

The Implementation of MBKM Policy as a Government Communication Effort in Educational Transformation in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The Freedom to Learn-Independent campus (hereafter, MBKM) policy provides opportunities for students to gain broader learning experiences and new competencies through some learning activities. Students are also free to take part in learning events that are not part of their study plan. It is important to follow this policy, so it needs to be shared with everyone who has an interest in it. This study aims to determine the extent of government communication in encouraging the successful implementation of the MBKM policy. This study used a quantitative approach, and the population was the MBKM unit (units or sections that facilitate students for MBKM activities) and students involved in the MBKM program, with a total of 100 respondents. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Data were collected by distributing questionnaires. Data were then tabulated and processed using SPSS. The results showed that government communication in the implementation of the MBKM Policy was procedural (with a mean value of 4.97) and accountable based on government communication procedures (with a mean of 4,96). The implementation of the MBKM policy was to provide benefits for students in terms of creativity and innovation, as demonstrated by the implemented MBKM programs. Indeed, the implementation of this policy faced some weaknesses in that the government communication regarding MBKM is not fully on target and lacks efficacy (with a mean value of 3.00). It means that some policy implementers have not fully implemented the policies and some students are less interested in being involved in MBKM programs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology has made significant strides in promoting quality and morally upright human resources through initiatives like the Freedom to Learn-Independent Campus (MBKM) policy. The goal of this policy is to broaden the horizons of both students and professors in order to foster intellectual growth, professional development, and moral superiority. The MBKM programme is the government's way of getting its graduates ready for the social, cultural, workplace, and technological shifts that have come with the 4.0 industrial revolution. The skills taught in schools today must be improved so that students can keep up with the times. Graduates of today's universities must be prepared to succeed in the dynamic workplace of tomorrow (Rodiyah, 2021). The primary objective of MBKM is to inspire students to acquire a breadth and depth of knowledge relevant to the workplace.

For instance, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology mandates that all universities and colleges implement their own student exchange programmes, each in accordance with its own resources and capabilities. In light of the MBKM Policy created by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology's Directorate General of Education, the University has formed its own student exchange programme. One of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be achieved is to provide opportunities for student activities outside of campus, such as student exchange, as stated in Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 754/P/2020 concerning Key Performance Indicators (IKU) of State Universities and Higher Education Service Institutions within the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. It is an opportunity to audit classes at institutions in other countries or the United States as part of an official exchange programme (Insani et al., 2021). As evidenced by the MBKM initiatives, this points to a government-initiated shift in the educational landscape.

The MBKM programme provides academic institutions with independence from bureaucracy, liberates professors from tangled bureaucracy, and allows students to pursue their own academic interests. This demonstrates the ministry's efforts to reform Indonesia's educational system on behalf of the government. This shift is implemented across a variety of pedagogical facets with the goal of stimulating students' originality and originality. Educators, legislators, students, and parents all have their say on the MBKM policy (Dasrimin, 2021; Febriyani & Februariyanti, 2023; Pipin & Kurniawan, 2022; Chelsya & Wirianata, 2022). This indicates that not all MBKM policies are supported by the academic community or the general population. Both proponents and detractors of the MBKM policy have voiced their opinions on it (Purwanti, 2021; Rahman, 2022). The MBKM curriculum policy has widespread support in the academic community.

In implementing the MBKM policy, it is important to find out how far tertiary institutions have understood this policy and how students perceive and understand it. A study by Krishnapatria (2021b) regarding the implementation of MBKM revealed that this policy had problems in terms of administration and partnership with external parties. Thus, it requires communication. This MBKM policy was born out of the government's political process, as every time there has been a change in officials in the ministry, the education policy has also changed. This shows that every policy has a political element in it. Therefore, it is necessary to see how the government, through its political communication, can smooth the implementation of the MBKM policy. The pros and cons of this MBKM policy indirectly indicate that this policy has political elements so that not all groups accept it. The current MBKM policy indicates that the government is trying to transform education in Indonesia. Andari et al. (2021) argue that the success of MBKM requires institutions to formulate guidelines for the implementation of the MBKM program.

