EXAMINING STUDENT PERCEPTIONS AND ENTHUSIASM FOR THE MBKM PROGRAM: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY

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Abstract

Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) is a new policy that has not been widely understood by students. It is necessary to assess students' perceptions and interests in this policy. This study was conducted to determine the extent of student perceptions of this policy and the level of student interest in the programs offered. The stages of the research method carried out include the preparation stage, data collection stage, data processing stage, and data analysis stage. The research method used in this study is a survey method using questionnaires as a data collection tool. The respondents of this study were 232 students of the elementary school teacher education study program starting from the Class of 2020 until 2022. Data analysis techniques use descriptive analysis, categorization and cross-tabulation as well as spherman rank correlation analysis. The results showed that students' interest in participating in the MBKM program

was in the medium category. Student perceptions of MBKM policies are highest in the good category, and these perceptions are related to interest in participating in the MBKM program. Meanwhile, students' perceptions of MBKM programs are in the good category and these perceptions are related to their interest in participating in the MBKM program.

Keywords: *MBKM Policy; Student Perception; Student Interest.*

Abstrak

Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) merupakan kebijakan baru yang belum banyak dipahami oleh mahasiswa, dan perlu diketahui persepsi dan minat mahasiswa terhadap kebijakan ini. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui sejauh mana persepsi mahasiswa terhadap kebijakan ini serta seberapa besar minat mahasiswa untuk program-program yang disediakan. Tahapan metode penelitian yang dilakukan meliputi tahap persiapan, tahap pengumpulan data, tahap pengolahan data, dan tahap analisis data. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode survei dengan menggunakan kuesioner sebagai alat pengumpulan data. Responden penelitian ini yaitu mahasiswa program studi pendidikan guru sekolah dasar mulai dari Angkatan 2020 hingga tahun 2022 sebanyak 232. Teknik analisis data menggunakan analisis deskriptif, kategorisasi dan tabulasi silang serta analisis korelasi spherman rank. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa, minat mahasiswa mengikuti program MBKM berada pada kategori sedang. Persepsi mahasiswa terhadap kebijakan MBKM paling tinggi berada pada kategori baik, dan persepsi tersebut berhubungan dengan minat mengikuti program MBKM. Sedangkan persepsi mahasiswa tentang program-program MBKM berada pada kategori baik dan persepsi tersebut berhubungan dengan minat mengikuti program MBKM.

Kata Kunci: *Kebijakan MBKM; Persepsi Mahasiswa; Minat Mahasiswa.*

INTRODUCTION

Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy was launched by the Minister of Education and Culture through the

Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Higher Education Standards, on Learning Process Standards, especially in articles 15 and 18. MBKM Campus is a policy that aims to encourage students to master various knowledge that is useful for facing the world of work (Ninda Beny Asfuri et al., 2022), as well as increasing graduate competency by creating more flexible programs for students to learn and develop their potential (Fauzannur et al., 2023). This policy gives students the freedom to choose the best way to develop their potential through flexible learning (Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020). The MBKM program is expected to be a solution for universities in producing graduates who are ready to face social and cultural changes and developments, industry and the world of work. MBKM programs for students include: Internships/Work Practices, Research/Research, Humanitarian Projects, Entrepreneurial Activities, Professional Work Practices, Projects/Village Building, Independent Studies/Projects, Teaching Assistantships in Education Units, and Student Exchanges (Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020).

The MBKM program is a program that focuses on improving students. Student involvement in taking part in this program is highly expected, so that the objectives of developing this program can be achieved. Various efforts have been made by the government to get students involved in this program, one of which is policy outreach. Policy socialization is still proven to have an influence on the successful implementation of this MBKM policy (Fatmala Rizky et al., 2021). Socialization of MBKM policies to students as program targets will have an

impact on comprehensive knowledge regarding available programs. This is very important for the successful implementation of the MBKM program (Herli Sundi et al., 2022). Apart from students, other academic members such as lecturers and university education staff also have a big role in implementing the MBKM program at the study program level.(Lucia et al., 2022). Lecturers and educational staff can provide knowledge and encouragement to students to participate in the MBKM program.

