Evaluation and Strategy for the Improvement of the MBKM Program at the Department of Architecture, Universitas Pembangunan Jaya

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Abstract

Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) is a concept that requires universities to design and implement innovative learning processes. This program is a solution to the demands of independent and flexible forms of learning in higher education, so as to create a learning culture that is innovative, unfettered, and in accordance with the needs of students. Likewise, Universitas Pembangunan Jaya, which is one of the Independent Campuses, has continued to encourage the implementation of this program since its inception. In line with the university's steps, the Department of Architecture quickly plans an MBKM program that aims to encourage students to master various sciences that are useful for entering the world of work. After one year of the MBKM program with four forms of running activities in the Department of Architecture, the researchers wanted to evaluate the implementation of that one, because a program definitely must have success and obstacles faced. Thus, this study aims to evaluate the running of the MBKM program in the Department of Architecture and provide strategic suggestions for improving program implementation. The research method used was a combination of quantitative and qualitative with the respondents involved were students and lecturers of the Department of Architecture. By using a SWOT analysis and cross-matrix strategy, this research

resulted in an evaluation of activities and proposed strategies in improving the MBKM program for the sustainability of the program in the future.

Keywords: *evaluation, merdeka belajar-kampus merdeka, strategic improvement program, SWOT analysis*

INTRODUCTION
Background of the Study

Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) is a concept introduced by the Ministry of Education and Culture – Directorate General of Higher Education to prepare students to become strong scholars who are relevant to the needs of the era and ready to become leaders with a high national spirit. In its implementation, universities are required to design and implement innovative learning processes in accordance with the provisions of Regulation of the Minister of Education No. of 2020 on National Higher Education Standards. With the implementation of an innovative learning process, students are expected to achieve their learning outcomes covering aspects of attitudes, knowledge, and skills (general and specific) optimally and in a relevant manner [1, 2].

Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program is a solution to the demands for independent and flexible forms of learning in higher education, so as to create a learning culture that is innovative, unfettered, and in accordance with student needs. The main program is intended to give students the right to enroll in a new program and allow them to study for three semesters outside of their current curriculum, modify the Higher Education accreditation system, and make it easier for universities in developing countries to become legal public institutions. In addition to designing a curriculum, universities are also required to cooperate and collaborate with partners or other parties related to their scientific fields, and their participation is required for the implementation of MBKM policies[3-6].

Along with the era, the education system must also develop to prepare human needs in the future. Subsequently, universities are expected to be able to contribute greatly to the development of education by preparing for the needs and threats that will come. In an effort to make reforms at all times, education continues to accommodate its students so that they have more quality in contributing maximally to the development of the nation. That is why universities are expected to be able to innovate in every learning process, especially student-centered learning in order to support the achievement of quality graduates who are ready to face the changing era. Likewise, Universitas Pembangunan Jaya (UPJ) is one of the Independent Campuses that has encouraged the implementation of this program since its launch in January 2020 by Nadiem Makarim, Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology[7-11]. The development of the MBKM Program within UPJ started from the Even Semester of 2020/2021 until currently entering the second year. Quick adjustments are definitely needed, both at the university level and at the study program level, which are required to be more adaptive and able to design the implementation of the MBKM program. In line with this program, the Architecture Study Program quickly accommodates the MBKM program which aims to encourage students to master various knowledge that are useful for entering the world of work [12, 13].

Kampus Merdeka program in its learning process is centered on universities and their students. This program also has the aim of developing creativity, even the personality of students by elaborating the independence of each individual to gain knowledge through activities provided by Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka [14, 15]. In its implementation, this concept encourages students to leave their campus and are given the freedom for two semesters in their study program to carry out activities outside the classroom. In accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Education No. 3 of 2020 Article 15 Paragraph 1, the forms of learning activities that can be carried out within the study program and outside the study program include eight schemes,

namely student exchange, internship, teaching assistance in an education unit, research, humanitarian projects, entrepreneurial activities, independent studies/projects, and village empowerment/community service (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1. MBKM Learning Forms Scheme
Source: Regulation of the Minister of Education, 2020

The Architecture Study Program has implemented four activities in these two semesters, namely student exchange and humanitarian projects in the Even Semester of 2020/2021, as well as student exchange, industrial internship, and teaching assistance in the Odd Semester of 2021/2022. According to the MBKM concept, which is to make students able to socialize with the environment outside the campus, the Architecture Study Program collaborates in a consortium with Pelita Harapan University, Pancasila University, the Indonesian Institute of Technology, Multimedia Nusantara University, and Podomoro University in organizing the student exchange. Outside of the consortium, the Architecture Study Program also conducts exchanges with Trisakti University, Udayana University, Bandar Lampung University, and Tanri Abeng University. In implementing the internship, the Architecture Study Program cooperates with PT. Arkonin, PT. Jaya Real Property, and PT. Jaya CM. In addition, in the implementation of the teaching assistance program, the Architecture Study Program collaborates with SMK Negeri 4 Tangerang Selatan [16-19].

