THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT PROGRAM KAMPUS MENGAJAR

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Abstract:
The Kampus Merdeka initiative, launched by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, provides university students with opportunities to gain off-campus learning experiences and contribute to improving educational quality, particularly in enhancing literacy and numeracy. This study examines the implementation of the Kampus Mengajar program at SMP Negeri 3 Watampone, Bone Regency, using a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving school principals, teachers, and participating students. The data analysis process involved data condensation, presentation, and conclusion drawing, with a focus on data validity. The implementation process was divided into three stages: pre-assignment, assignment and reporting, and post-assignment. While the program largely follows national guidelines and shows positive contributions to school activities, several major challenges were identified. These include disparities in the perception and policy regarding semester credit recognition between universities and the Ministry of Education, limited benchmarks to measure program effectiveness, varying capacities of student participants, and a lack of structured mechanisms to sustain the program's outcomes. To address these issues, the study recommends the standardization of academic credit conversion policies, improved preparatory training to strengthen student competencies, the development of clear evaluation metrics for effectiveness, and the integration of program sustainability plans into future cycles of Kampus Mengajar. These recommendations are critical to ensuring the long-term success and consistency of this national education initiative.

Abstrak:
Program Kampus Merdeka yang diluncurkan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia memberikan kesempatan kepada mahasiswa untuk memperoleh pengalaman belajar di luar kampus serta berkontribusi dalam peningkatan kualitas pendidikan, khususnya dalam hal literasi dan numerasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji implementasi program Kampus Mengajar di SMP Negeri 3 Watampone, Kabupaten Bone, dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi dengan melibatkan kepala sekolah, guru, dan mahasiswa peserta program sebagai informan. Analisis data dilakukan melalui proses kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan dengan tetap menjaga validitas data. Proses pelaksanaan program terbagi dalam tiga tahapan, yaitu pra-penugasan, pelaksanaan dan pelaporan, serta pasca-penugasan. Meskipun pelaksanaan program sebagian besar telah

mengikuti panduan nasional dan memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap aktivitas sekolah, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi beberapa tantangan utama. Tantangan tersebut meliputi perbedaan persepsi dan kebijakan mengenai konversi satuan kredit semester (SKS) antara perguruan tinggi dan Kementerian, belum adanya tolok ukur yang jelas untuk mengukur efektivitas program, kapasitas mahasiswa yang masih bervariasi, serta belum adanya mekanisme yang terstruktur untuk menjaga keberlanjutan dampak program setelah selesai dilaksanakan. Untuk mengatasi permasalahan tersebut, penelitian ini merekomendasikan adanya standarisasi kebijakan konversi SKS, peningkatan pelatihan prapenugasan untuk memperkuat kapasitas mahasiswa, pengembangan indikator evaluasi yang jelas terhadap efektivitas program, serta integrasi rencana keberlanjutan program dalam setiap siklus Kampus Mengajar ke depan. Rekomendasi ini penting untuk menjamin keberhasilan dan konsistensi jangka panjang dari inisiatif pendidikan nasional ini.

INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian government continues to strive for improvements in the national education system by introducing various innovative programs across all levels of education, from early childhood to higher education. This effort is driven by concerning international benchmarks; for instance, based on the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Indonesia ranked 74th out of 79 participating countries in literacy and numeracy skills (Zaim & Zakiyah, 2024). Moreover, domestic indicators also reflect similar challenges Indonesia's average Teacher Competency Test score in 2021 was only 53.02 out of 100, still below the national target of 55 (Dignath, 2021; Muslim, 2024). These statistics indicate a pressing need to strengthen pedagogical, professional, and social competencies among educators.

Recent research highlights the importance of shifting from traditional teacher-centered approaches to more active, personalized learning models. Personalized learning requires active student engagement and should replace passive lecture-based teaching (du Plooy et al., 2024; Maryanti et al., 2021). In parallel, fostering independent learning encourages students to develop critical thinking, initiative, and strong character to compete in the Industry 4.0 era(Abulibdeh et al., 2024; Saifullah et al., 2023). Supporting teacher and student

potential through collaborative innovation and targeted human resource development is crucial to producing competitive future generations.