The small number of students participating and not all programs being participated in may be caused by several factors, including (1) they are not aware of the MBKM program; (2) they are aware of the MBKM program, but are not interested in participating after considering the benefits and risks; (3) they know, but not in detail, so they don't dare decide to take part (Mardiah & Piantari, 2022). The level of student participation in this program is influenced by students' perceptions and interest in the MBKM program. Student perceptions and interest in involvement in the MBKM program are very important because they can influence the level of student participation in the program. If students have a positive perception and interest in this program, it is likely that they will be more active and involved in taking part in the activities offered. In addition, positive perceptions and interests can motivate students to develop themselves and gain learning experiences that are different from their main study program. Thus, the MBKM program can help students to improve their quality and prepare themselves to face future challenges. On the other hand, if students have negative perceptions and interest in this program, then they will most likely be less interested and involved in the

program. This can reduce the benefits that students can obtain from the MBKM program.

Perception according to Pride and Ferrel is all processes of selecting, organizing and interpreting input information, sensations received through sight, feeling, hearing, smell and touch to produce meaning (Fadila & Lestari, 2013). Student perceptions about MBKM can be interpreted as students' interpretations of MBKM policies which are supported by relevant information about the program. This shows that perception is built on the basis of knowledge obtained from available information which is then processed into new information. This shows that individual perceptions will depend on how good and much information they get.

Interest can refer to the psychological state of having affective reactions and attention focused on particular content and/or a relatively enduring tendency to re-engage with a particular class of objects, events, or ideas (Ainley, 2019). In general, it can be divided into two categories, namely situational interest and individual interest. Situational interests describe interests that are triggered in the moment, such as a sudden sound, an opportunity to work with a friend on a project, a cartoon illustrating text. Individual interest refers to a person's relatively long-lasting tendency to re-engage and persist in work with certain content over time (Tan et al., 2019). In general, a person's interest is associated with his or her achievements with certain subject content. Such a relationship may be appropriate if the type of interest being discussed is an individual's well-developed interest (Renninger & Hidi, 2002). This relationship is likely to be inaccurate if interest here refers to or is determined solely by positive or negative evaluation measures of liking,

preference, or interest (Hidi, 2000). The consequence of this interest is the motivation, attitudes and behavior that are visible from student involvement (Kahu et al., 2017). In implementing the MBKM policy, students who have a high interest in these programs will have a high level of involvement. This involvement can help students to develop habits and thought patterns that increase the capacity for lifelong learning (continuous learning) and personal development (Kuh, 2003).

Previous research on perceptions and interests and their relationship with the MBKM program as well as the implementation of MBKM policies has had an influence on student interest and involvement in the program (Rochana et al., 2021). Some of the efforts made by the campus to get students to participate in the MBKM program include: (1) increasing the intensity of socialization to all students in each class through various platforms such as WhatsApp groups, Google Meet and Zoom meetings. 2) opening an internal MBKM activity program for study programs and internships/field practice 3) orderly administration in the form of converting MBKM activities into courses 4) the funding structure used in MBKM activities is collaborated with other activities that require costs or other sources that are not attractive through collaboration partnership(Munawar et al., 2021). Several previous studies on student perceptions of MBKM policies were seen from several aspects such as knowledge and understanding of the program, forms of program activities, student roles and participation, information media that provide information about MBKM policies (Riatmo et al., 2023) (Fauzannur et al., 2023) (Ninda Beny Asfuri et al., 2022) (Anwar et al., 2023) (Asfuri et al., 2022).

The research on students' perceptions and interests towards the MBKM program is crucial, given its role in transforming higher education in Indonesia. Understanding the perceptions and interests of students provides clear insights into the challenges and barriers they face in engaging with the program. This understanding is vital for universities to identify issues such as inadequate information dissemination, lack of administrative support, and funding difficulties. Moreover, this research can inform policymakers to evaluate and refine MBKM strategies, enhancing student participation and enriching their learning experiences. The findings are particularly relevant in the context of globalization, where the MBKM program aims to produce graduates who are ready to compete on an international scale.

