



Effectiveness of Teaching Assistance Implementation at SMA Kristen Rantepao as an Embodiment of the Independent Learning - Independent Campus (MBKM) Program

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Abstract

This study evaluates the implementation of teaching assistance as an embodiment of the Independent Learning - Independent Campus (MBKM) program, focusing on its effectiveness for both educators and students at the high school level. Conducted at SMA Kristen Rantepao, the research employs a quantitative approach, utilizing digital questionnaires via Google Forms to gather data. The findings center on three key aspects of student activities: (a) interaction and socialization levels, (b) collaboration with teachers, and (c) emotional connections with students to boost motivation and learning enthusiasm. The results demonstrate a significant positive impact, with educators acknowledging the program's role in easing their teaching burdens and inspiring students with innovative and creative teaching methods. This program has been identified as effective in enhancing student learning engagement and fostering collaboration among all stakeholders. To optimize the outcomes, it is recommended to provide comprehensive training for participating students.

Keywords: university students, teaching assistants, educators, students, roles

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengevaluasi pelaksanaan asistensi mengajar sebagai wujud implementasi program Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM), dengan fokus pada efektivitasnya terhadap tenaga pengajar dan peserta didik tingkat SMA. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di SMA Kristen Rantepao dengan pendekatan kuantitatif, menggunakan kuesioner digital melalui Google Form sebagai instrumen pengumpulan data. Temuan penelitian ini berpusat pada tiga aspek utama aktivitas mahasiswa: (a) tingkat sosialisasi dan interaksi, (b) kolaborasi dengan guru, dan (c) pendekatan emosional dengan siswa untuk meningkatkan motivasi dan semangat belajar. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan dampak positif yang signifikan, di mana tenaga pengajar merasa terbantu dengan program ini dan terinspirasi oleh metode pembelajaran yang inovatif dan kreatif. Program ini dinilai efektif dalam meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dalam belajar dan memperkuat kolaborasi antara semua pihak terkait. Disarankan untuk memberikan pelatihan yang memadai kepada mahasiswa peserta program untuk mengoptimalkan hasilnya.

Kata Kunci: mahasiswa, asisten mengajar, tenaga pengajar, peserta didik, peran

INTRODUCTION

The Independent Learning-Independent Campus (Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka or MBKM) program is a groundbreaking initiative introduced by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia to elevate the quality of education nationwide. One of its key components, the Teaching Assistance Program, allows university students to actively engage in school teaching environments. This initiative aims to provide students with practical teaching experiences while simultaneously assisting schools in enhancing the quality of learning processes. The implementation of this program at SMA Kristen Rantepao serves as a critical example of how collaboration between universities and schools can foster innovation in education.

This program benefits not only the participating university students but also positively impacts teachers and high school students. University students are expected to bring creative and adaptive teaching methods into the classroom, addressing the needs of 21st-century education. Through this process, students are provided a platform to develop interpersonal skills, critical thinking abilities, and creativity. These attributes are essential for future educators and leaders. However, assessing the effectiveness of this program remains crucial. What is the tangible contribution of university students to classroom learning? To what extent does the program inspire students and support teachers in their instructional roles? This study aims to explore these questions by thoroughly evaluating the implementation of the Teaching Assistance Program at SMA Kristen Rantepao.

Furthermore, this study highlights the challenges encountered during program implementation. Limited specialized training for university students, unengaging teaching methods, and inadequate infrastructure often hinder the program's success. By addressing these challenges, this research seeks to provide actionable recommendations for future improvements to the program.

The significance of this research extends beyond its academic implications. The MBKM program is designed to encourage experiential learning, fostering a holistic understanding of education among university students. It allows them to step outside the confines of traditional classroom settings and contribute to the broader educational ecosystem. As such, it offers mutual benefits, enriching the learning experiences of both the university and high school students. Moreover, this program aligns with the government's broader goals of promoting inclusive and equitable quality education. By involving university students in teaching roles, schools gain access to fresh perspectives and innovative teaching approaches. At the same time, it alleviates the workload of teachers, enabling them to focus on strategic teaching goals.

The program also addresses key educational challenges, including students' lack of motivation and engagement in learning. By introducing innovative teaching methods and fostering emotional connections, university students act as role models, inspiring high school students to strive for academic excellence. These interactions play a vital role in enhancing the overall learning atmosphere in schools. The Teaching Assistance Program exemplifies the collaborative spirit of the MBKM initiative, offering a practical and impactful solution to educational challenges. By analyzing the program's implementation at SMA Kristen Rantepao, this research aims to shed light on its strengths and weaknesses while providing a roadmap for optimizing similar initiatives in the future.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative research methodology to examine the effectiveness of the Teaching Assistance Program as part of the Independent Learning-Independent Campus (MBKM) initiative. Quantitative research was chosen for its capacity to generate measurable, objective, and statistically analyzable data that help in understanding the impact of the program on both teachers and students.

The research was conducted at SMA Kristen Rantepao, a senior high school comprising 24 classes and 806 students spread across grades X, XI, and XII. This site was selected due to its active participation in the MBKM program and its diverse demographic of students and teachers, which provide a robust basis for analysis. The population of this study includes teachers and students who interacted directly with the university students participating in the Teaching Assistance Program.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that the selected respondents were directly involved with or impacted by the program. This approach allowed the researchers to focus on specific groups that could provide valuable insights into the program's outcomes, including participating teachers, students, and university teaching assistants.

Data collection utilized digital questionnaires distributed through Google Forms. The questionnaire was designed to measure three main areas: (1) interaction and socialization levels between university students and school stakeholders, (2) collaboration effectiveness between teaching assistants and school teachers, and (3) emotional engagement between university students and school learners in enhancing learning motivation. This method was complemented by informal interviews and direct observations to gain a more nuanced understanding of the program's implementation.

