

# **Implementation of The Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka Policy at The Faculty of Islamic Religion: A Multisite Study of UMSU and UISU**

**Rahmat Rifai Lubis<sup>1</sup>, Candra Wijaya<sup>2</sup>, Siti Halimah<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Sumatera Medan

<sup>2,3</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara Medan

\*Korespodensi: *pailubis8@gmail.com*

## **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka policy at the Islamic faculty of the Muhammadiyah University of North Sumatra and the Islamic University of North Sumatra, focusing on four things, namely implementers, targets, and management. Multicity-based qualitative research method. Data collection through observation interviews and documentation studies. The results of this study found that the implementer of MBKM in the faculty of Islam UMSU by a special MBKM unit consisting of the chairman, secretary, and members, while in the faculty of Islam UISU, the implementer is the faculty and study program, respectively. The targets of MBKM policy implementation in the faculties of Islam UMSU and UISU are undergraduate students with the right to study three semesters outside the study program to improve hard skills and soft skills for entering the world of work. MBKM implementation management on both sites includes planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling. The focus of planning on both sites becomes two, namely tools and strategies. The organization of MBKM in the faculty of Islamic religion at UMSU is under the coordinator of Vice Chancellor III, while in the faculty of Islamic religion, UISU is under the coordinator of the Chancellor. The implementation of MBKM on both sites is directed by the leadership through coaching, motivation, supervision, and evaluation. The form of policy control on both sites is the same, namely monitoring and evaluation and internal quality audits. The achievement of success in both sites has been achieved even though it is still an additional performance indicator.

**Keywords:** Merdeka Belajar, Merdeka Campus, Education Policy, Education Innovation

## A. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia, led by Minister Nadiem Makarim, issued the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy. This policy began to be realized in 2020, where previously the government had also issued the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework policy, whose orientation is also not much different from the needs and demands above, namely preparing students' ability levels to be ready to enter the world of work. Likewise, the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka policy aims to encourage students to master various sciences that are useful for entering the world of work. The main idea of Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka is to provide opportunities for students to choose the courses they will take outside of their study program (Nizam (Ed.), 2020).

Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka provides opportunities for students for 1 (one) semester or the equivalent of 20 (twenty) credits to take learning outside the study program at the same university; and a maximum of 2 (two) semesters or the equivalent of 40 (forty) credits to take learning in the same study program at different universities, learning in different study programs at different universities; and / or learning outside the university. Learning opportunities outside the study program are of course carried out in courses that are related to or aligned with courses that support learning outcomes. (Nehe 2021; Baharuddin 2021; Sari, Rafida, and Wijaya 2023).

Since its launch in 2020, not many universities have implemented the policy of the right to study 3 semesters outside the study program, several reasons include in addition to the fact that there is no obligation for universities, and also because there are still many universities that are confused or do not understand the implementation of the policy. In fact, based on researchers' searches for universities in the PTKI category specifically in Medan City (2020-2022 period), there are no campuses that have implemented the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka program. However, for the general university (PTU) category in Medan City, there are already several campuses that implement it.

There are seven universities in Medan City that have Islamic faculties, namely: (1) Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, (2) Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara, (3) Universitas Pembangunan Pancabudi, (4) Universitas Alwashliyah, (5) Universitas Dharmawangsa Medan, (6) Universitas Tjut Nyak Dhien, (7) Universitas Medan Area. Based on the researchers' initial observations at the seven universities (especially the Faculty of Islamic Religion), there are only two campuses that have implemented the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka program ideally, including in terms of updating the MBKM-based

curriculum. Meanwhile, the rest have not implemented the program. The two campuses are Muhammadiyah University of North Sumatra, and Islamic University of North Sumatra.

The initial observation also provided preliminary data related to the number of participants in the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka program in 2021, which reached 650 participants. However, specifically at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara (UMSU) Medan, the overall number is still small, the details are 2 student exchange participants, 3 internship/work practice participants, 6 teaching assistant participants, 60 international village/KKN participants (independent), 1 micro credential participant, and 60 humanitarian project participants (independent).

Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara (UISU) has implemented a 3-semester learning program outside the study program since 2020. Since the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka program (especially the 3-semester rights program for students studying outside the study program), eight forms of MBKM learning have been implemented at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara (UMSU) Medan. However, specifically at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, the forms of MBKM learning that have been implemented are internships or work practices, teaching assistance, and building thematic villages / KKN.

Initial observations at UISU also provided preliminary data regarding the number of participants in the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program in 2021, which reached 200 participants. However, specifically at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, the overall number is still relatively small, namely 2 internship / work practice participants, 3 teaching assistant participants, and 1 Indonesian student micro credential participant. Not only that, in 2021 UISU has also updated the MBKM-based curriculum.

Although both are considered as campuses that have implemented the MBKM policy, the implementation of both still recognizes several problems. The results of the researchers' initial observations on April 12-14, 2022, both have almost the same problems, namely: (1) there is still a lack of socialization at the lower level (lecturers and students) so that it makes lecturers and students experience confusion, (2) partial administrative problems that make universities not have integrated data. This is because there are two data systems, namely the government's data system and the university's data system, (3) problems in the difficulty of establishing cooperation. This difficulty lies not with the universities but with the partner institutions, in which case many of the partner institutions do not understand the MBKM program, so it sometimes takes a long time to establish cooperation and agreements. (4) Problems with the readiness of teaching staff, the lack of even distribution of socialization targets has led to the lack of readiness of lecturers to implement MBKM-based learning, (5)

the problem of equal distribution of the number of participating students also triggers disparities with other students, (6) the problem of frequent miscommunication between the campus and off-campus parties, especially in terms of grade conversion. (7) The problem of delays in providing pocket money provided by the government is also a problem in terms of the seriousness of students to participate in the MBKM program. (8) the problem of the absence of an MBKM information center on the intended campus or campus of origin.

To find out the position of distinction with other studies, the position of the two campuses as research sites will first be stated, then analyze the results of previous relevant research to see the gaps in these two research problems. Regarding the position, UMSU is a campus with the status of a Public University under the auspices of the Ministry of Education Culture Research and Technology. It has been established since February 27, 1957 or when it was 65 years old, within the period of the start of this research (2021) UMSU has an A accreditation reputation. UMSU has 9 faculties of undergraduate programs, and 8 master study programs. One thing that makes it different from other Public University campuses in Medan City is that UMSU has a Faculty of Islamic Religion with 4 study programs (PAI, PIAUD, PBS, MBS). The existence of the Faculty of Islamic Religion also makes UMSU compete with PTKI in Medan city, which is the main house for the implementation of Islamic sciences. However, in relation to the MBKM policy, the Faculty of Islamic Religion UMSU has implemented it, while none of the PTKI in Medan city has implemented it, even in 2022 UMSU Medan was named the campus with the best MBKM implementation in the LLDIKTI-1 North Sumatra region. Not only that, UMSU also has its Muhammadiyah characteristics which will certainly color the MBKM-based learning model. Of course, this condition becomes a distinction which will then become one of the research verdicts in the form of contributions and references for other campuses in implementing MBKM.