This study offers significant innovations compared to previous research. It delves deeper into various aspects affecting student interest and engagement, such as knowledge about the program, types of activities offered, student roles, and information dissemination methods. Additionally, it explores the specific efforts made by universities to boost student participation, including increased socialization, opening internal MBKM programs, administrative efficiency, and innovative funding structures. By using a holistic approach that incorporates surveys, interviews, and document analysis, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing student perceptions and interests.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. Respondents in this research were Primary Teacher Education Department, Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa, Indonesia students class 2020 until 2022. The sample for this research was chosen randomly but still paying attention to sampling rules so that it represents the population. The number of respondents in this research was 232 students. The distribution of respondents is presented in the research results section. The data collection technique uses a questionnaire distributed via Google Form. The questionnaire consists of 23 statement items which are divided into two research variables. 7 items measure student perceptions about MBKM policies, 9 items measure student perceptions about MBKM programs and 7 items measure student interest in participating in the MBKM program. Before the questionnaire is distributed to respondents, the validity and reliability of the instrument is first tested. The results of the instrument validity test are presented in table 1 and the results of the instrument reliability test are presented in table 2. The data analysis technique used is descriptive analysis in the form of categorization (table 3), cross tabulation analysis, and Spearman rank correlation. Process research data using the SPSS IBM 21 application.

Validity test

Decision making criteria

If the Pearson correlation value is > 0.325 then the instrument item is valid

If the Pearson correlation value is <0.325 then the instrument item is invalid.

Table 1. Data Validity and Reliability Test Results

Question Items	Method	Amount	Decision
Q1	Pearson Correlation	0.636**	Valid
Q2	Pearson Correlation	0.816**	Valid
Q3	Pearson Correlation	0.691**	Valid
Q4	Pearson Correlation	0.772**	Valid
Q5	Pearson Correlation	0.797**	Valid
Q6	Pearson Correlation	0.731**	Valid
Q7	Pearson Correlation	0.732**	Valid
Q8	Pearson Correlation	0.511**	Valid
Q9	Pearson Correlation	0.742**	Valid
Q10	Pearson Correlation	0.877**	Valid
Q11	Pearson Correlation	0.811**	Valid
Q12	Pearson Correlation	0.862**	Valid
Q13	Pearson Correlation	0.819**	Valid
Q14	Pearson Correlation	0.871**	Valid
Q15	Pearson Correlation	0.870**	Valid
Q16	Pearson Correlation	0.898**	Valid
Q17	Pearson Correlation	0.731**	Valid
Q18	Pearson Correlation	0.779**	Valid
Q19	Pearson Correlation	0.713**	Valid
Q20	Pearson Correlation	0.850**	Valid
Q21	Pearson Correlation	0.845**	Valid
Q22	Pearson Correlation	0.709**	Valid
Q23	Pearson Correlation	0.781*	Valid

Instrument Reliability Test

If the Cronbach's Alpha value is > 0.6 then the instrument is reliable

If the Cronbach's Alpha value is <0.6 then the instrument is not reliable

Below are presented the results of instrument reliability test data processing

Table 2. Instrument Reliability Test Results

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.969	23

Based on the table above, it is known that the Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.969. This value is greater than 0.6, so it can be concluded that the instrument is reliable.

Table 3. Categorization Rules for Research Variables.

Categorization	Value range
Low/not good	$X < M-1SD$
Average/good	$M-1SD \leq X < M+1SD$
High/very good	$M+1SD \leq$

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Research Results

Table 4. Respondents by Gender

Gender	Amount	Percentage
Man	48	20.7
Woman	184	79.3
Total	232	100.0

Table 4 presents information about the number of respondents by gender and percentage. The data consists of two gender categories, namely male and female. The following is a description of the data contained in the Male data table. There were 48 male respondents in this study. The percentage of male respondents was 20.7% of the total number of respondents. Meanwhile, for female data, there were 184 female respondents

in this study. The percentage of female respondents was 79.3% of the total number of respondents. The total number of respondents was 232 people. The total percentage is 100.0%, which indicates that the data in the table includes all respondents involved. Thus, table 4 data provide information about gender distribution.

Table 5. Respondents by Force

Year	Amount	Percentage (%)
2020	13	5.6
2021	85	36.6
2022	134	57.8
Total	232	100.0

Source: Process research data.

