

Determining Cultural Character Approach at Aufa Royhan University: Independent Learning Program-Campus Environment

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ABSTRACT

The Independent Learning Campus-Independent Program or *Program Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) has become one of the government's focuses to overcome current problems in higher education, namely the absorption of labor and the relevance of graduates to the industrial field. Aufa Royhan University in Padangsidempuan City is one of the private universities that has implemented the MBKM program in several aspects during education year 2021. This research intended to determine evidence-based implementation of independent learning program-campus in Aufa Royhan University. The research method was a descriptive survey by base population. The research subjects were 513 people. It was found that from all the questions given to lecturers, educators and undergraduate students, only few people understood about MBKM policies and the MBKM curriculum documents that were still in draft form.

KEYWORDS: Cultural Character Approach, Independent Learning Program, Independent Campus

INTRODUCTION

The lack of labor absorption from university graduates still become one of the most problematic discussions in industrial work field. Thus, the government tends to create mainstay program called The Independent Learning Program-Independent Campus or *Program Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (hereinafter referred to as MBKM). It is one of the government's tactical ways in overcoming current problems in the world of higher

education, namely employment and the relevance of graduates to the industrial world. MBKM held by Kemendikbudristek offers several programs, namely Certified Internships, Independent Student Exchanges, Teaching Campuses and Certified Independent Study Projects created by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2020 (Kemendikbud, 2021a).

With the MBKM program, students can take courses outside the study program for three semesters, and off campus for two semesters.

Student exchanges, internships, research, and humanitarian projects are some of the activities that can be followed in the MBKM program (Kemendikbud, 2021b). In implementing the MBKM policies, the learning process in higher education needs to be more autonomous and flexible (Supatmi et al., 2022). The key of perpetuity process is to create a learning culture that is innovative, unfettered, and in accordance with the needs of higher education institutions. In this case, the study program seeks to develop a curriculum by adjusting to the times and producing alumni who are ready to work in accordance with the expected learning outcomes (Pangruruk et al., 2022).

Students are expected to be able to experience firsthand the ecosystem of the world of work so that it will become a provision for their abilities in living the world of work in the future. This is a form of transformation in the world of education that the government wants, namely the quality of graduates who are relevant to the world of work and are highly competent and have high performance characters and work culture so that they are able to compete both in terms of digital literacy and information literacy (Abna et al., 2022).

Aufa Royhan University in Padangsidempuan City is a private university in North Sumatra which has changed the shape of a high school since 2019, which has 2 faculties, namely the faculty of health (8 study programs) and the faculty of Business and Applied Education (2 study programs). Currently, it has supported the MBKM Program by implementing 1 MBKM program in Teaching Campus where there are 16 students (14 public health study programs and 2 nursing) and 2 lecturers (1 nursing study program and 1 fashion design study program).

The utilization of MBKM at Aufa Royhan University has not been implemented in its entirety. This study is needed regarding the implementation of MBKM at Aufa Royhan University. The determination of graduates from Aufa Royhan University who will be ready to work and create jobs is necessary to track the alumni record. Thus, graduates can have a competent work and culture of technological and information literacy.

The purpose of this study was to find out the evidence based implementation of the MBKM program with a cultural character approach at

Aufa Royhan University in Padangsidempuan City in 2021. The results of the study were based on the activity of Aufa Royhan University in Padangsidempuan City in implementing MBKM both programs from the center and independently.

METHOD

The target of this research was the activity of Aufa Royhan University in Padangsidempuan City in the implementation of MBKM both programs from campus or from the center. The strategy to achieve this was to conduct seminars related to the implementation of MBKM in study programs and faculties. The parties involved in this research were students, staffs, and lecturers from all study programs and faculties at Aufa Royhan University in Padangsidempuan City. There are 10 study programs at Aufa Royhan University, namely Postgraduate Public Health, Public Health Sciences, Bachelor of Nursing, Bachelor of Midwifery, Diploma of Midwifery, Bachelor of Pharmacy, Bachelor of Entrepreneurship, Bachelor of Fashion Design, Nursing Profession, and Midwifery Profession.