Then UISU is also a campus with the status of a Public University (PTU) under the auspices of the Ministry of Education Culture Research and Technology. Having been established since January 7, 1951 or when it was 71 years old, in that span of time UISU currently has a B accredited campus reputation. There are 9 faculties and 5 master study programs managed by UISU. One thing that makes it different from other PTU campuses in Medan City is that UMSU has a Faculty of Islamic Religion with 4 study programs (PAI, MPI, ES, IAT, IPR). Similar to UMSU, the existence of FAI also makes it compete with PTKI in Medan city, which is the main house for the implementation of Islamic sciences. However, in relation to the MBKM policy, when PTKI has not implemented it, FAI UISU

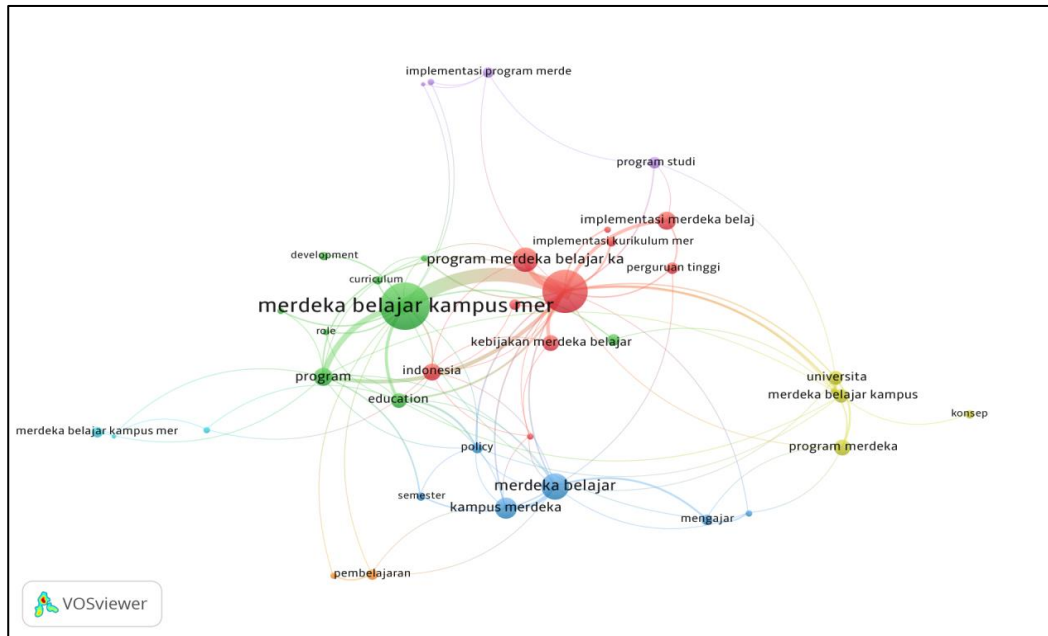
has implemented it. As a campus with Islamic characteristics, it certainly becomes its own color in implementing MBKM.

Then the distinction in terms of previous research, the period 2020-2022 shows that research on Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) has been carried out a lot, such as (1) The Implementation of Independent Learning Independent Campus: The New Paradigm of Education in Indonesia, this research was conducted at Ibnu Khaldun University Bogor, (in general, it does not focus on FAI), the focus of the study is on analyzing the impact of implementing the MBKM policy on improving the performance of lecturers, students, and administrative staff (Sa'diyah et al., 2022) (2) The Independent Campus Program for Higher Education in Indonesia: The Role of Government Support and the Readiness of Institutions, Lecturers and Students, This study was conducted in universities under Kopertis region IV of West Java and Banten Provinces. The focus of the study is on PTU and not on FAI, in terms of the relationship between stakeholder readiness in the independent campus program and the success of program implementation (Yusuf, 2021) (3) Implementation of the Independent Campus Learning Policy of FISIP UPN Veteran East Java, The focus of the study is on PTU and not on FAI, in terms of policy implementation and its obstacles (Puspitasari and Nugroho 2021). (4) Implications and Benefits of Implementing the Independent Campus Learning Policy for Trisakti University Students, The focus of research on PTU is not on FAI, which examines students' understanding of the MBKM policy and analyzes the implications and benefits of the policy (Septiani et al., 2022). (5) Implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Policy, Independent Campus at Private Universities: Survey of History Education at Flores University, The focus of research on PTU is not on FAI, in terms of surveying the responses of Flores university students about the independent campus program (Mei et al., 2022).

So based on the position and the results of the analysis of previous relevant research, the author can position the distinction of this research lies in the specificity of the study of the MBKM policy at the Faculty of Islamic Religion which has never been done, especially in the city of Medan, and has not even been implemented at PTKI, so the distinctiveness of Islam and the implementation model in the two universities is the target of this research novelty.

In connection with the gap in research topics, this research uses the Publish or Perish application tool version 8.4.4041.8250 and VOSviewer version 1.6.18. Publish or Perish serves to select research results that are relevant to the research topic, while VOSviewer serves to visualize bibliometric analysis and find topics that still have opportunities for research. Data selection with Publish or Perish is carried out on Google Scholar indexation

using the keyword "Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka". The results found 398 relevant research topics, while specifically with the keyword "Implementation of the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka Policy" found 176 relevant topics. Then the results are visualized using VOSviewer, the results are as below:



**Figure 1.** VOSviewer Bibliometric Visualization

Based on the visualization above, in scope, there are no topics related to the implementation of MBKM at the Faculty of Islam. Furthermore, in the aspect of discussion, it still revolves around the implementation of the program, but not the policy implementation activities. Who is the implementer, who is the target, and how is the management of MBKM implementation, has not been seen at all in the Vos Viewer visualization. Therefore, the scope of the study at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, and the study on the aspects of implementers, targets, management and achievement.

Based on the problems mentioned above, and the various uniqueness and advantages of the implementation of Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka at the universities mentioned above, the researcher is interested in conducting a more in-depth study with the research title Implementation of Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka Policy at the Faculty of Islamic Religion: Multi Site Study at UMSU and UISU.