In relation to the acceleration of the MBKM program, UPJ's Architecture Study Program seeks funding to support the program by submitting a Kampus Merdeka Competition Program Grant, until in June 2021 UPJ's Architecture Study Program won a grant from the Directorate General of Higher Education (Dirjen DIKTI) of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) in the 2021 Kampus Merdeka Competition Program (PKKM). By this funding, the Architecture Study Program wants to strengthen the depth of curriculum implementation by organizing the MBKM Program Curriculum Workshop. As a resource person, Antaryama mentioned the parties involved in the MBKM Program, namely the government, universities, faculties, and study programs. Initially, the government offered a grant program to strengthen MBKM program institutions. Subsequently, university forwarded to faculties to establish and design guidelines for the MBKM program and make cross-study policies and MoUs with partners. Furthermore, the Architecture Study Program must strive to review, adapt, and develop the curriculum, list the activities, create a credit conversion mechanism, determine the activity supervisors, and provide alternatives to online courses [20-23].

After one year of the MBKM program with four forms of running activities in the Department of Architecture, the researchers wanted to evaluate the implementation of that one, because a program definitely must have success and obstacles faced. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that this research aims to evaluate as well as monitor the implementation of the MBKM program in the Architecture Study Program and provide strategic *cross-matrix* suggestions to improve the implementation of the MBKM program in the Architecture Study Program [24-27].

RESEARCH METHODS
Location of the Study

This study was conducted in the Architecture Study Program at Universitas Pembangunan Jaya with 170 students and 8 lecturers from the study program as respondents.

Data Analysis

This study was sourced from the MBKM activities/programs that have been implemented by UPJ's Architecture Study Program. Thus, to find out whether the current process has been effective or not, an in-depth analysis needs to be carried out so as to provide an evaluation and improvement strategy for the following program [28, 29].

The research method used was a combination of quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data are secondary data obtained from the responses of the respondents in the Higher Education Database in the Higher Education SPADA Survey: https://survey.spadadikti.id/61b8c03c205fb36c71698a3a (for students) and page: https://survey.spadadikti.id/61b8bfc6205fb36c71698a39 (for lecturers), while qualitative data are primary data obtained from *Focus Group Discussion* (FGD) moderated by the UPJ Leader with lecturers and students of the Architecture Study Program as respondents [30-34].

The materials extracted from this study as a whole are about the respondents' knowledge of MBKM, effective information media used, the level of interest and participation of students in the program, the preparation they have, to the impacts and obstacles experienced. Especially for lecturers, the contribution and the issue of readiness in fostering students were also asked. From this data, the authors made a framework for the classification of SWOT analysis (*strengths, weaknesses, opportunities,* and *threats*) and made the four *cross-matrix* in the SO (*strength-opportunities*), WO (*weaknesses-opportunities*), ST (*strength-threats*), and WT (*weaknesses-threats*) tables. According to Rangkuti (2001), SWOT analysis is a strategy formulation through a process of identifying strategic factors that is carried out systematically to achieve all the goals that have been set previously. In this study, the authors first grouped the factors comprehensively, then analyzed the problem to get a solution. The final results are in the form of alternative strategies based on the *cross-matrix* of the four SWOT factors. The following is the research flowchart:
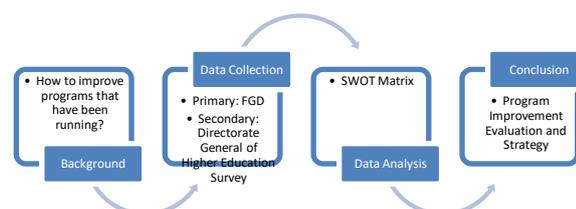