The research was conducted in several stages, namely the preliminary stage, data analysis, data interpretation and drawing conclusions. The method in this study used a descriptive survey research method base population, with the aim of looking at the proportion of data distribution of students, education staff and lecturers who were the research subjects (Sugiyono, 2010). Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire to the research sample totaling 1721. Data from the evidence-based survey results from the implementation of MBKM were analyzed using descriptive methods.

RESULTS

The MBKM implementation survey was conducted at Aufa Royhan University in Padangsidempuan City with the target of lecturers and education staff and undergraduate students. Based on the results of data analysis, the implementation of MBKM is divided into three participant segments.

Lecturer’s Awareness on MBKM Implementation

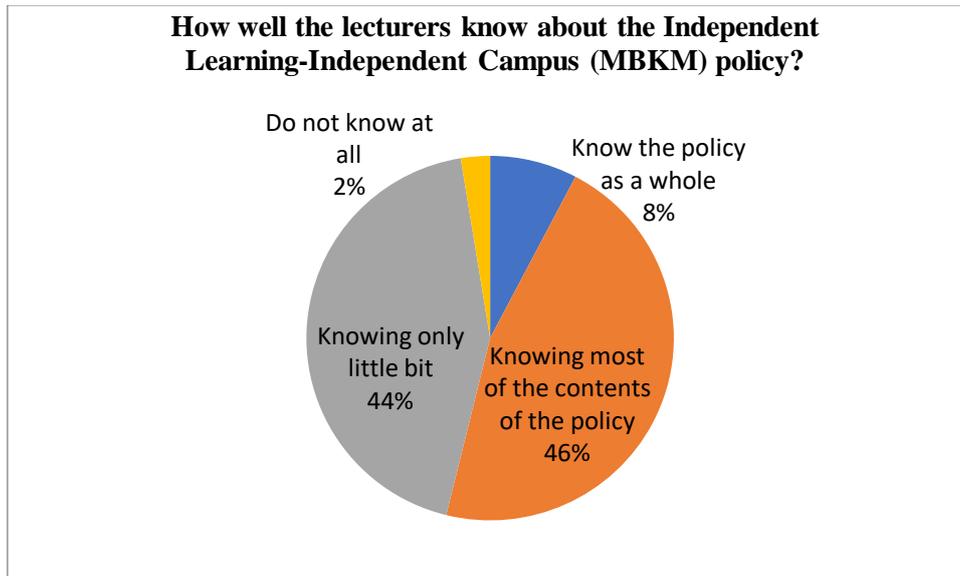


Figure 1. Lecturer’s Awareness about the MBKM policy at Aufa Royhan University in 2021

Based on the diagram above, it shows that out of 39 lecturers, there are 46% who know most of

the policy contents regarding MBKM, 44% know little about MBKM, and there are still 2% who do not know about the MBKM program itself.