The challenges in Indonesia's education system are particularly pronounced in the 3T regions (Terdepan, Terluar, dan Tertinggal). For instance, in Kabupaten Nduga, Papua, nearly half of the junior high school teachers have not completed a D4/S1 degree, and many schools operate with only one or two teachers handling multiple subjects and grade levels. In Desa Nanga Bayan, Kecamatan Ketungau Hulu, Kabupaten Sintang, Kalimantan Barat, four teachers are responsible for educating 150 junior high school students, with the school principal also teaching multiple classes. Furthermore, in SMKN 1 Karangjambu, Purbalingga, Central Java, the lack of a dedicated school building has forced students to attend classes in market stalls, highlighting severe infrastructure deficiencies (Valmay et al., 2024; Werang et al., 2022).

In response to these educational challenges, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of Indonesia launched the Kampus Mengajar program. The initiative is designed to enhance educational quality in underperforming schools, particularly in rural and 3T areas, by deploying university students to assist teachers in improving literacy, numeracy, and school administrative functions. Students participating in this program are engaged for one semester to support elementary and junior high schools, with the dual purpose of enriching their practical teaching experience while contributing directly to national education development (Lestari et al., 2022a; Pujiani & Sukmawati, 2024).

According to the Director General of Higher Education, Prof. Ir. Nizam, the Kampus Mengajar program primarily targets C-accredited and 3T-area schools, although other schools in need may also qualify (Pujiani & Sukmawati, 2024). This program provides meaningful out-of-campus learning opportunities for students and assists schools in addressing core challenges (Widiyono et al., 2021). However, despite its noble objectives, preliminary observations suggest that the Kampus Mengajar program has yet to be optimally implemented. Numerous field challenges persist, making it premature to claim the program as a comprehensive solution.

Various issues have been encountered during the implementation of Kampus Mengajar, such as poor coordination between central and local governments, mismatches between student majors and school needs, technical issues within the MBKM (Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka) platform, late disbursement of student stipends, and inconsistencies in credit recognition by universities (Nisa, 2023; Rahmawati et al., 2024). These problems highlight the necessity of a thorough problem analysis to propose effective program improvements. Given these dynamics, this study aims to scientifically examine the implementation of the Kampus Mengajar program at SMP Negeri 3 Watampone during its third batch in Bone Regency. The research is expected to yield insights into the ideal implementation model of Kampus Mengajar, which could inform government policy and contribute to future improvements in the program's execution.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to explore educational phenomena in depth and within their natural contexts. Qualitative description (QD) offers an accessible entry point for researchers, emphasizing direct, rich descriptions of experiences and events without extensive theorization or abstraction. The Kampus Mengajar program, part of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) initiative, empowers university students to contribute directly to school improvement efforts. The program's third cohort (2022) emphasized enhancing students' literacy and numeracy skills, supporting the integration of digital technology among educators, assisting with school administration, and facilitating effective teaching and learning practices. The program is structured into three phases: pre-assignment, implementation, and reporting, and post-assignment (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2024; Lestari et al., 2022b)

The researcher's field involvement began during the preparatory phase, which included problem identification and a contextual needs assessment aligned with the study's aims. Observations were conducted at SMP Negeri 3 Watampone to gain insight into school infrastructure, teacher-student interactions, and administrative routines. Informants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevance and depth of data. Purposive sampling is widely used in qualitative research for selecting information-rich cases that provide deep insights into the phenomenon under study. Key participants included the school principal, teachers involved in literacy, numeracy, or digital learning components, and university students participating in the Kampus Mengajar program. This approach enabled data triangulation across institutional roles and ensured the inclusion of diverse yet interconnected perspectives (Hall & Liebenberg, 2024; Saclarides & Lubienski, 2020).