Implementing educational transformation is not easy because the culture of education in Indonesia has taken root, for example, the implementation of the MBKM policy in tertiary institutions. Considering this phenomenon, this policy is considered very complicated for some parties, so it arises ignorance in its implementation. The MBKM policy has some problems in its implementation, both

from lecturers and students, as well as partners (Agus & Aisah, 2021; Asiah, 2021; Bhakti et al., 2022; Hermanto et al., 2021; Ningrum et al., 2021; Puspitasari & Nugroho, 2021; Santoso et al., 2022).

The implementation of the MBKM policy at the university is perceived as highly intricate by certain groups, leading to a lack of awareness regarding its execution. Certain educators may express discomfort or unease towards the MBKM programmes. Panjaitan et al. (2022) reveal that the MBKM policy demands that learning can be carried out anywhere, not limited to classrooms, laboratory rooms, and libraries, but can be done in villages, industries, workplaces, research centres, or even in the community. This is not usually done by some lecturers and is considered complicated. Therefore, this present study aims to determine the extent of government communication in encouraging the successful implementation of the MBKM policy using quantitative methods with descriptive statistics. In this case, government communication refers to Howlett et al. (2010) that government communication has two dimensions, namely activities or communications that are oriented towards manipulating policy actors to achieve goals and policy processes or cycles that focus on different communication tools that are accountable and have efficacy. Indeed, a successful university needs to make changes to carry out the learning process better in the future by focusing on the students' soft skills in the form of communication, responsibility, and others (Zehr, 1998). Besides, the MBKM policy is implemented as the learning process in the tertiary institutions in Indonesia has not fully capable of producing graduates who are responsive to changes in the real world of work (Hunkins & Ornstein, 2016). This study concerning the implementation of the MBKM policy is expected to positively impact increasing knowledge, skills, innovation, creativity, capacity, personality, and the development of students' hard skills and soft skills, as well as increasing lecturer's capacity.

2. METHODS

This study uses quantitative methods. This study focuses on government communication issues at University which further involves students through their perceptions of communication in the implementation of MBKM policy. The population of this study was MBKM units and students in 10 faculties. The determination of the sample used a purposive sampling technique with the criteria of MBKM managers or units and students participating in one of the MBKM programs. This study involved 5 lecturers in the MBKM unit and 5 students in the MBKM program in each faculty, with a total of 100 respondents.

Data were collected from observations, questionnaires, and documentation. This study involved stakeholders, namely students who were given questionnaires. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques based on the mean value obtained from the results of statistical tests using SPSS. The formula to get the mean value can be seen below.

$$\text{Interval} = \frac{\text{Highest value} - \text{Lowest value}}{\text{Number of interval classes}} = \frac{5 - 1}{5} = 0,8 \quad (1)$$

Table 1. Interpretation criteria of mean values.

Criteria	Scale	Mean Values
Very high	5	4.20 – 5.00
High	4	3.40 – 4.19
Moderate	3	2.60 – 3.39
Low	2	1.80 – 2.59
Very low	1	1.00 – 1.79

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to determine the extent of government communication in encouraging the successful implementation of the MBKM policy. In this case, government communication refers to Howlett et al. (2010) that government communication has two dimensions, namely activities or communications that are oriented towards manipulating policy actors to achieve goals and policy processes or cycles that focus on different communication tools that are accountable and have efficacy. Implementing MBKM in many tertiary institutions raises pros and cons so that many perceive this policy as complicated. The descriptive statistics results based on the respondents' mean value are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Results of Descriptive Statistical Test of Government Communication Variables.