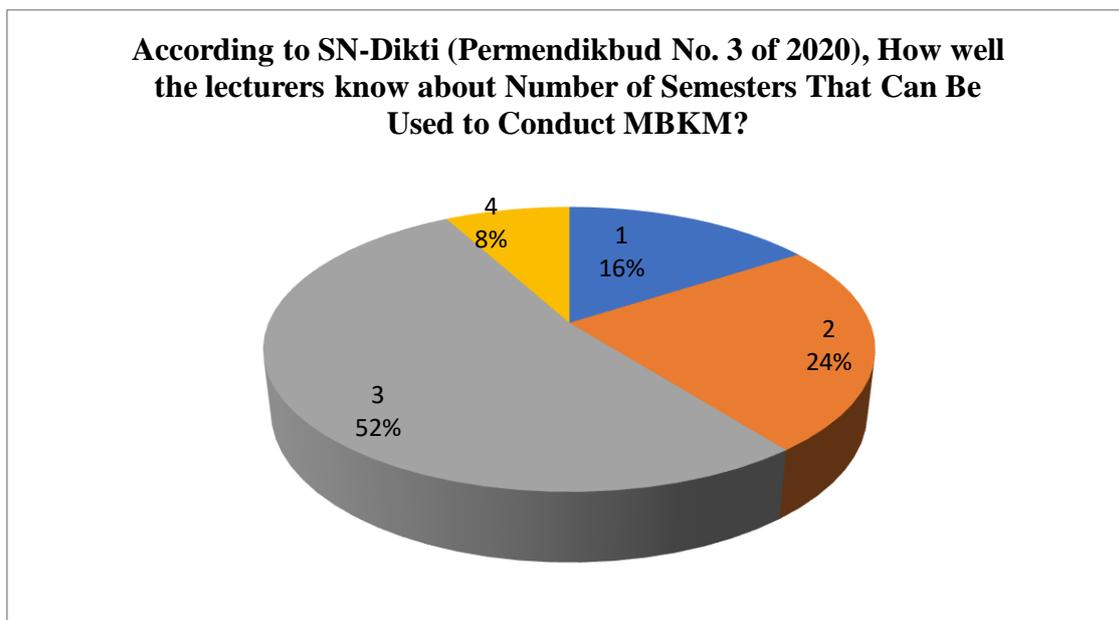


Figure 2. Frequency Distribution of Number of Semesters That Can Be Used to Conduct MBKM at Aufa Royhan University in 2021

Based on the diagram above, it shows that from 39 lecturers there are 52% who say 3 semesters can be used to do MBKM outside campus and

24% say 2 semesters can be used to do MBKM outside campus.