## **B. TINJAUAN PUSTAKA**

In the context of policy according to Purwanto and Sulistyastuti, implementation is a series of activities intended to distribute policies or decisions issued by one or several people who have the authority so that it can achieve the desired goals (Purwanto & Sulistyastuti,

1991: 21). According to Werner, J. and K. Wegrich, the term implementation is one of the seven stages of the public policy formulation cycle. The seven stages in question are agenda-setting, formulation, legitimacy, implementation, evaluation, reformulation, and termination. The seven cycles, if depicted in the form of a circular framework, will appear as shown below:

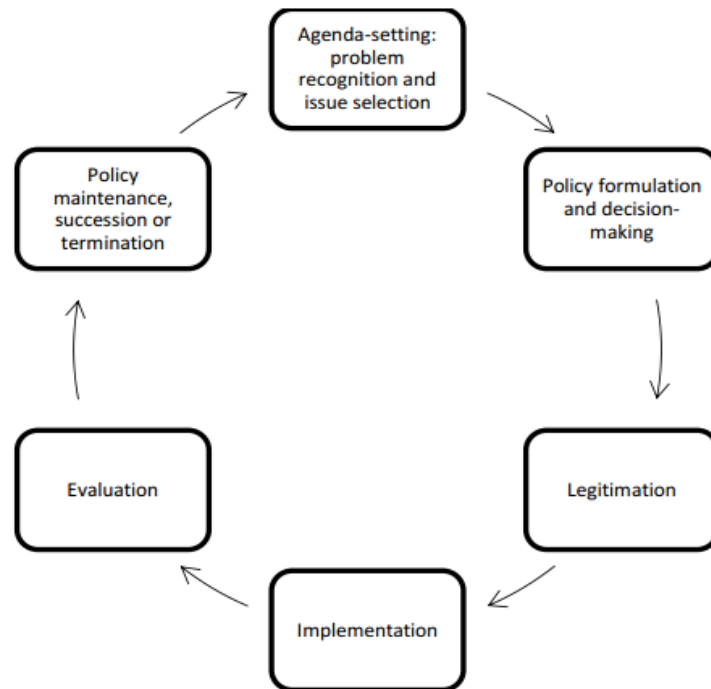


Figure 2. Policy Theory Cycle (Jann & Wegrich, 2017: 43-47)

George C. Edwards and Ira Sharkansky argue that the definition of policy is anything in the form of a statement and what the government does, or does not do. Policies can be in the form of goals and objectives, from programs issued by the government. The policy is issued in the form of regulations or legislation or it can also be verbal (speech), as well as programs or real actions they make (Edwards & Sharkansky, 1978: 2). William N. Dunn argues that policy is a series of government products intended to be done or not done by the community. Typically policies to regulate the course of government or political life (Dunn, 2005: 95).

If it is associated with education, the implementation of education policy can be interpreted as the application or implementation of written or oral rules about education made based on formal decisions of organizations/governments that are authorized in the field of education, are binding and regulate people's behavior with the aim of creating a new value system in educational affairs.

Education policy is needed with the assumption that governments, or organizations often have dynamics, besides that they often try to meet the needs of society. On that basis, the policy becomes something that must exist for the running of the government or organization. Without a policy, it will certainly be difficult to achieve goals as demanded or needed by the community. Education policy is closely related to improving the standard and quality of life of many people. To be able to organize the livelihood of many people in the field of education, it is very necessary to have an education policy. (Putri and Astutik 2023).

There are several approaches to policy implementation including the following: (1) Top-Down Approach, this approach assumes that the main actor of successful implementation lies with the decision maker, while other parties who have involvement in the implementation process may be considered as obstacles. (2) Structural Approach, this approach centers on the belief that certain organizational structures are only suitable for certain types of tasks and environments. So the organizational structure based on their respective main tasks and functions is very important in terms of policy implementation, (3) Procedural and Managerial Approach, this approach does not require structuring the bureaucratic structures of services that are suitable for program implementation, but requires efforts to develop appropriate processes and procedures, (4) Behavioral approach, the orientation of policy implementation activities in this approach is on human behavior as the implementer of the policy. (Abdoellah & Rusfiana, 2016: 62).

Merdeka belajar-kampus merdeka is one of the policies of the minister of education and culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Nadiem Makarim. This program was implemented in 2020, as a realization of the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 3 of 2020 concerning SNPT, in which article 18 describes the fulfillment of the study period and study load of undergraduate and applied undergraduate students, namely: (1) following the entire learning process in the study program at PT in accordance with the existing period and study load, (2) following the learning process in the study program (part of the period and study load), and partly following outside the study program. (Muhammad Yunus (ed.), 2022: 97-98).

As stated in the MBKM guidebook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the purpose of the MBKM version of the learning rights program outside the study program is to improve the ability of graduates in terms of soft skills and hard skills, to be more prepared to face the demands and needs of the times, to prepare graduates who are able to become leaders who are tough and have a personality. Experiential learning programs with



flexible models will facilitate students in developing potential in line with their passions and talents.

Referring to Permendikbud No. 3 of 2020 concerning national standards for higher education in article 15 paragraph 1, it describes several forms of learning activities carried out within the study program and outside the study program. Commonly known as 8 forms of MBKM learning activities. The eight activities are described as follows: Each form of MBKM learning activity is (1) Student Exchange, universities provide opportunities for students to study outside their study program; (2) Internship / work practice, Internship / work practice is learning in the form of internships / practices in companies directly; (3) Teaching assistance in educational units, a form of learning by providing opportunities for students who have an interest in education to be involved in teaching or becoming teachers in certain educational units; (4) Research, a form of learning that provides opportunities for students who have a passion to become researchers, through internships in research center laboratories, or study centers; (5) Humanitarian projects, a form of learning that provides opportunities for students to be involved in humanitarian project activities; (6) Entrepreneurial activities, a form of learning that provides opportunities for young people who have an interest and passion in entrepreneurship; (7) Independent Studies / Projects, many students have a passion to realize great works that are contested at the international level or works from innovative ideas. (8) Village Building / Thematic Real Work College, is a form of learning with a method of providing real experience to students to live together with the community, who are directly involved in identifying existing potential.