Figure 2. Research Flowchart
Source: Personal documents, 2021

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Architecture Study Program has implemented the MBKM Program in three schemes, namely industrial internship, student exchange, and teaching assistance with the following graph of student achievement:
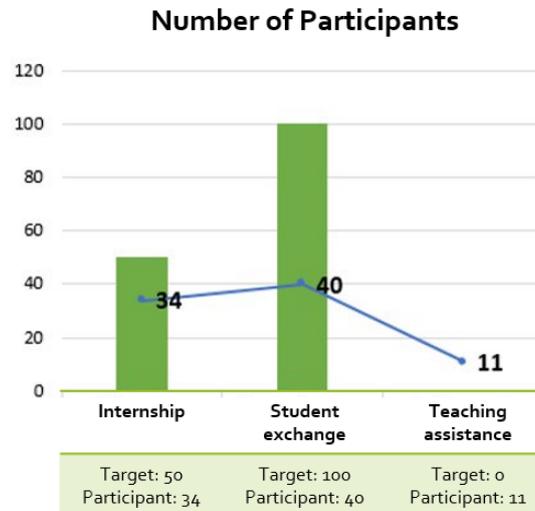

Number of Participants

Figure 3. Number of Participants of MBKM from Architecture Study Program
Source: Personal documents, 2021

Figure 4. Documentation of MBKM Participants
Source: Instagram channel @upj.arsitektur, 2021

The graph above shows that the number of enthusiasts for this activity is quite low (37%) compared to the overall number of *student body*, that is, 210 students. This is the first critical point, considering that the Architecture Study Program has sought a thorough dissemination and obtained the PKKM (Program Kompetisi Kampus Merdeka) Grant which gave them the opportunity to carry out the program as good as possible [35-39].

The data on student knowledge of the MBKM program informs that 44% of students know most of its policies, even 62% say that they know that there are guidelines within the university (**Picture 5**).
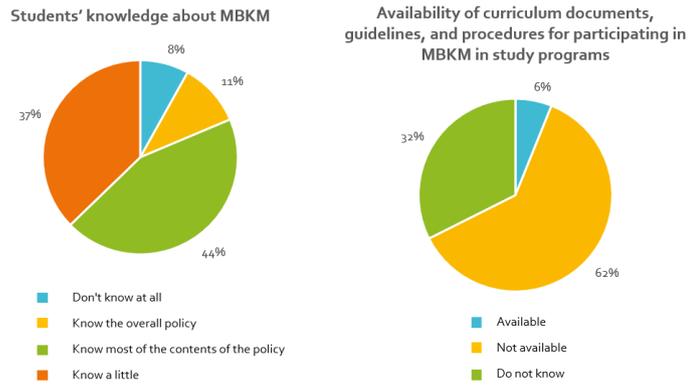
Figure 5. Profile of MBKM Program Understanding Level
Source: Personal documents, 2021

From this understanding, they learned the information related to MBKM from offline/online dissemination activities organized by the UPJ Campus (62%), and not from the Ministry of Education and Culture channel (**Figure 6**).
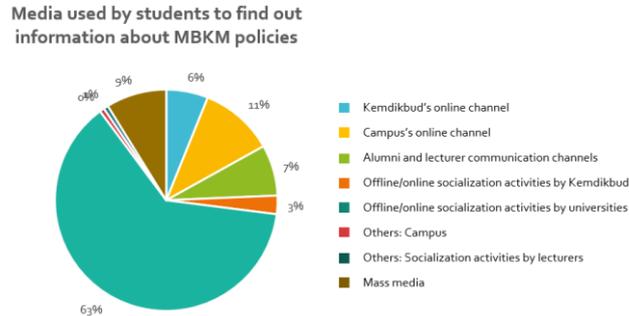

Figure 6. Profile of MBKM Program Information Media
Source: Personal documents, 2021

With the knowledge that is mostly obtained from university dissemination (including the study program), students say that 58% are ready to be part of MBKM, 65% are interested in joining the program, and 75% know that the Architecture Study Program provides the program (**Figure 7**).
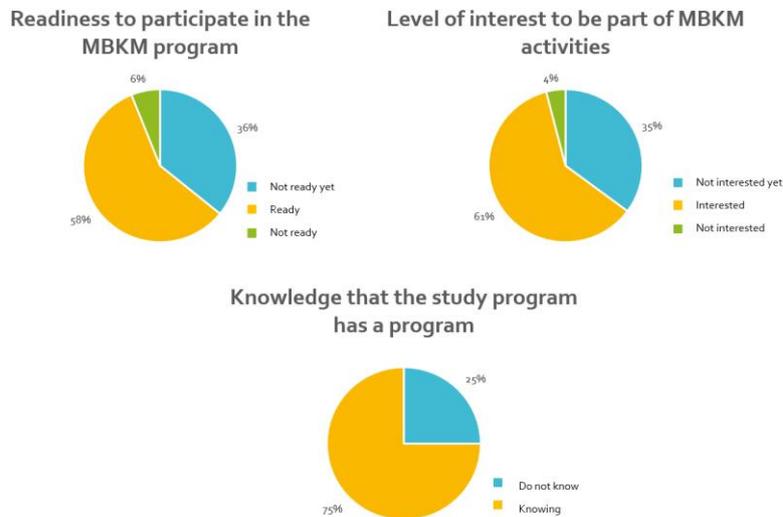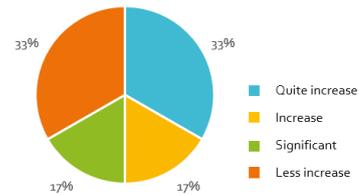