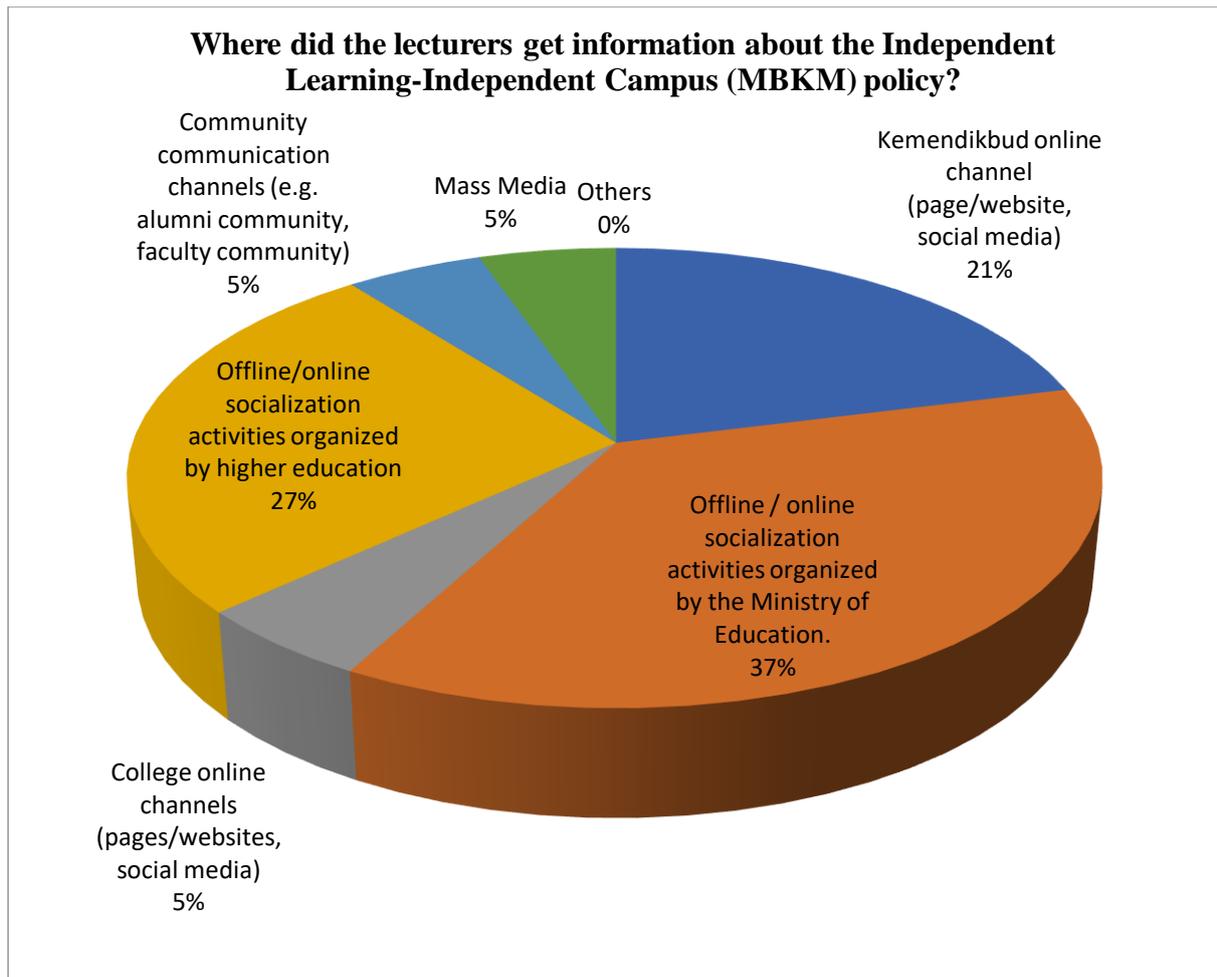


Figure 3. Frequency Distribution of Information Sources Regarding the MBKM Program at Aufa Royhan University in Padangsidimpuan City in 2021

Based on the diagram above, it shows that of 39 Lecturers the highest percentage of information sources for the MBKM Program is from offline/online socialization activities organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture, which is 37%, then information through offline/online socialization activities organized by universities

is 27% and the lowest from the mass media and communication channels of lecturers 5% each.

College Staff’s Awareness on MBKM Implementation

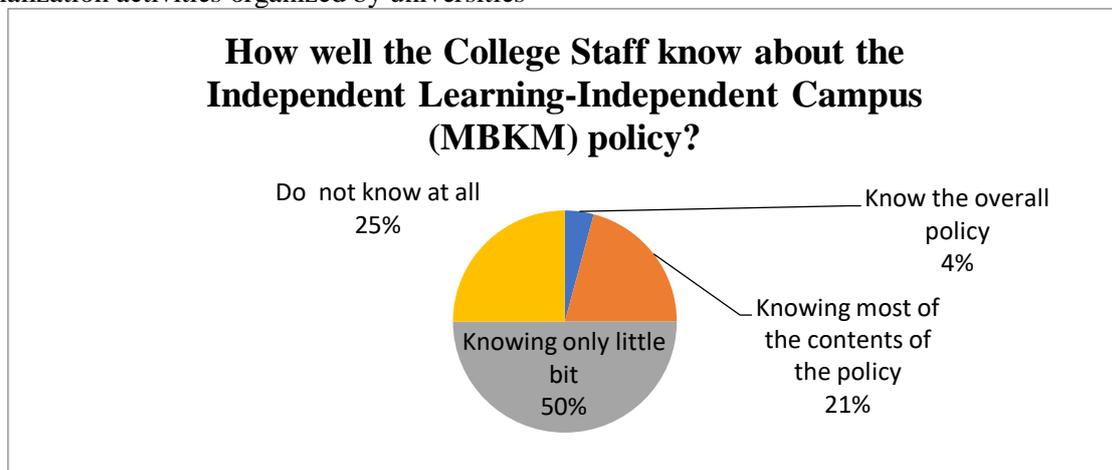


Figure 4. College Staff’s Awareness about the MBKM policy at Aufa Royhan University in 2021

Based on the diagram above, it shows that of the 24 educators there are 50% who know a little about MBKM policies, 24% who do not know about the MBKM program itself.