### **C. METHOD**

This research is a type of field research with qualitative methods, while the approach used is multisite. There are two sites in this study, namely UMSU and UISU. Both sites have different accreditations, but in the initial year of this research, of the 7 universities in Medan City that have a Faculty of Islamic Religion, only UMSU and UISU have implemented MBKM, while the others have not implemented it at all. However, in relation to the research focus that has been determined, these two sites are assumed to meet the same criteria, namely (1) both have faculties of Islamic religion under the auspices of PTU type campuses, (2) both campuses are located in the same working area in the center of North Sumatra province, namely Medan City (3) both faculties have had MBKM policies and implemented them since 2020, (4) both faculties are in Islamic-based universities that adhere to the chess dharma of higher education, (5) both have updated the MBKM-based curriculum, (6) both have MBKM performance indicators listed in the quality standards.

The research data sources consist of primary data sources, namely the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs or Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Deans and Vice Deans for Curriculum and Academic Affairs, Head of the MHBM Unit, Head of the Quality Assurance Agency and Head of Study Program and Study Program Secretary. The secondary data are lecturers, students, partner institutions, library references.

Data collection uses three techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation is carried out by making direct observations of the implementation of the independent learning-campus independent policy carried out in the two locations. Observations of the implementation include observations of policy implementation, forms of MBKM-based learning, learning processes, learning administration, and about the obstacles faced. Interviews were conducted directly and structured, which were carried out to obtain policy implementation data focused on four things, namely implementers, targets, management and the successful implementation of MBKM at UMSU and UISU. Documentation is carried out to collect data that is documentary in nature, especially those directly related to the independent study policy.

The multicluster analysis of this research adopts Robert K. Yin's theory, as shown in the following table:

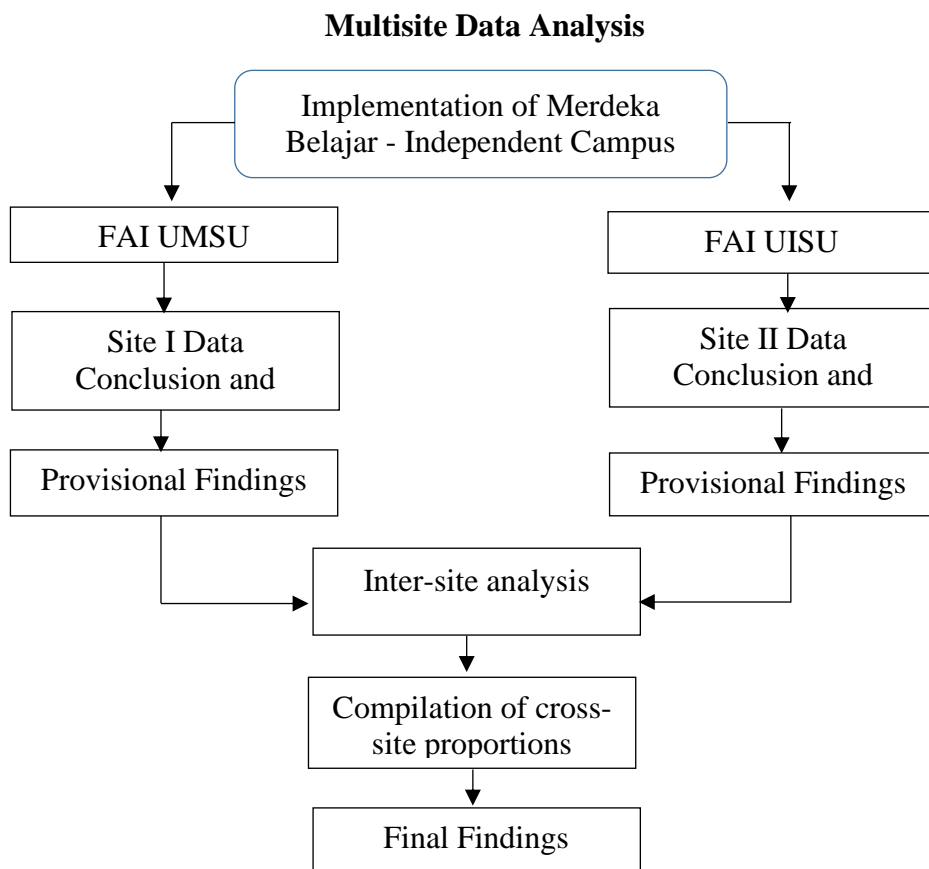


Figure 3. Multisite Analysis (Yin, Robert K., 2003: 114-115)

To ensure the validity of the data, triangulation of data sources was carried out involving leaders, lecturers, and students, Faculty of Islamic Religion UMSU and UISU, triangulation of data collection instruments through the use of a variety of instruments in collecting the same data and diverse data, extension of participation and persistence of observations made by researchers during data collection.

#### D. HASIL PEMBAHASAN

##### a. Implementation of the Independent Learning-Campus Policy Implementation at the Faculty of Islamic Religion

The research findings in this sub-discussion include five things, namely the procedure for determining the implementer, the scope of work of the implementer, the composition of the implementer, the main tasks and functions of the implementer, and the special competence of the implementer. To facilitate the description of the discussion, it will be presented in a scheme:

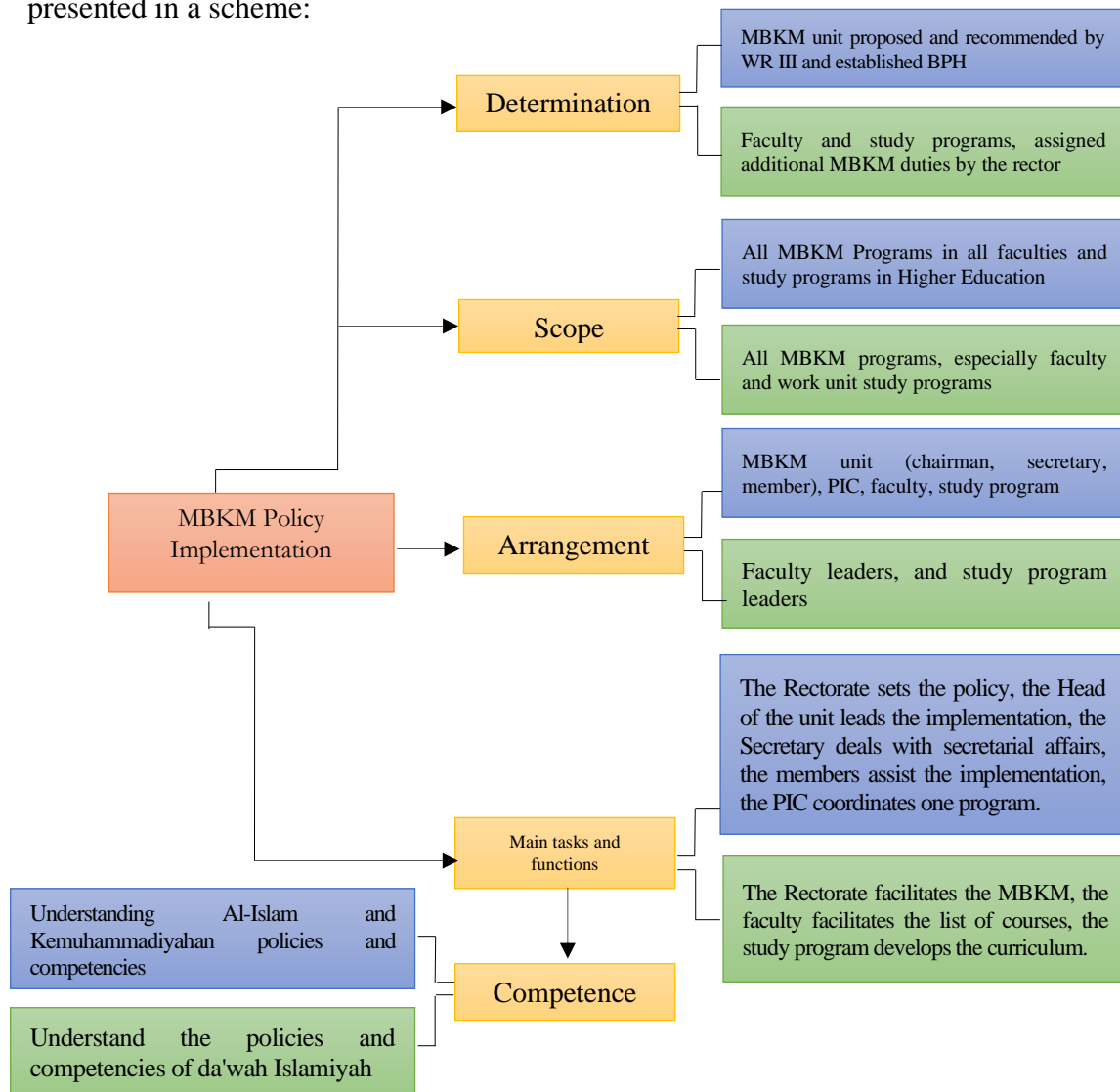


Figure 4. Schematic of research findings on MBKM implementers at UMSU (blue box) and UISU (green box)

The research findings show that there are differences in the implementers of MBKM implementation in the two sites. MBKM activities at UMSU are assigned to a special unit called the MBKM unit. The unit has several structured personnel, who are specifically appointed to be in charge of managing the implementation of MBKM. However, in its implementation, the rectorate, faculties and study programs are still involved but are limited to their main duties and functions in academic services. Not only forming a special unit, UMSU also establishes a Person in Charge (PIC). This is different from the implementation of MBKM at UISU, which has not been structured in a special unit, so that its management is left to the faculties and study programs respectively. In terms of determination procedures, the faculty and study programs as MBKM implementers do not go through a special mechanism.

The research findings on the implementers of MBKM policy implementation on both sites concluded two patterns of implementers, namely special implementers in separate MKBM units (partial) and implementers integrated with existing faculty and study program leadership positions. Universities may choose between these two alternative patterns, because the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research does not provide specific rules regarding this pattern. Referring to the guidebook *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* published by Kemdikbudristek, it only regulates the parties involved in the implementation of MBKM. However, the pattern of the implementation structure is not regulated in detail (Nizam (Ed.), 2020: 5).

The differences in the two MBKM implementation patterns make the scope of work or work zone different as well. The special implementation pattern (MBKM unit) is responsible for the entire faculty or all study programs in the university. While the pattern of implementers integrated with faculties and study programs is assigned to faculties or study programs that become work units. Simply put, the implementer in this second pattern does not take care of the MBKM program outside of the faculty and study program where he is assigned. Although the work zones of the two patterns are different, both manage the MBKM activities as a whole.

In their theory Herbert G. Hicks and G. Gray Gullet through their book *Organizatio: Theory and Behavior* explain that the more specific the position in the organizational hierarchy, the more specific the relationship between authority, power, accountability and responsibility. Furthermore, the two figures explained that a certain position structure is said

to be ideal if it fulfills the following elements: (1) it has a good structure, which can describe the relationship of authority, power, accountability and responsibility, (2) it has clear job specifications, (3) the hierarchy of organizational goals is clearly stated, (4) the arrangement of rights and obligations of organizational members is made clearly, (5) the organization tends to plan the duties of members, (6) organizational membership is obtained consciously with a specific purpose (Hicks & Ray Gullet, 1996: 169).

With regard to the organizational structure of MBKM implementers, of course the two sites have different patterns. The organizational structure of the MBKM special unit at UMSU consists of the unit head, unit secretary, and members. The line of command to the top of the unit is to the Vice Rector for Student Affairs, and the line of coordination to the side of the unit is with other institutions including faculties and study programs. Meanwhile, the organizational structure of MBKM implementers at UISU consists of deans and vice deans, and study program heads and study program secretaries. MBKM activities are tasks that are assigned to the existing structure of faculties and study programs. The line of command is upward to the Rector, and the line of coordination is sideways with other institutions.

The similarity of the organizational structure in the two sites lies in the line of command and coordination. The line shows that the MBKM implementer does not stand alone, but is an addition or part of the existing organizational structure. According to Tarmizi, the line of command is marked by a clear straight line, which shows the hierarchy in creating a superior-subordinate relationship. The line can connect administrative officials with members or between officials of different levels. As a symbol of vertical relations, the line of command implies that elements lower in the hierarchy must obey orders or instructions from their superiors. On the other hand, the dotted line symbolizes coordination. Like the command line, the coordination line can connect all elements in the group. The difference lies in the indication of a principally parallel relationship in the coordination line (Tarmizi, 2019: 11).

MBKM implementers certainly have main tasks and functions (tupoksi), for this reason, researchers compiled all parties involved in implementing MBKM at several points as follows: (1) Rector, establishes MBKM policy, divided by vice rectors according to their respective fields of responsibility; (2) Faculty, coordinating the MBKM program in study programs, including curriculum preparation and grade rules; (3) Study programs, adjust the MBKM curriculum, facilitate students across study programs, offer courses across study programs; (4) Quality assurance, setting MBKM quality standards and controlling MBKM

activities; (5) Head of MBKM Management Unit, leads, coordinates, and controls MBKM administration; (6) Secretary of the MBKM Management Unit, takes care of the unit secretariat and administration of activities; (7) MBKM Management Unit members, realize programs, provide services to students, and manage information; (8) Person in Charge (PIC), MBKM program coordinator at the rectorate, unit, faculty, and study program levels.