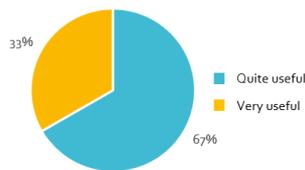**Figure 7**. Profile of Student Readiness and Interest

Source: Personal documents, 2021

In its implementation, 37% of students who have participated in this program feel that this activity is quite useful in developing competence as a provision for work after graduation (53%), there is an increase in soft skills obtained (86%) and in accordance with the needs of future graduates (78%) (**Figure 8**).

Figure 8. Profile of MBKM Program Impact
Source: Personal documents, 2021

After the activity, the authors found that the students still felt that they lacked information about this activity (45%) and most of the reasons for not participating in the MBKM were because their parents did not give permission (35%). The third largest percentage is that they did not have sufficient funding to be able to carry out MBKM activities (**Figure 9**).

In contrast to the students, the impact of MBKM implementation felt by lecturers on increasing lecturer capacity was quite good (50%), the impact on the learning process was 66% moderate and not good, MBKM program implementation was quite beneficial (67%), and the biggest obstacle was funding (21 %). Thus, the lecturers feel that this activity can basically be implemented, but the mechanisms and benefits provided are not yet optimal (**Figure 10**).

Figure 9. Profile of Implementation Barriers (Students)
Source: Personal documents, 2021

Implementation barriers: MBKM program plays a role in increasing lecturer capacity

17%
50%
33%
- Quite increase
- Increase
- Less Increase
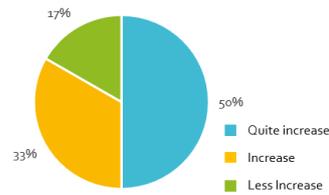
The impact of the MBKM program on the student learning process

33%
33%
17%
17%
- Quite increase
- Increase
- Significant
- Less increase

Benefits of implementing the MBKM program to fulfill CPL

33%
67%
- Quite useful
- Very useful

The main obstacle for the Study Program in providing the right to study for 3 semesters outside the study program

11%
14%
18%
21%
18%
18%
- Partner initiation
- Funding
- Human resource capability
- Curriculum adjustment
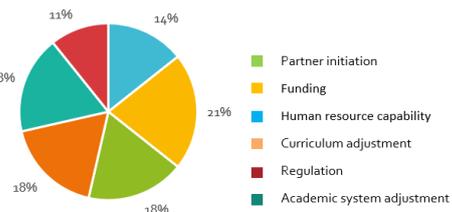- Regulation
- Academic system adjustment

Figure 10. Profile of Implementation Barriers (Lecturers)
Source: Personal documents, 2021

The data processing from the survey and FGD results were then analyzed in the classification of Curriculum and Academic, Information Media, Human Resources, and Funding in the SWOT table below:

Table 1

SW Analysis (in SWOT)

S (Strengths)	W (Weaknesses)
Curriculum and academic • **KOTA courses** • **JSDP** • **Consortium of 6 campuses** • **Partner exploration**	**Curriculum and academic** • Curriculum adjustments (courses, credits, and schedules) • Academic information system adjustment • Unstructured HR preparation • Poor coordination between courses and outcomes • Freedom to choose MK results in no freedom
Information media • **APTARI (Association of Indonesian Architectural Universities)**	**Information media** • University/UPJ online channel is not yet optimal
Human resources • **Students and lecturers of the study program understand the MBKM guidelines and schemes** • **Obtaining Grants matures the HR** • **The umbrella SOP for the MBKM program at UPJ is contained in the SPT-I/03/SOP-47 SOP for Merdeka Belajar (Supporting Unit).**	**Human resources** • Very limited, a special team and MBKM admin staff are needed • The umbrella SOP for the MBKM program at UPJ contained in the SPT-I/03/SOP-47 SOP for Merdeka Belajar (Supporting Unit) is not yet optimized • Low student interest (inversely proportional to the data)