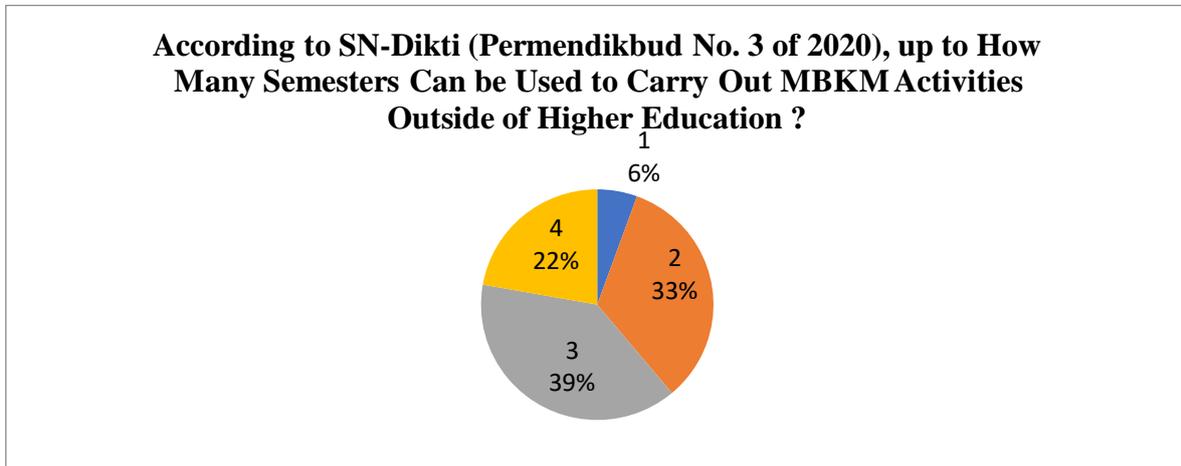


Figure 5. Frequency Distribution of Knowledge of College Staff according to SN-Dikti (Permendikbud No. 3 Of 2020), up to How Many Semesters Can be Used to Carry Out MBKM Activities Outside of Higher Education in 2021

Based on the diagram above, it shows that of the 24 educators there are 39% who say 3 semesters can be used to do MBKM outside campus and

22% who say 24 semesters can be used to do MBKM outside campus.