Table 5 presents information about the number of respondents based on class year and percentages. The data consists of three class years, namely 2020, 2021, and 2022. Based on the respondent data contained in the table, it is known that in 2020 there were 13 respondents who were part of the class of 2020. The percentage of respondents from this class year was 5.6% of the total number of respondents. In 2021 there were 85 respondents who were part of the class of 2021. The percentage of respondents from this class year was 36.6% of the total number of respondents, and in 2022: There were 134 respondents who were part of the class of 2022. The percentage of respondents from this class year was 57.8 % of the total number of respondents. The total number of respondents was 232 people, according to the total in the table. The total percentage is 100.0%, which indicates that the data in the table includes all respondents involved. Thus, this table provides information about the distribution of respondents based on class year.

Table 6. Respondents by Semester

Semester	Amount	Percentage
Semester 2	134	57.8
Semester 4	87	37.5
6th semester	11	4.7
Total	232	100.0

Table 6 presents information about the number of respondents based on semester of study and the percentages. The data consists of three semesters, namely semester 2, semester 4, and semester 6. The following is a description of the data contained in the Semester 2 table, there are 134 respondents who are currently undergoing semester 2 and the percentage of respondents from this semester is 57.8% of the total number of respondents. Semester 4: There are 87 respondents currently undergoing semester 4 and the percentage of respondents from this semester is 37.5% of the total number of respondents. Semester 6: There are 11 respondents currently undergoing semester 6 and the percentage of respondents from this semester is 4.7% of the total number of respondents. The total number of respondents was 232 people, according to the total in the table. The total percentage is 100.0%, which indicates that the data in the table includes all respondents involved. Thus, this table provides information about the distribution of respondents based on their semester of study and their percentage in the study.

Table 7. Number of Respondents Based on Their Participation in MBKM Socialization

Items	Amount	Percentage
No	121	52.2
Yes	111	47.8

Total	232	100.0

Table 7 presents information about the number of respondents based on their participation in MBKM (Student Entrepreneurship and Partnership) socialization. The data consists of two categories, namely "No" and "Yes", which indicate whether the respondent participated in MBKM socialization or not. The following is a description of the data contained in the table, there are 121 respondents who did not take part in the MBKM socialization with the percentage of respondents who did not take part in this socialization was 52.2% of the total number of respondents and there were 111 respondents who took part in the MBKM socialization with the percentage of respondents who took part in this socialization was 47.8% of total number of respondents. The total number of respondents was 232 people, in accordance with the total in the table with a total percentage of 100.0%, which shows that the data in the table includes all respondents involved in the research. Thus, this table provides information about the distribution of respondents based on their participation in MBKM socialization.

Table 8. Respondents Based on the Origin of the MBKM Information Obtained

Origin of information	Amount	Percentage
Never	5	2.2
Other	7	3.0
College friend	28	12.1
Social media	40	17.2
Campus	152	65.5
Total	232	100.0

Table 8 presents information about the number of respondents based on the source of the information they got

regarding MBKM (Student Entrepreneurship and Partnership). The data consists of several categories of information origin. The following is a description of the data contained in the "never" category table. There are 5 respondents who have never received information about MBKM with the percentage of respondents who have never received this information being 2.2% of the total number of respondents. In the "other" category there were 7 respondents who got MBKM information from other sources not listed in the table. The percentage of respondents from this category is 3.0% of the total number of respondents. In the "college friends" category, there were 28 respondents who got MBKM information from college friends with the percentage of respondents from this category being 12.1% of the total number of respondents. In the "social media" category there were 40 respondents who received MBKM information through social media with the percentage of respondents from this category being 17.2% of the total number of respondents. In the "campus" category there were 152 respondents who received MBKM information through campus with the percentage of respondents from this category being 65.5% of the total number of respondents. The total number of respondents was 232 people, according to the total in the table. The total percentage is 100.0%, which indicates that the data in the table includes all respondents involved.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics

		Perception of MBKM Policy	Perception of the MBKM Program	Interested in joining MBKM
N	Valid	232	232	232
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		21.8621	28.0474	21.7328

Median	21,0000	27,0000	21,0000
Mode	21.00	27.00	21.00
Std. Deviation	2.27502	2.79957	2.24228
Variance	5,176	7,838	5,028
Range	11.00	17.00	14.00
Minimum	17.00	19.00	14.00
Maximum	28.00	36.00	28.00
Sum	5072.00	6507.00	5042.00

Source: Process research data.