The last discussion about this sub-section concerns the competencies that must be mastered by MBKM implementers. An interesting finding in both sites is about Islamic competence that characterizes science, culture and work practices. Islamic competence is a compulsory competence that must be used as a foundation in all activities by the academic community, including MBKM implementers. With regard to this competency, UMSU has a characteristic called *Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyah*, which in a broad sense is the entire Islamic teaching which includes creed, morals, worship and worldly *muamalat* sourced from the *Al-Qur'an* and *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad *Saw.* as understood and implemented by *Muhammadiyah* in its movement.

In the context of *Muhammadiyah* universities, AIK has three dimensions, first AIK as learning material, so that there are AIK courses and there are lecturers or education who teach it, students can take MBKM if they pass the course and can graduate if they pass the comprehensive test of the course. Second, AIK as a value or as a frame of reference for daily behavior and as a frame of reference for academic behavior. MBKM implementers must reflect ten *Muhammadiyah* behaviors, namely: (1) pure faith, (2) progressive Islam, (3) sincere honesty and trustworthiness, (4) intelligent knowledge, (5) moderate wisdom, (6) high work ethic, discipline, and productivity, (7) Fair and Ennobling Humans, (8) the spirit of *al-Maun* which means caring and empowering the weak, (9) Love of Charity and Business, (10) Organizing and Cooperating.

Islamic competence is also applied to MBKM implementers at UISU, namely the competence of *da'wah islamiyah*. In fact, this competency characteristic adds to the *dharma* (obligations) of UISU, so that it becomes *caturdharma* (education, research, community service, and Islamic preaching), and that is what makes the difference with other universities. UISU's academic community, including MBKM managers, must reflect Islamic values in every learning activity, and make academic services part of Islamic preaching. Some of the behaviors that must be reflected in MBKM managers are (1) practicing Islamic teachings (creed, worship, morals), (2) being knowledgeable, charitable, moral, (3) being diligent, tenacious and earnest, (4) Implementing the internalization of Islamic values in learning, (5)

carrying out the role of a preacher in the midst of society, (6) building silaturahmi among the academic community.

**b. Target Implementation of the Independent Learning Policy - Independent Campus at the Faculty of Islamic Religion**

The research findings in this sub-discussion include five things, namely the basis for determining targets, target objects, limits on the number of students participating in MBKM, target object requirements, scope and distribution of target objects. To facilitate the description of the discussion, it will first be visualized in the research findings scheme:

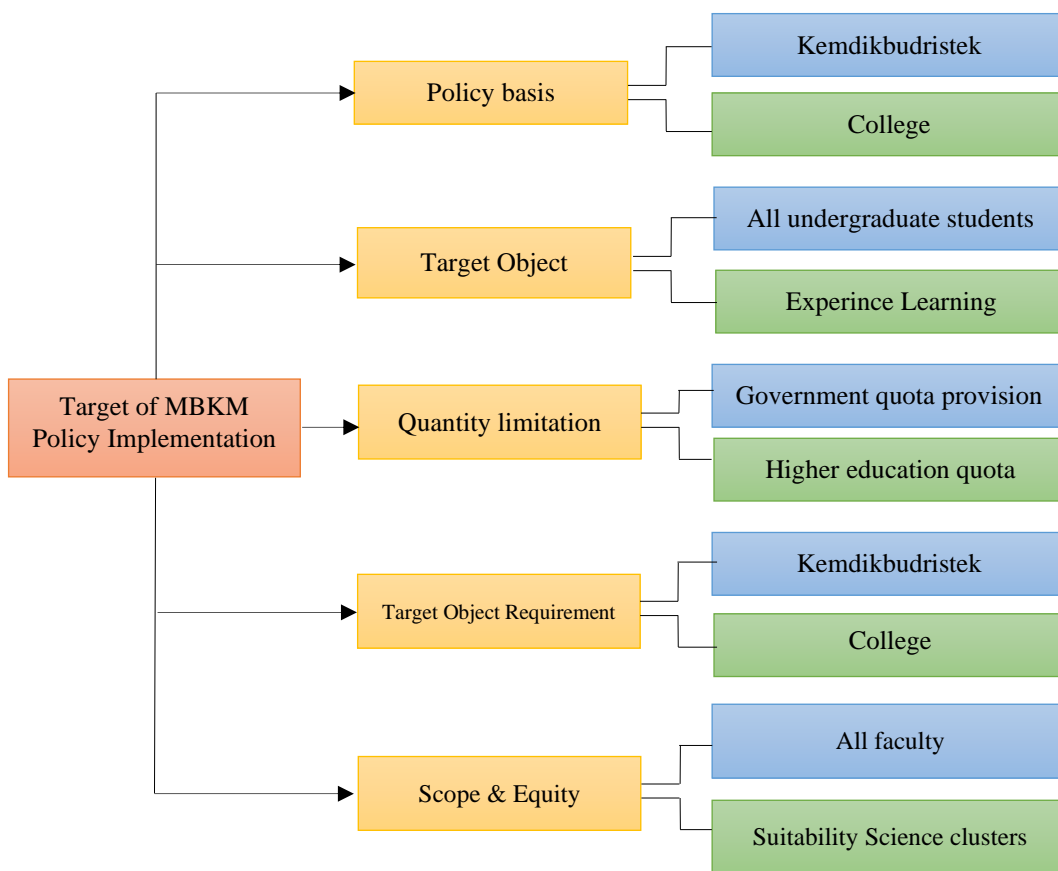


Figure 5. Chart of Research Findings Targeted Implementation of MBKM at FAI UMSU (in blue) and FAI UISU (in Green)

The research shows that the basis for determining MBKM policy targets at both sites is based on central policies from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, as well as internal university policies. Although the research focused on the Faculty of Islamic Studies, the internal policies at both sites were not made by the faculty, but by the university as a whole. This means that central policies apply to all universities in

Indonesia, while internal university policies apply to all faculties and study programs at the university.

This explanation is in line with the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka Guidelines published by the Directorate General of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2020. This guide is intended as a reference for managers, university leaders, lecturers, students, industry partners, and other related parties in implementing MBKM, a policy originating from Kemdikbudristek. (Yusuf, 2021: 281).