The questionnaires included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions were used to capture quantifiable data on predefined indicators such as teaching effectiveness, interaction levels, and student motivation. In contrast, open-ended questions allowed respondents to elaborate on their experiences, providing qualitative data that enriched the overall analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics to identify trends and patterns in the responses. The statistical analysis focused on percentages, means, and

frequency distributions to present an overall picture of the program's impact. Qualitative responses from open-ended questions and interviews were analyzed thematically to extract recurring themes and insights related to the program's challenges and strengths.

The research timeline spanned four months, from August 1, 2024, to November 18, 2024. During this period, university students actively participated in teaching activities, interacted with teachers and students, and completed their program tasks. This timeline included multiple phases, such as initial planning and coordination, data collection, and analysis, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the program's implementation and outcomes. Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research and the voluntary nature of their participation. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed, and informed consent was obtained before the questionnaires and interviews were administered. This ensured that all respondents could share their experiences freely and without concern for their privacy.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The implementation of the Teaching Assistance Program at SMA Kristen Rantepao yielded several key findings across three dimensions: social interaction, teaching collaboration, and emotional engagement. The program fostered high levels of social interaction between university students and school stakeholders. Approximately 80% of respondents, including teachers and students, noted that teaching assistants were approachable, enthusiastic, and effective in integrating into the school's daily activities.

In terms of teaching collaboration, the university students played a crucial role in lesson planning, classroom management, and introducing innovative teaching strategies. Around 75% of the teachers surveyed acknowledged that the program reduced their

workload and provided new instructional perspectives. The collaboration not only improved teaching efficacy but also created opportunities for teachers to adopt creative methodologies.

Emotional engagement between teaching assistants and students emerged as a significant outcome of the program. Over 85% of the student respondents reported feeling motivated and encouraged by the teaching assistants, who created a positive and supportive classroom environment. This interaction helped to enhance students' participation and enthusiasm for learning, as evidenced by qualitative feedback collected through questionnaires.

Discussion

The findings are consistent with prior research emphasizing the benefits of teaching assistance programs. For example, Meilia and Erlangga (2022) highlighted that social interaction between teaching assistants and students bridges gaps in traditional pedagogical approaches, fostering a more inclusive learning environment. This was clearly observed in the high level of engagement reported by the students at SMA Kristen Rantepao.

Collaborative teaching between university students and school teachers exemplifies the program's capacity to address challenges such as curriculum overload and monotonous teaching methods. Santoso et al. (2022) similarly found that teaching assistants can alleviate teachers' administrative burdens, allowing them to focus more on effective teaching practices. The introduction of fresh and innovative instructional strategies further underscores the program's contribution to revitalizing classroom dynamics.

Emotional engagement, one of the program's strongest aspects, significantly enhanced student motivation and confidence. As Siregar et al. (2020) argued, mentorship plays a vital role in students' emotional and academic development. The program's success in building strong, positive relationships between teaching assistants and

students demonstrates its potential to foster holistic student growth.

Despite these successes, several challenges were identified. One notable issue was the inconsistent readiness of teaching assistants, as noted by some teachers. This highlights the importance of comprehensive training before program deployment. According to Widiyono et al. (2021), equipping teaching assistants with adequate pedagogical and classroom management skills is essential for ensuring consistent and impactful contributions.

Moreover, the reliance on digital tools such as Google Forms for data collection posed accessibility challenges for certain respondents. Some teachers and students expressed difficulty in navigating the online platform, which might have affected the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data collected. Alternative or hybrid methods of data collection could address this issue in future program evaluations.

The positive feedback from both teachers and students underscores the effectiveness of the Teaching Assistance Program as a model for improving educational practices. However, addressing the identified challenges through targeted training and resource allocation is crucial for maximizing its potential impact. The Teaching Assistance Program has demonstrated its ability to enhance learning experiences, foster collaboration, and boost motivation at SMA Kristen Rantepao. By refining the program's framework and addressing logistical gaps, it can serve as a sustainable and scalable model for improving education quality across Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Teaching Assistance Program at SMA Kristen Rantepao has proven to be an effective embodiment of the Independent Learning-Independent Campus (MBKM) initiative. This study demonstrated that the program significantly impacted various aspects of teaching and learning, including social interaction, collaboration between university students and teachers, and emotional engagement with

students.

The high levels of interaction between teaching assistants, teachers, and students fostered an inclusive and motivating learning environment. The program allowed university students to introduce innovative teaching methods that effectively supported school teachers, reducing their workloads and providing fresh perspectives on instructional practices. These contributions were highly valued by both teachers and students, as reflected in the survey results.

The emotional engagement between university students and high school students emerged as one of the most impactful elements of the program. By building positive relationships, teaching assistants were able to inspire greater motivation and enthusiasm for learning, significantly boosting student participation and academic confidence. These findings highlight the importance of mentorship in educational settings and its role in nurturing students' emotional and academic growth.

Despite these successes, the study also identified areas for improvement. The inconsistent preparedness of teaching assistants and accessibility challenges related to the digital tools used for data collection were noted. To maximize the program's effectiveness, it is essential to provide more robust training for the teaching assistants and to explore more inclusive and accessible methods for data collection in future evaluations.

In conclusion, the Teaching Assistance Program at SMA Kristen Rantepao exemplifies the positive outcomes that can arise from university-school collaborations within the MBKM framework. With targeted improvements, such as enhanced training and more accessible tools, the program has the potential to become a sustainable and scalable model for educational advancement across Indonesia.

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