Description of student perceptions of MBKM policies

Table 10. Student Perceptions of MBKM Policy

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't agree
I clearly understand the concept and objectives of the Merdeka Belajar and Merdeka Campus policies.	12.5%	79.7%	7.8%
I feel that the MBKM and Independent Campus policies provide greater freedom and flexibility in choosing study programs or subjects.	14.7%	83.6%	1.7%
I feel that the MBKM policies encourage self-development and improvement of skills that suit my interests and talents.	16.8%	81%	2.2%
I believe MBKM policies provide opportunities for students to organize their time and study methods that are more appropriate to their personal learning style.	14.2%	81.9%	3.9%

I feel that the MBKM policies provide wider access to learning resources, including access to libraries, laboratories and other facilities.	12.9%	84.9%	2.2%
I feel that the MBKM policies encourage creativity, innovation and the ability to think independently.	19.4%	79.3%	1.3%
I feel the MBKM policies allow students to explore their interests and potential outside the formal curriculum.	17.2%	80.2%	2.6%

Based on the data presented in the table of students' perceptions of the MBKM policy, it can be seen that a high percentage of the agree choice, this indicates that students' perceptions of acceptance of the Merdeka Belajar and Merdeka Campus policies. The majority of students agreed to statements related to the MBKM policy. Students see this policy as a source of freedom, flexibility and opportunity to develop themselves, as well as providing wider access to learning resources. Students also feel that this policy encourages creativity, innovation and the ability to think independently, as well as providing space for them to explore interests and potential outside the formal curriculum.

To determine the level of student perception regarding the MBKM program policies, categorization was carried out. The level of student perception is presented in table 11.

Table 11. Categorization of Student Perceptions of MBKM Policy

Category	Amount	%
Good	180	77.6
Very good	52	22.4
Total	232	100.0

Based on table 11, it can be seen that the category of students who have a good perception of the MBKM policy is 180 people or 77.6%, while those who have a very good perception are 52 people or 22.4%.

Based on table 11, it can be seen that the category of students who have a good perception of the MBKM policy is 180 people or 77.6%, while those who have a very good perception are 52 people or 22.4%.

Perceptions about the MBKM Program

Table 12. Student Perceptions of the MBKM Program

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't agree
The Independent Campus Learning Program provides good flexibility in choosing and arranging study schedules.	19.9%	83.2%	3.9%
The Independent Campus Learning Program provides opportunities for students to take cross-disciplinary courses.	12.5%	85.3%	2.2%
The Independent Campus Learning Program increases student involvement in decision making related to their education.	13.8%	84.5%	1.7%
The Independent Campus Learning Program provides	14.2%	83.2%	2.6%

broader opportunities for students to develop skills and interests outside the formal curriculum.			
The Independent Campus Learning Program facilitates easier access to campus resources and facilities.	13.4%	83.2%	3.4%
The Independent Campus Learning Program provides encouragement for students to become more independent in their learning process.	16.4%	81.5%	2.2%
The Independent Campus Learning Program improves the quality of education provided by universities.	14.7%	83.2%	2.2%
I feel that the Independent Campus Learning Program supports the achievement of my educational goals.	15.9%	81.0%	3.0%
I feel happy and satisfied with the implementation of the Independent Campus Learning Program on this campus	14.7%	82.8%	2.6%

Source:processing research data.

Based on the data presented in the table of students' perceptions of the MBKM program, it can be seen that a high percentage of the agree choice, this indicates that students' perceptions of acceptance of the Merdeka Belajar and Merdeka Campus programs. The majority of students agreed to statements related to the MBKM program. Students see this program as providing flexibility, cross-disciplinary opportunities, involvement in decision making, development of skills outside the formal curriculum, access facilities,

encouragement to become independent, increased quality of education, and support in achieving their educational goals. Students also expressed satisfaction and joy regarding the implementation of the MBKM program on their campus.