The implementation of MBKM at both sites also involves internal university policies, which are derivatives of central policies. Policy documents in both sites show the existence of general policies regulated by the government, coupled with specific policies that only apply in each college. For example, at UMSU and UISU there is an independent MBKM policy as well as other policies related to curriculum and Islamic propagation. In the context of public policy analysis by William N. Dunn, there are two policy traits, namely centralization and decentralization. Indonesia has implemented a decentralized policy system through Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, but the hierarchy still follows and supports central government programs. (Dunn, 2005: 154).

The research findings regarding the target objects of MBKM implementation at the Faculty of Islamic Religion in both universities are divided into two things, namely the beneficiaries and the form of benefits received. (Ishak, 2021: 53). All students of the Faculty of Islamic Studies, regardless of study program, become the target object of MBKM beneficiaries. The forms of benefits received include increasing graduate competence in soft skills and hard skills, as well as learning experiences outside the classroom or the world of work. (Rachman, Setiawan, & Putro, 2022: 57).

The analysis shows that the substance of the MBKM target, namely opportunities for learning outside the classroom, is in line with the tradition of *rihlah ilmiah* in Islamic science. (Asari, 2006: 198). Although MBKM is conducted in an organized manner, its essence is to increase insight and experience through learning experiences outside the classroom, a concept that has long been known in the Islamic scholarly tradition. (Ramadhan, 2022: 216)

### **c. Implementation Management of Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka**

The study found that MBKM planning involved internal and external parties at both sites. The internal parties come from the sending universities, while the external parties are the receiving partners. Universities with specialized MBKM units become internal parties and



plan MBKM under the coordination of university leaders. The MBKM unit together with faculties, study programs, and PICs develop the plan in accordance with the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Research guidelines.

Universities without specialized units involve university leaders, faculties, study programs, and partners in planning. The rectorate prepares MBKM policies and guidelines, the dean prepares curriculum and cooperation documents, while study programs adjust the curriculum to the Merdeka campus implementation model. Partners are also involved in developing the programs listed in the MoU /SKP. The policy planning mechanism is different at FAI UMSU and UISU. At FAI UMSU, it starts with identifying needs, team meetings, drafting, examining, and determining policies. At UISU, the quality assurance agency handles policy development with stages involving meetings, FGDs, and rector approval.

The focus of planning is also different. FAI UMSU focuses on policy planning, curriculum, value conversion, and cooperation guidelines because it has a special unit. While FAI UISU without a special unit focuses on tools (curriculum documents, value conversion, technical guidelines), implementers (registration officers, lecturers), and strategies (implementation steps, program management, budget allocation).

Furthermore, organizing or placing MBKM involves assigning activities, dividing work into specific tasks, and determining who is responsible for these tasks. At UMSU, there is a special MBKM unit that has institutional authority to manage MBKM, while at UISU, MBKM is assigned to existing institutions such as faculties and study programs without special units. The MBKM unit has a structure with a chairperson, secretary, members, and PIC for each MBKM program. Policy decisions remain with the university leadership, although the MBKM unit has coordination with them.

MBKM management by adding tasks to institutions means there is no specific structure; deans and study program leaders are responsible for the implementation of MBKM. From an organizational perspective, faculties and study programs are under the leadership of the rector for academic, financial, student, and cooperation affairs. The external person in charge of MBKM at UMSU is the vice chancellor III in charge of student affairs and cooperation, while at UISU, it is the authority of the vice chancellor IV in the field of cooperation and entrepreneurship.

MBKM's cooperation with educational and industrial partners is important for the implementation of education and training, as well as curriculum development and internship opportunities for students. This cooperation also involves domestic and foreign universities to

diversify learning experiences, improve the quality of education, and expand international networks.

The next area of management concerns actuating, which is the effort to move members of a group or organization to work together to achieve desired goals, through concrete steps such as providing instructions, empowering resources, providing constructive feedback, and motivating team members. Leaders at the Faculty of Islamic Religion at UMSU and UISU play an important role in directing, shaping the character of the organization, and ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in achieving goals.

MBKM socialization is conducted through various methods such as technical guidance, training, working meetings, workshops, experience sharing, and seminars. Socialization is done both directly and through digital media such as social media, webinars, and radio/podcasts. Basic working principles in the implementation of MBKM in both sites include commitment to quality services, close cooperation with related parties, efficient time management, clear goal setting, skill development, good communication, and response to policy changes.

Leaders motivate their subordinates by providing active support, creating a positive work climate, handling work obstacles responsively, giving awards and recognizing achievements, and providing rewards such as verbal, written awards, incentives, and opportunities to become resource persons in sharing session activities.

The last management highlights the control of Merdeka Belajar (MBKM) on both sites, which is carried out through monitoring, evaluation, and internal quality audits. This process aims to ensure compliance with established standards, with monitoring carried out periodically to oversee the implementation of learning, research, and community service activities. Evaluation is used to assess the quality and impact of the MBKM implementation, which becomes the basis for policy improvements or adjustments to increase the effectiveness of this program.(Septiani et al. 2022; Kolb 2014).

Monitoring and evaluation (monev) in Merdeka Belajar management is a process of systematically monitoring and assessing program performance, to ensure the achievement of desired goals and results. Internal quality audit is also an integral part of MBKM control, with a thorough audit to assess compliance with established standards, as well as to find potential risks and ensure the Merdeka Belajar system is running as planned.(Septiani et al. 2022; Kolb 2014; Jufriadi et al. 2022; Martini 2021; Christensen 2013).

The implementation of controlling higher education standards on both sites is handled by quality assurance institutions that vary in hierarchy, but have the same duties. Quality

assurance institutions at various levels are responsible for ensuring and improving the quality of education, research, and community service. The timing of monitoring and AMI is also similar at both sites, with monitoring conducted every semester and AMI every academic year.

Obstacles in controlling MBKM include lecturers' understanding of the program and grade conversion problems. Improvement and evaluation efforts include upgrading lecturers' skills through various activities such as workshops and focus group discussions. Grade conversion can be done with three different types of conversion, namely free form, structure form, and hybrid form.

The follow-up of these obstacles is different in both sites, with FAI UMSU updating the curriculum to the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) approach, while FAI UISU controls students before choosing the MBKM program to avoid incompatibility with the graduate profile. The alignment of curriculum and courses with graduate profiles aims to ensure that students can develop competencies desired by industry or specific fields of work after graduation.

