deadline, usually at night when I arrive at the boarding house.

In the quote above, it can be observed that some students upload their assignments according to the specified time even though they are approaching the deadline, but they still collect them, one of the reasons they upload them at night is because they have class schedules in the morning until the afternoon. has taken place face-to-face is limited (Robbins, K., Orr, R., & Phavaphutanon, 2004).

3.3. Obstacles faced by students and lecturers

It is undeniable that learning in PMM has its own challenges, because learning is carried out online either through the Spada Dikti dashboard or using Google Meet at certain meetings. In learning to use Spada Dikti, the obstacle experienced by students is that they are confused about using the features on the dashboard. Most of them still often ask about where to upload files, where to download modules, then how to reply on the discussion forum.

Meanwhile, from the lecturer's point of view, the lecturer has the responsibility to develop modules or activities that will later become the teaching-learning process (Sesriyani, 2020), at the beginning of the socialization there are still many lecturers who do not know how to upload module files, insert a google meet link, how to post discussion forums, setting student attendance, upload assignment questions, even to open quizzes. However, over time, lecturers began to understand how to create activities on the dashboard.

Google meet is used to strengthen the material (Insani et al., 2021) that the lecturer wants to convey, at the PMM at Unpam, the google meet was held at the first, sixth and thirteenth meetings. In this study, researchers were able to observe learning using google meet twice. So it can be observed that in the two meetings students had a strong argument that they had difficulty joining google meet because the network was unstable, besides that for the same reason they also turned off their camera features, so that learning seemed to only run in one direction (Herwiana & Laili, 2022), the lecturer gave material without having two-way interaction with students.

Another thing that becomes an obstacle in implementing PMM is the lack of socialization between the central committee and the college from which students come (Fuadi & Aswita, 2021). So there was a time when the schedule clashed with their lecture schedule at their home campus (Istiana et al., 2021), but fortunately this can be communicated well by the supervisor to the home university.

3.4. Effectiveness of Dikti Spada Dashboard

The Spada Dikti dashboard has been prepared in such a way as to become a forum for the learning process carried out by PMM. Before the course was opened, the developers had provided in general what features could be used by lecturers to facilitate learning. At the time of socialization, lecturers

were also given the opportunity to conduct trials so that they could directly try to fill in learning activities and ask the committee directly if they experienced technical difficulties (Gunawan, 2022).

During the PMM, the lecturer creates an account using the institution's email and activates it via that email. Both lecturers have the same role, the first lecturer holds the class from meeting one to meeting seven, while the second lecturer in charge of the remaining meetings. Both lecturers will be able to jointly or separately access, edit, add and delete activities on the page.

The menu on the Spada Dikti page is made as simple as possible to make it easier for lecturers to operate it (Hudha et al., 2018). In the initial menu, the name of the course and the name of the lecturer will appear. Lecturers have the flexibility to develop features in it such as; (1) increasing the number of modules/activities, (2) adding quizzes, (3) adding course descriptions, (4) inserting a google meet link, (5) adding learning videos, (6) uploading UTS and UAS questions, (7) setting student attendance, (8) recap of activities, and (9) open discussion forums. In general, the display of the types of activities that can be developed by lecturers during the Spada Dikti period can be seen from the image below.

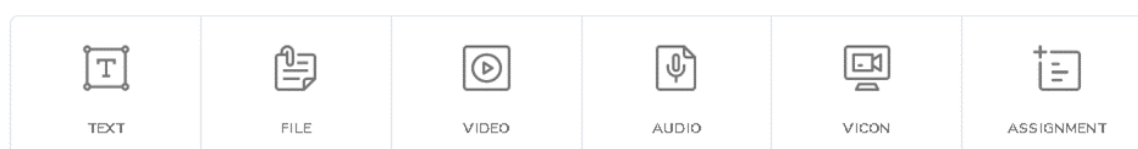


Figure 3. Spada Dikti dashboard activity

3.5. Final Student Grade Conversion

Before the PMM activity begins, the receiving university and the origin university sign an MoU related to the implementation of learning. Students who take the PMM will be converted to the value and weight of the credits following the receiving campus (Kabanbayeva et al., 2019) (Streitwieser, B. T., Le, E., & Rust, 2012). In the Student Development course, the weight of the credits received by students is 3 credits (Robbins, K., Orr, R., & Phavaphutanon, 2004). The score is an accumulation of 10% attendance, 20% assignments, 30% UTS and 40% UAS. The value of PMM students in the Student Development course can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. PMM Value Conversion

Perguruan Tinggi ASAL	NAMA MAHASISWA	HADIR	TUGAS	UTS	UAS
Universitas Bhinneka PGRI	LUKKI NOFITASARI	14	85,00	84,00	83,00
Universitas Bhinneka PGRI	WAFIK AZIZAH	14	85,00	84,00	83,00
Universitas Negeri Makasar	ANISA SYANIA EMPO	14	85,00	84,00	83,00
Universitas Negeri Makasar	ADE NOVIANTY ODE	13	84,00	83,00	82,00
Universitas Bhinneka PGRI	AVITA PUTRI ARDIASIH	14	85,00	84,00	86,00
Universitas Syiah Kuala	WIDYA UTAMI	13	83,00	83,00	82,00
Universitas Negeri Makasar	SRI WAHYUNI	8	60,00	0,00	0,00
Universitas Negeri Makasar	VIRA YUNIAFRIDA	8	60,00	0,00	0,00
Universitas Negeri Makasar	INDAH ARISANTI	8	60,00	0,00	0,00
Universitas Pamulang	MUHAMMAD ALI REZA	12	81,00	80,00	0,00
Universitas Bhinneka PGRI	ROVITA ARUM	14	85,00	83,00	84,00
Universitas Negeri Makasar	DEVALIA WAHID SALSABILAH	9	61,00	70,00	0,00
Universitas Pamulang	FATHURRAHMAN	11	80,00	80,00	80,00
Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof Dr Hamka	DINA YUNIAR RAMADHAN	0	0,00	0	0
Universitas Syiah Kuala	DELA SELVIA	14	85,00	84,00	83,00
Universitas Pamulang	NUGROHO DWI SUSANTO	11	80,00	80,00	80,00

4. CONCLUSION

Knowing how PMM is implemented in private universities in Indonesia, for example, Pamulang University, can provide a real picture of how the quality of learning really depends on all the components in it. Lecturers, infrastructure, media, networks and students have a very strong influence on the success of PMM which is planned as an effort to improve the quality of higher education in Indonesia. Suggestions for researchers who have the same interest in PMM should take a deeper photo of the effectiveness of this program in relation to the quality of education, whether it can be proven to improve the quality of higher education by means of temporary and meaningful exchange of students

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