Table 13. Categories of Student Perceptions of the MBKM Program

Category	Amount	%
Good	178	76.7
Very good	54	23.3
Total	232	100.0

Based on table 13, it can be seen that the category of students who have a good perception of MBKM programs is 178 people or 77%, while those who have a very good perception are 54 people or 23%.

Interest in Joining MBKM

Table 14. Student Interest in Participating in the MBKM Program

Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't agree
I am interested in taking part in the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program as part of my educational experience.	16.4%	79.3%	4.3%
I see the benefits in taking advantage of the freedom provided by the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program to choose courses or study programs that suit my interests.	15.1%	81.9%	3.0%
I feel that the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program can	13.8%	84.5%	1.7%

help me develop additional skills that are relevant to my interests and career aspirations.			
I am interested in taking independent steps in planning and organizing my study program according to my personal goals.	9.9%	85.8%	4.3%
I see added value in having more flexible access to learning resources and campus facilities through the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program.	13.4%	83.6%	3.0%
I am interested in taking the initiative in exploring my personal interests and potential outside the formal curriculum through the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program.	11.6%	84.5%	3.0%
I believe that the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program can provide a more personal and satisfying learning experience for me.	15.1%	83.2%	1.7%

Source: Process research data.

Based on the data presented in table 14, students' perceptions of interest in participating in the MBKM program show that a high percentage of agree choices, this indicates that students' perceptions of acceptance of interest in the Merdeka Belajar and Merdeka Campus programs. Most students showed interest and approval for the MBKM program. They are interested in joining this program as part of their educational experience, taking advantage of the freedom it provides, developing additional skills, taking independent steps in

planning their learning program, taking advantage of flexible access to resources, exploring interests and potential outside the formal curriculum, and gaining learning experience which is more personal and satisfying.

Table 15. Categorization of Interest in Participating in the Program

Category	Amount	Percent
Low	13	6
Currently	181	78
Tall	38	16
Total	232	100.0

Based on table 15, it can be seen that the category of students who have low interest in taking part in the MBKM program is 13 people or 6%, while students who have moderate interest are 181 people or 78%, and students who have high interest in taking part in the MBKM program are 38 people or 16%.

Cross Tabulation Analysis between Policy Perceptions and Interest in Participating in the Program

Cross tabulation analysis is used to find out

Table 16. Cross tabulation analysis test results between Policy Perceptions and Interest in Participating in the Program

Policy Perceptions	Interest in Joining the Program			p-Value
	Low	Currently	Tall	
Good	12 (5.2%)	165 (71.1%)	3 (1.3%)	0,000
Very good	1(0.4%)	16(6.9%)	35(15.1%)	
Total	13 (5.6%)	181(78.0%)	38(16.4%)	

Based on table 16, it can be seen that there are 12 students who have good perceptions but have low interest (5.2%), while the students who have good perceptions and moderate interest

are 165 people (71.1%), students who have good perceptions and have high interest as many as 3 people (1.3%). Meanwhile, 1 student who has a very good perception of the MBKM policy has low interest (0.4%), 16 students who have a very good perception and moderate interest and 16 students who have a very good perception and have an interest. The highest number of people participating in the MBKM program was 35 people (15.1%) Based on the chi square test, the p-value was obtained at 0.000. This value is <0.05, so policy perceptions are related to interest in participating in the MBKM program.

Cross Tabulation Analysis of Perceptions of the MBKM Program with Interest in Participating in the MBKM Program

Table 17. Cross Tabulation Analysis Test Results of Perceptions of the MBKM Program with Interest in Participating in the MBKM Program

Program Perception	Interest in Joining the Program			p-Value
	Low	**Currently**	**Tall**	
Good	12 (5.2%)	164 (70.7%)	2 (0.9%)	0,000
Very good	1(0.4%)	17(7.3%)	36(15.5%)	
Total	13 (5.6%)	181(78.0%)	38(16.4%)	

Based on table 17, it can be seen that there are 12 students who have good perceptions but have low interest (5.2%), while the students who have good perceptions and moderate interest are 164 people (70.7%), students who have good perceptions and have High interest was 2 people (0.9%). Meanwhile, 1 student (0.4%) had a very good perception of the MBKM program, 17 students (7.3%) had a very good perception and moderate interest, and 17 students had a very good perception and had an interest. The highest number of people participating in the MBKM program was 36 people (15.5%). Based on the chi square

test, a p-value of 0.000 was obtained. This value is <0.05, so policy perceptions are related to interest in participating in the MBKM program. To find out the relationship between perceptions of the MBKM program and interest in participating in the MBKM program, you can see the results of the chi square table test.