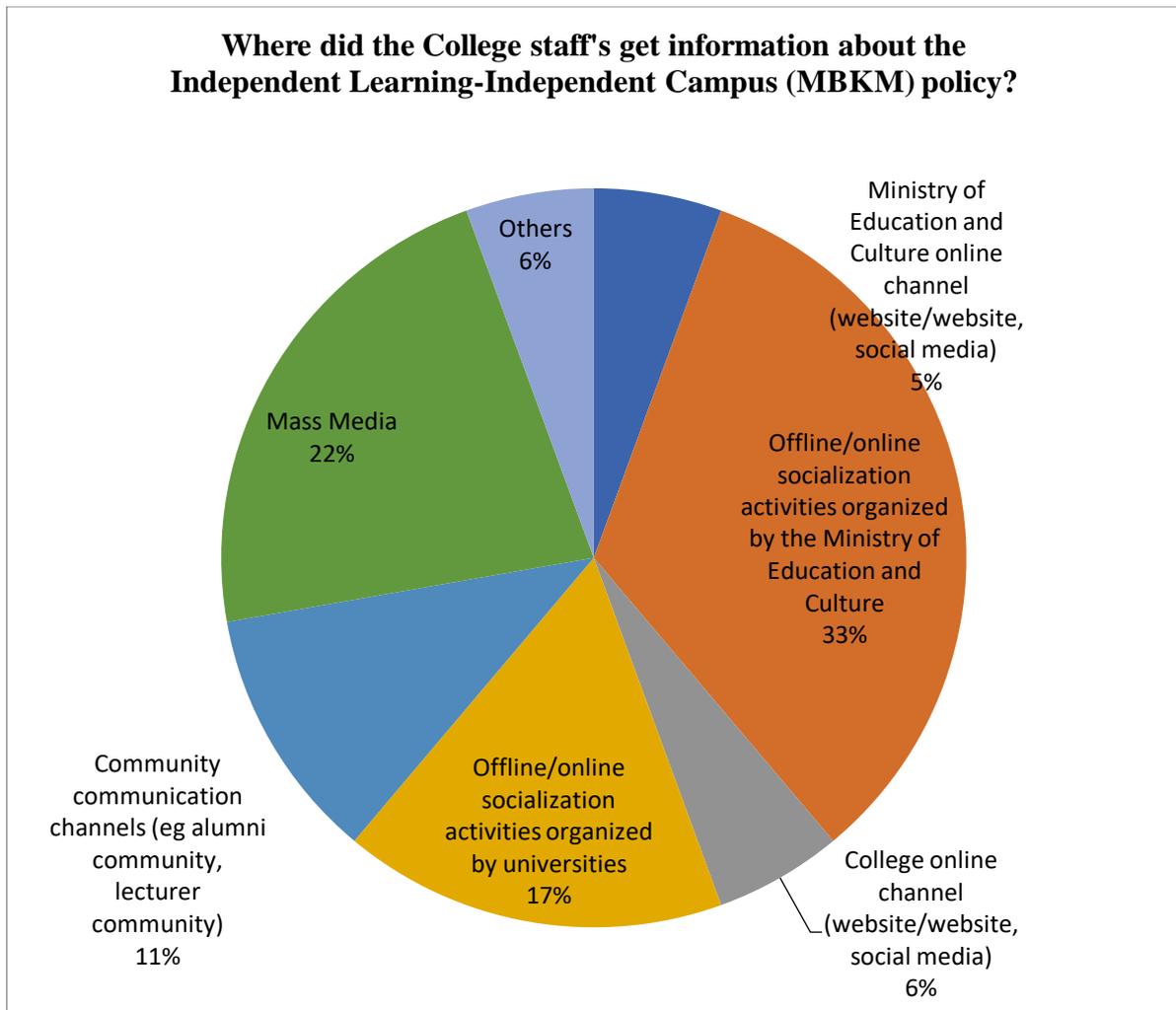


Figure 6. Frequency Distribution of Knowledge of College Staff About Where to Get Information About the Policy of MBKM in 2021

Based on the diagram above, it shows that of the 24 educators the highest percentage of information sources for the MBKM Program is from offline/online socialization activities organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture, which is 33%, then information through

mass media is 22% and the lowest is from college socialization 1%.

Student's Awareness on MBKM Implementation

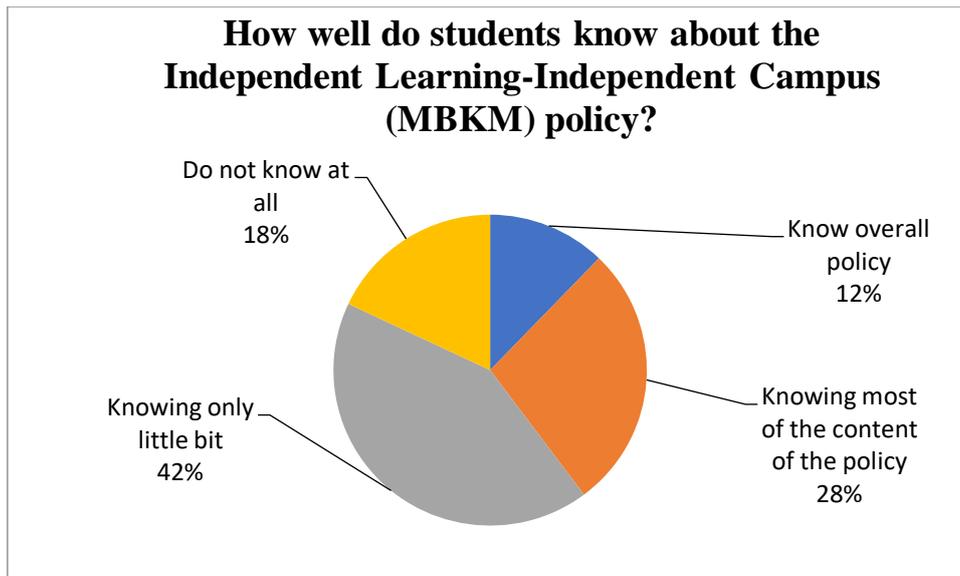


Figure 7. Student’s Awareness about the MBKM policy at Aufa Royhan University in 2021

Based on the diagram above, it was found that the students' knowledge about the policy of Merdeka Learning – Merdeka Campus, the majority knew a little as much as 42% and the

minority knew the policy as a whole as much as 12%.