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Table 2

OT Analysis (in SWOT)

O (Opportunities)	T (Threats)
Curriculum and academic • **Cooperation documents with partners**	**Curriculum and academic** • Class schedule synchronization • The rise of consortiums from other campuses
Information media • **Ministry of Education and Culture's online channel** • **Alumni's online channel, APTARI**	**Information media** • DUDI/non-academic partners have not been informed of the MBKM concept
Human resources • **MBKM partners (DUDI, academics, associations, communities)**	**Human resources** • Limited MBKM partners (Jaya Group)
Funding • **MBKM grant/scholarship**	-

From the SWOT analysis, the authors tried to make *cross-matrix* SO (*strength-opportunities*), WO (*weaknesses-opportunities*), ST (*strength-threats*), and WT (*weaknesses-threats*) tables as follows:

Table 3

Cross-Matrix SWOT

	S	W
O	• Implementing cooperation documents between campuses and targeted partners. • Expanding and improving information through alumni media, the Ministry of Education, and APTARI. • Expanding relationships with related partners based on MBKM programs, schemes, and SOPs.	• Systematic adjustment of documents in accordance with the curriculum, outcomes, courses, credits, and HR so that they are optimal between partners. • Integrating university/UPJ's online information channel with the Ministry of Education and Culture's online channel, alumni, and APTARI. • Comprehensive, regular, and interesting dissemination regarding the MBKM Program and SOPs between lecturers, partners, and students. • Taking the opportunity to get a grant.
T	• Synchronization of lecture schedules between campuses and related partners. • Expanding the MBKM concept information media that is known to related partners. • Reviewing MBKM guidelines and schemes with partners, lecturers, and students. • Optimizing collaboration with Supporting Unit.	• Curriculum adaptation: Coordination with both parties regarding scheduling and curriculum (courses, credits, outcomes). • Synchronizing academic information system with partners on the same online channel. • Direct dissemination between partners and lecturers and students.

S	W

Based on the matrix above, the strategy in planning, implementing, and evaluating MBKM activities is proposed in two major stages. **Preparation phase** takes approximately 3-6 months, with the proposed activities as follows:

1.   Exploring the specifics of each study program in planning MBKM through the Ministry of Education, alumni, and APTARI channels.
2.   Dissemination of the implementation mechanism by collaborating with and optimizing the performance of supporting unit.
3.   The administrative process needs to be carried out specifically by optimal administrative personnel.
4.   MBKM materials need to be consolidated, synchronized, and adapted well and as early as possible.
5.   Comprehensive, regular, and interesting dissemination needs to be carried out regarding the MBKM Program and SOPs between lecturers, partners, students, which includes urgency, benefits, and obtaining feedback on student understanding and interest.

Implementation phase needs to be done with program assistance by UPJ leaders and Directorate General of Higher Education to find out the obstacles to preparation, implementation as well as providing solutions. It is also necessary to **evaluate** the entire mechanism of the MBKM program to facilitate the implementation at the university, study program, student, and partner levels. As a final suggestion, we hope that Directorate General of Higher Education can provide dissemination regarding the alignment of outcome conversions and formats of the *rewards* given to students after participating in the MBKM program [40-45].

CONCLUSION

This study concludes several important things related to the evaluation results and strategies that will be carried out by the Architecture Study Program, including:

1.   Human resources (students) of UPJ's Architecture Study Program in general have understood the MBKM program, but their interest in participating in this activity is still low, at 37%. All lecturers have also contributed to the planning and implementation of MBKM, but really need the support of special administrative staff to accelerate the performance of this program. In terms of planning, the Supporting Unit in UPJ needs to optimize their performance to jointly plan activity options.
2.   The Architecture Study Program has implemented three of the eight MBKM programs offered, but has a challenge in implementing them in the upcoming Even Semester of 2021/2022, namely the timeline in preparing the program that is very short (less than 1 month).
3.   It is necessary to prepare, assist, and evaluate the entire mechanism of the MBKM program to facilitate implementation (both for leaders, study programs, supporting units, students, and partners), with the following stages: *Preparation – extracting information on the peculiarities of study program learning methods – technical discussions between the study program and supporting unit – administrative documents – discussions on the readiness of MBKM materials with partners – dissemination to the students (urgency, benefits, feedback on understanding).* **Implementation and Evaluation** *– regular monitoring and evaluation from Directorate General of Higher Education and UPJ – intense communication with partners.*

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