Correlation Test

Correlation tests were carried out to find out the relationship between students' perceptions of their interest in participating in the MBKM program. The correlation test in this research uses the spherman rank correlation test to find out whether there is a significant relationship between student perceptions and interest in participating in the MBKM program, and what are the correlation level categories, what is the direction of the correlation between student perceptions of interest in participating in the MBKM program.

Table 20. Spheren Rank Correlation Test Results

	Correlation Coefficient	p-Value
The relationship between policy perceptions and interest in participating in the program	0.660**	0,000
The relationship between perceptions of the MBKM program and interest in participating in the program	0.669**	0,000

Based on the results of data processing presented in table 20, it was found that the p-value was 0.000. This value is smaller than 0.05. So it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between student perceptions of MBKM policies and interest in participating in the MBKM program. Based on table 20, it is also known that the Correlation Coefficient value is 0.660.

This figure shows the level of relationship between student perceptions of MBKM policies and interest in participating in the MBKM program. This value shows that students' perceptions of MBKM policies and interest in participating in the MBKM program have a strong level of relationship. Apart from that, the Correlation Coefficient figure also shows that students' perceptions of MBKM policies and interest in participating in the MBKM program have a positive relationship. This shows that the better the student's perception of the MBKM program policy, the higher the student's interest in participating in the MBKM program. Conversely, the worse the student's perception of the MBKM program, the lower the student's interest in participating in the MBKM program.

Based on the results of data processing presented in table 20, it was found that the p-value was 0.000. This value is smaller than 0.05. So it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between student perceptions about MBKM programs and interest in participating in the MBKM program. Based on table 20, it is also known that the Correlation Coefficient value is 0.669**. This figure shows the level of relationship between student perceptions about MBKM programs and interest in participating in the MBKM program has a strong level of relationship. Apart from that, the Correlation Coefficient figure also shows that student perceptions about MBKM programs and interest in participating in the MBKM program have a positive relationship. This shows that the better the student's perception of MBKM programs, the higher the student's interest in participating in the MBKM program. Conversely, the worse the student's perception of

MBKM programs, the lower the student's interest in participating in the MBKM program.

The aim of the MBKM program is to prepare students to have the hard skills and soft skills needed in the world of work because the concept of the MBKM program is more industrial and tends to be practical in responding to the demands of today's times (Fachrissal, 2020). Several studies state that several students who have participated in the MBKM program have had a positive impact from implementing this program. Like research (Nehe, 2021; Susilawati, 2021) which states that by learning MBKM, students will develop hard skills and soft skills to meet the demands of the times and will prepare graduates who are ready and superior for a quality generation of the nation. And students gain a lot of new experiences that can improve their competencies in the future.

Based on the research results, the majority of students' perceptions of MBKM policies and programs are still in the good category. This shows that students' perceptions of MBKM policies and programs have not been interpreted optimally by students (Walgito, 2010) says that perception is an impression of an object that is obtained through the process of sensing, organizing and interpreting the object that is received by the individual, so that it is something that is meaningful and is an integrated activity within the individual. Students' perceptions of MBKM are closely related to the information they receive. Information related to MBKM policies and programs received by students will become the basic foundation in building their perceptions. This has also been proven in several studies (Ariawan et al., 2021; Sadhana, 2012) that a person's perception of a phenomenon is influenced by the information he gets, even

obey (Al Anshori et al., 2021). Many students do not know about the MBKM program because the majority of students do not take part in outreach activities. Apart from the socialization of the MBKM program, other factors that can influence students' perceptions of MBKM policies and programs still need to be explored more deeply. This is certainly related to the success of study programs in implementing the MBKM policies and programs at the study program level.