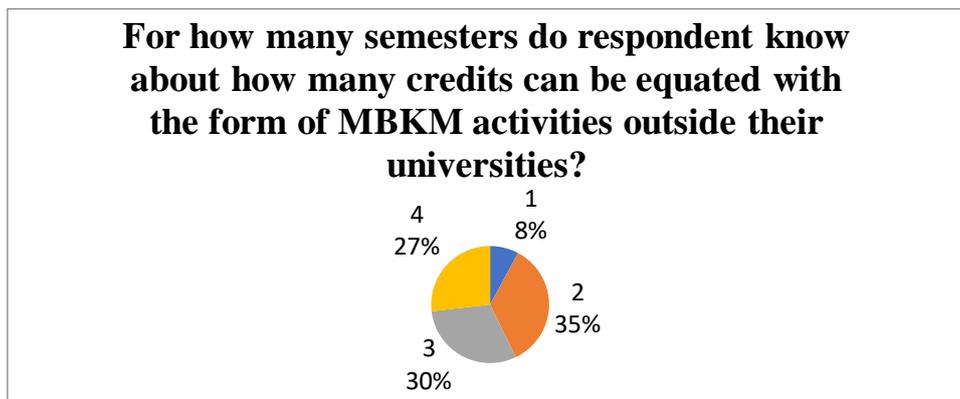


Figure 8. Distribution of Frequency in Learning Semester to Accredited as MBKM Program Outside the Campus

Based on the diagram above, it is found that the number of credits that can be equated with MBKM activities outside of universities, the majority of respondents answered 2 credits as

much as 35% and a minority of 1 credits as much as 8%.

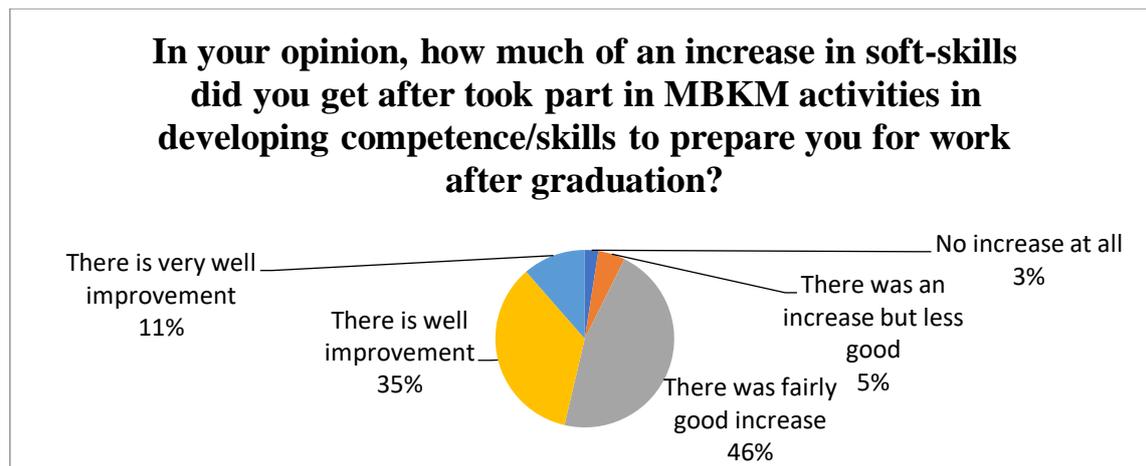


Figure 9. Frequency Distribution of Respondents Regarding Opinions on the Improvement in Soft-skills Obtained After Participating in MBKM Activities in Developing Competence/Skills as a Provision for Work After Graduation

Based on the table above, it is found that how much is the increase in soft skills obtained after participating in MBKM activities in developing competence/skills as a provision for work after graduation, the majority answered that there was a fairly good increase of 46% and the minority did not increase at all by 3%.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained after conducting a data survey related to the implementation of MBKM on lecturers, education staff and undergraduate students at Aufa Royhan University in Padangsidempuan City in 2021 were contented. There were still few who aware and know and even understand about MBKM policies that are still in draft form for the MBKM curriculum document. The wider socialization is needed to overcome this obstacle in further implementation. The evidence-based data from questionnaires also proposed that students were the most who did not aware about MBKM program and policies.