## **E. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the MBKM implementers at UMSU and UISU are different. At UMSU, the implementation is carried out by a special structure called the MBKM unit consisting of the chairman, secretary and members, while at UISU the implementers are the faculty and their respective study programs. The target of implementing the MBKM Policy at FAI UMSU and UISU targets FAI undergraduate students to study three semesters outside the study program to improve their hard skills and soft skills to enter the world of work, with a *rihlah ilmiah* approach. UMSU and UISU have a quota of MBKM recipients; students who are not included in the quota can join the independent MBKM program. Central MBKM requirements follow government regulations, while independent MBKM is determined by universities. The learning objectives outside the study program are the same in both institutions. MBKM implementation management consists of planning where the focus of planning is on policies, implementation strategies, and success outcomes. Then management also concerns the organization, namely the placement of implementers to carry out all MBKM activities, and MBKM control is carried out by quality assurance agencies by referring to predetermined standards.

## REFERENCES

- Abdoellah, Awan Y., and Yudi Rusfiana. 2016. *Teori Dan Analisis Kebijakan Publik*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Asari, Hasan. 2006. *Menguak Sejarah Mencari 'Ibrah: Risalah Sejarah Sosial-Intlektual Muslim*. Bandung: Citapustaka Media Perintis.
- Baharuddin, Muhammad Rusli. 2021. "Adaptasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (Fokus: Model MBKM Program Studi)." *Jurnal Studi Guru Dan Pembelajaran* 4 (1): 195–205. <https://doi.org/10.30605/jsgp.4.1.2021.591>.
- Christensen, Clayton M. 2013. *The Innovator's Dilemma: When New Technologies Cause Great Firms to Fail*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Dunn, William N. 2005. *Analisis Kebijakan Publik*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Edwards, George C, and Ira Sharkansky. 1978. *The Policy Predicament: Making and Implementing Public Policy*. San Fransico: W.H Freeman and Campany.
- Hicks, Herbert G., and G. Ray Gullet. 1996. *Organization Theory and Behavior*. Jakarta: Earth.
- Jann, Werner, and Kai Wegrich. 2017. "Theories of the Policy Cycle." In *Handbook of Public Policy Analysis*, 69–88. Routledge.
- Jufriadi, Akhmad, Choirul Huda, Sudi Dul Aji, Hestiningtyas Yuli Pratiwi, and Hena Dian Ayu. 2022. "Analisis Keterampilan Abad 21 Melalui Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka." *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan* 7 (1): 39–53. <https://doi.org/10.24832/jpnk.v7i1.2482>.
- Kolb, David A. 2014. *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. FT press.
- Martini, Ns Made. 2021. *Membangun Pembelajaran Merdeka Belajar Dan Kampus Merdeka Di Pendidikan Tinggi*. Bandung: Media Sains Indonesia.
- Mei, Agutina, Finsensius Yesekiel Naja, and Josef Kusi. 2022. "Implementasi Kebijakan 'Merdeka Belajar, Kampus Merdeka' Pada Perguruan Tinggi Swasta: Survey Pendidikan Sejarah Universitas Flores." *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 4 (2): 2066–76.
- Muhammad Yunus (ed.). 2022. *Merdeka Belajar Dan Kampus Merdeka*. Malang: Literasi Nusantara.
- Nehe, Berita Mambarasi. 2021. "Analisis Konsep Implementasi Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka Dalam Menghadapi Era Revolusi Industri 4.0 Di Masa Pendemik Di STKIP Setia Budhi Rangkasbitung 2021." In *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Setia Budhi*, 1:13–19. <http://jurnal.stkipsetiabudhi.ac.id/index.php/prosiding/article/view/18>.
- Nizam (Ed.). 2020. *Buku Panduan Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka*. Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi Kemdikbud RI.

- Purwanto, Purwanto, and Sulistyastuti Sulistyastuti. 1991. *Analisis Kebijakan Dari Formulasi Ke Implementasi Kebijakan*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Puspitasari, Ratna, and Riant Nugroho. 2021. "Implementasi Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka FISIP UPN Veteran Jawa Timur." *Dinamika Governance: Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Negara* 11 (2): 276–92. <https://www.ejournal.upnjatim.ac.id/index.php/jdg/article/view/2539>.
- Putri, Iga Finalia, and Anita Puji Astutik. 2023. "Implementasi Merdeka Belajar - Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) Di Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo." *Asatiza: Jurnal Pendidikan* 4 (2): 125–36. <https://doi.org/10.46963/asatiza.v4i2.936>.
- Rachman, Ali, Muhammad Andri Setiawan, and Hendro Yulius Suryo Putro. 2022. "The Implementation of Independent Learning-Independent Campus in the Guidance and Counseling Study Program." *Bisma The Journal of Counseling* 6 (1): 56–65. <https://doi.org/10.23887/bisma.v6i1.42384>.
- Ramadhan, M Riski. 2022. "Dinamika Rihlah Ilmiah Ulama Hadis Periode Awal Islam." *Hadharah: Jurnal Keislaman Dan Peradaban* 16 (2): 213–24. <https://doi.org/10.15548/h.v16i2.4836>.
- Sa'diyah, Maemunah, Immas Nurhayati, Endri Endri, Dedi Supriadi, and Yuggo Afrianto. 2022. "The Implementation of Independent Learning Independent Campus: The New Paradigm of Education in Indonesia." *Preprints* 20 (2): 2022. <https://doi.org/10.20944/preprints202202.0302.v1>.
- Sari, Novita, Tien Rafida, and Candra Wijaya. 2023. "Implementation of The Merdeka Campus Policy At Dharmawangsa University." *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12 (1): 90–123. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30868/ei.v12i01.4452>.
- Septiani, Winnie, Astri Rinanti, Triwulandari Satitidjati Dewayana, Melati Feuranita Fachrul, Mohammad Ischak, and Wegig Murwonugroho. 2022. "Implikasi Dan Manfaat Pelaksanaan Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka Bagi Mahasiswa Universitas Trisakti." *Jurnal Penelitian Dan Karya Ilmiah Lembaga Penelitian Universitas Trisakti* 7 (1): 130–40. <https://doi.org/10.25105/pdk.v7i1.12711>.
- Tarmizi, Tarmizi. 2019. "Desain Organisasi Dalam Pengembangan Struktur Organisasi Perguruan Tinggi Di Era Industri 4.0." *Jurnal Tahdzibi: Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 4 (1): 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.24853/tahdzibi.4.1.1-14>.
- Yin, Robert K. 2003. *Case Study Research; Design and Methode*. California: Sage Publications.
- Yusuf, F A. 2021. "The Independent Campus Program for Higher Education in Indonesia: The Role of Government Support and the Readiness of Institutions, Lecturers and Students." *Journal of Social Studies Education Research* 12 (2): 280–304. [https://api.elsevier.com/content/abstract/scopus\\_id/85110713401](https://api.elsevier.com/content/abstract/scopus_id/85110713401).