Public and private universities exhibit fundamental differences that influence the implementation of the MBKM program (Alfika et al., 2022). Public universities typically have greater resources, including facilities, funding, and networks with industries and other institutions. These abundant resources enable public universities to offer a wider variety of MBKM programs, such as internships, research opportunities, and international exchange programs. Students at public universities often find it easier to access these programs due to government support and better infrastructure. Geographical location also plays a crucial role in the implementation of the MBKM program. Universities located in major cities generally have better access to industries and research institutions, as well as supporting infrastructure. This advantage enables urban universities to offer more diverse and high-quality MBKM programs. Students at these universities have more opportunities to participate in internships, research projects, and international collaborations, all of which can enrich their learning experiences. In contrast, universities in rural areas may face limitations in access to major industries and research institutions. Nevertheless, rural universities can develop collaborations with local industries and regional governments to

implement MBKM programs that are relevant to local needs. This approach can also foster regional development and make tangible contributions to the local community (Yuwono et al, 2023). Conversely, private universities, despite often having more limited resources, demonstrate strengths in flexibility and innovation

Based on the research results, it shows that the majority of students' interest in participating in the MBKM program is in the medium category. This gives us information that the majority of students are not all interested in taking part in the MBKM program. Of course, this needs to be explored more deeply, what causes students to have this moderate interest, which means that not all students are willing to take part in the MBKM program. Some studies show that there are several such things in research (Zakiyyah et al., 2021) which explains that there is a bias in student perception and involvement in the implementation of the MBKM curriculum. This biased student understanding can be attributed to the lack of communication and dissemination of information between study programs and students regarding the implementation of MBKM. So he suggested that study programs need to take proactive steps to overcome this biased perception among students by providing them with accurate and comprehensive information about the MBKM curriculum and its implementation.

Based on the research results, it shows that perception has a significant relationship with students' interest in participating in the MBKM program. This finding is relevant to several previous studies on perception and interest (Ismawati & Anwar, 2019; Joan Tony Sitinjak, 2019; Sukma et al., 2020). A person's perception of something will influence their interests. Interest in

participating in the MBKM program is the main basis for the success of the MBKM program in higher education. High interest will have an impact on student participation in the programs offered. Knowing student interest in the MBKM program is also the main measure of readiness to implement the MBKM program by the study program (Wijayanti & Cahyadi, 2023). Even according to research (Suyoto et al., 2022) stated that students' interest in participating in MBKM had a significant effect on increasing students' Soft Skills. Therefore, it is imperative for study programs to prioritize understanding students' perceptions and interests in the MBKM activity program with the specific aim of enhancing the quality of college graduates. By focusing on students' perspectives, study programs can tailor the MBKM initiatives to align closely with students' educational and career aspirations. This approach aims to ensure that the MBKM activities not only meet the academic requirements but also provide practical skills and experiences that are relevant to students' future careers. Additionally, by actively engaging with students' feedback and preferences, study programs can foster a supportive learning environment that encourages greater participation and enthusiasm towards the MBKM program. Ultimately, the concrete objective is to equip graduates with comprehensive competencies and capabilities that enable them to excel in their chosen fields, thereby contributing effectively to the workforce and societal development.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, several implications emerge regarding students' perceptions and interests in the Merdeka

Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program. Firstly, the majority of students view MBKM policies and programs positively, indicating a favorable reception. This positivity underscores the potential effectiveness of MBKM initiatives in aligning with students' educational goals, yet also highlights the need for clear communication to sustain this perception. Secondly, although students' interest in participating in MBKM programs primarily falls within the medium category, there exists a significant and strong positive relationship between their perceptions of MBKM policies and their interest in participation. Enhancing students' understanding and appreciation of MBKM policies could therefore potentially increase their active engagement. Higher education institutions and study programs should focus on fostering greater awareness through targeted communication strategies and showcasing successful participant outcomes. These findings emphasize the importance of continuously evaluating and improving MBKM initiatives based on student feedback to ensure relevance and impact in preparing students for future challenges and opportunities in their careers. Further research needs to be carried out, especially in exploring factors that can influence students' perceptions and interest in MBKM policies and programs. This includes technical matters related to the implementation of the MBKM program that need to be explored further so that the program can have a big impact on graduates of the study program.

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