It is in line with the previous research. In Aceh private campuses, the obstacles of socializing MBKM were varied, starting from limited access on campus information, the lack of digital literacy held by students, and unwilling support from the staff to campaign about MBKM, specifically during pandemic era (Fuadi & Aswita, 2021). The other study also found the difference between health and non-health study

program in implementing MBKM. The health study program is more likely to have better awareness on spreading MBKM policy and program than the campaign hold by non-health study program (Sulistiyani et al., 2022).

Based on the findings in Aufa Royhan University, it is necessary to follow up to support the achievement of Main Indicator Number 7 of the Directorate General of Higher Education Research and Technology. The decision makers at Aufa Royhan University must issue a policy on MBKM to every aspect of individual in the campus itself. It will rise to increased knowledge and awareness of all lecturers, education staff and students about MBKM. The number of lecturers and students who are participating in MBKM activities will also increase. Then, the producing MBKM curriculum documents implementing MBKM activities for the Kemenristekdikti program or independently from campus will follow. Study in Palopo found that adaptation of MBKM is focused on the concept of a model of curriculum development for study programs and implementation of MBKM activity programs. The academic culture in lecturers, staffs, and students were reflected on how strong their awareness of MBKM (Baharuddin, 2021).

The curriculum development model includes the design of MBKM policies in universities, the design of standard operational standards for the implementation of MBKM, the academic cooperation design and identification of program support resource needs (Andari et al.,

2021). Based on a social and economic perspective, the MBKM was launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture to improve the competence of graduates, both soft skills and hard skills, to be more prepared and relevant to the needs of the times, preparing graduates as future leaders of the nation with excellent and personality (Riyadi et al., 2022).

Experiential learning programs with flexible pathways are expected to facilitate students to develop their potential according to their passions and talents (Werdiningsih & Setiawan, 2022). In addition, if the MBKM will be implemented in all Universities in Indonesia, it can create a link and match with the business world and the industrial world, as well as to prepare students for the world of work from the start so that when students graduate, they will be ready to work or create their own business. and will automatically reduce unemployment in Indonesia. One of the characteristics of a developed country is a low unemployment rate. Study in gathering industrial policy of MBKM shows that the industrial factors in MBKM policy are highlighted and strengthened by giving students the right to take a program and doing a credit transfer at the end of the program (Kodrat, 2021). The university and study program curriculum is focused on the need for the business and industrial world (Hakim et al., 2022).

Elementary schools and secondary schools are other sectors that have contributed to the MBKM where one of the activities of the program is the Teaching Campus and is one of the menus of activities to facilitate the technology champions of future leaders to provide space for ready early to enter life. The outcome is not just getting ready to graduate, but before the students are ready to graduate (Fuadi, 2021; Laga et al., 2022; Nona et al., 2022).

This Teaching Campus will provide students with the context of real situations in the field. The fields are in schools, in the form of elementary schools and junior high schools. In a field that is very open to developing student potential, not only teaching but also other activities to see the real school, the situation of our education world around. So that later a sense of social sensitivity, leadership, and so on will grow.

CONCLUSION

Only few people from lecturers, staffs, and students who were aware of the implementation of MBKM policies that are still in draft form for MBKM curriculum documents. The obstacle in this study is related to the condition of the lectures being carried out online, causing researchers to evaluate filling out questionnaires because students from Aufa Royhan University in Padangsidempuan City come from areas where network conditions are not all good.

SUGGESTION

The campus needs to create campaign of awareness to socialize MBKM policy on increasing the knowledge of lecturers, staffs, and students related to MBKM. The seminar related to policy of MBKM and the implementation of all MBKM program activities are necessary. Further research with wider participants who willingly take part in the questionnaires and interviews is highly recommended. Additional time for filling out the questionnaire will also do so.

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