No.	Dimension	Indicator	Item	Question	N	Mean	Criteria
1.	Activities or communications that are oriented towards manipulating policy actors to achieve goals	Policy tools	Q1	The MBKM policy implementer carries out the policy procedurally	100	4.97	Very high
			Q2	The procedural communication carried out comes from the ministry's information	100	4.09	High
			Q3	Communication is carried out institutionally between universities and ministries	100	3.09	Moderate
		Policy instrument	Q4	Communication is based on direct information from the government	100	3.07	Moderate
			Q5	Information obtained from direct sources influences actors and policy objectives	100	4.05	High
2.	Policy processes or cycles that focus on different communication tools that are accountable and have efficacy	Accountability	Q6	Government communication is directed toward accountable policy results	100	4.96	Very high
			On target (efficacy)	Q7	Government communication regarding MBKM is right on target and has efficacy	100	3.00

Source: Data processed, 2023.

Table 2 shows that all question items obtained various responses. The highest mean value was item number 1 (Q1), with a mean value of 4.97, followed by number 6 (Q6) with a mean value of 4.96. It indicates that the government communication by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology as the implementers of the MBKM policy is carried out procedurally and promotes accountability. This means that government communication is directed at accountable policy outcomes. However, a question received low responses, for example, item number 7 (Q7) which indicates that government communication regarding MBKM is not fully on target and lacks efficacy. This can also be seen from the responses to policy targets which tend to show rejection as the implementation is

complicated and out of the comfort zone of both lecturers and students. Many polemics produce pros and cons in implementing the MBKM policy at various universities. Indeed, the implementation of MBKM is an attempt to change or transform education in Indonesia.

MBKM is an autonomous and flexible form of learning in higher education to create learning cultures that are innovative, non-restrictive, and in accordance with the needs of students (Sopiansyah et al., 2022). This freedom and autonomy is a challenge for the Study Programs in implementing the MBKM policy so that the implications of the MBKM policy in increasing the potential and self-development of students can be achieved as expected.

The government has carried out some policies and studies together with universities to obtain the relevance of teaching, training, and education in responding to the development of the world of work and time (Krishnapatria, 2021; Meke et al., 2021; Rohiyatussakinah, 2021). The Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 3 of 2020 concerning Higher Education standards regarding MBKM Policy provides students with the freedom to study at universities as a form of learning innovation in order to obtain quality learning (Sakdiah & Maryam Jamilah, 2022; Sofa et al., 2022). The independent learning curriculum is expected to make the world of education carefree, to encourage students to master useful sciences to enter the world of work or industry and to solve social life problems (Kholik et al., 2022).

Implementing the MBKM curriculum will impact students' hard and soft skills (Suastika et al., 2022a, 2022b). Besides, the application of the MBKM curriculum poses a challenge for tertiary institutions in providing innovation, creativity, capacity, personality, and student development needs, as well as developing independence in seeking and finding knowledge through realities and field dynamics such as ability requirements, real problems, social interaction, collaboration, self-management, performance demands, targets and achievements (Kodrat, 2021; Nurhayati et al., 2022). The MBKM program is an implementation of a collaborative learning approach. In this approach, students need to master four competencies, namely the ability to think critically and solve problems, communication, collaboration and creativity, and innovation. It means that the MBKM policy reinforces for students to enter the world of work. This indicates that the educational transformation has been carried out in Indonesia.

The implementation of the MBKM policy does not run smoothly because of the pros and cons. This means that this policy has a political element that must be obeyed. This policy is very new, but its implementation hastened so that it seems forced. It even buried the previous policies that had been implemented. This means that this policy is carried out because of political pressure that must be highlighted in the transformation of education. Although this is not necessarily true, it is clear that this policy is contrary to the policies of the previous Minister of Education and Culture. The MBKM policy has good intentions in transforming education, especially in creating and producing creative and innovative students who are ready to enter the world of work.

4. CONCLUSION

Government communication regarding the implementation of MBKM has been carried out based on government communication procedures that are procedural and accountable. The MBKM policy aims to provide benefits for students in terms of creativity and innovation, as demonstrated by the implemented MBKM programs. The implementation of this policy has some weaknesses in that government communication regarding MBKM is not fully on target and lacks efficacy. This means that some policy implementers have not fully implemented the policies and some students are less interested in MBKM programs. Meanwhile, it cannot generalize student interest. Therefore, future studies need to examine educational policies that are more comprehensive and involve many universities to provide better input for the university and ministry.

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