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured, in-depth interviews, allowing informants to share experiences, challenges, and reflections. Responses were paraphrased and synthesized to preserve meaning while facilitating accurate interpretation, following best practices for qualitative reliability. Thematic analysis was guided by established frameworks, encompassing data collection, reduction, and review. To enhance analytical efficiency and consistency, digital tools, including artificial intelligence applications, were integrated into the coding process. This comprehensive methodological framework strengthens the credibility, transferability, and contextual relevance of the study's findings on the implementation of the Kampus Mengajar program (Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Naeem et al., 2023) This comprehensive research design, including purposive informant selection and multi-stage data analysis, strengthens the credibility and transferability of findings in examining the implementation of the (Kampus Mengajar) program in a specific educational setting.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of the Kampus Mengajar program at SMP Negeri 3 Watampone aligns with findings from other studies on similar initiatives across

Indonesia. Structured phases ranging from pre-assignment training to stakeholder coordination, pedagogical execution, and administrative accountability emerged as central pillars for success.

The presentation of data that explains the aspects studied is the implementation of the Kampus Mengajar at SMP Negeri 3 Watampone, which includes pre-assignment, assignment and reporting, and post-assignment. The results of the study are described according to the focus of the research as follows:

Pre-Assignment of Kampus Mengajar

Pre-assignment activities mark the initial phase after students are officially accepted as volunteers for the Kampus Mengajar program. Kampus Mengajar students are required to follow a set of preparatory activities which include briefing, coordination with LPMP and the local Education Office, and initial reporting to the assigned school. These steps are mandatory and serve as groundwork before deployment.

The provision process plays a strategic role in ensuring that students are adequately prepared to adapt to the school environment. The content delivered includes training on learning assistance techniques, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and project planning. According to the findings, KM students at SMP Negeri 3 Watampone participated in these provision sessions, which helped mitigate significant challenges during their placement.

Coordination efforts were conducted through direct communication between students and the DPL (field supervisor), followed by formal notification to the Education Office and LPMP. Interviews and documentation confirmed that coordination had been well-executed, as evidenced by the formal handover process from the LPMP and Education Office to the school.

Self-reporting to the target school was carried out by KM students after they received their official assignment letter. This allowed the school to prepare for their arrival and enabled students to integrate with the school environment. Field data revealed that this step was crucial in securing accommodation and fostering rapport with the school community.

Preliminary findings at SMP Negeri 3 Watampone highlight the critical role of pre-assignment training and local stakeholder coordination in preparing student volunteers for effective school integration. This finding aligns with (Suyatno et al., 2023), who emphasized the importance of pedagogical training and administrative briefings in boosting volunteer adaptability. Similarly, (Azizah et al., 2024) found that pre-assignment workshops on school culture and pedagogy significantly enhanced readiness. Their study revealed that successful integration was more likely when coordination among Kampus Mengajar students, DPL (field supervisors), and local education offices was established early. (Nugraha & Bajari, 2022) also reported logistical improvements in Papua schools due to early coordination and reporting mechanisms.

Assignment and Implementation of the Kampus Mengajar

The core assignment of the Kampus Mengajar spans approximately 108 working days. Students engage in a series of structured tasks aligned with the program's objective of improving educational quality and enhancing literacy and numeracy levels.

Initial school observations were conducted to gather data on school conditions. These observations were essential for the development of contextually relevant work programs. The researcher's direct participation, alongside interviews and documentation, confirmed the accuracy and utility of these observations.

Work program planning was followed by a seminar attended by KM students, DPL, and the school community. During this seminar, students presented the rationale, objectives, and methodologies of their proposed activities. Supporting documents and reports validate the alignment of this process with the MBKM guidebook (Rohmah, 2024).

The AKM (Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum) test was administered as mandated by the Kampus Mengajar guidebook to assess literacy and numeracy levels. Field documentation confirmed the test's implementation with the full support of school staff.

This study emphasized the use of AKM (Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum) tests and targeted interventions to improve literacy and numeracy efforts that mirror results from (Puspitasari & Budisantoso, 2024), Their research across rural schools in East Java confirmed measurable improvements in student competencies when such interventions were deployed. (Malik et al., 2024) also found that tutoring by Kampus Mengajar students led to a 15% increase in AKM scores among primary school students in West Java over five months. However, (Stich & Crain, 2023) noted minimal improvements, attributing the outcome to overcrowded classrooms and the limited reach of personalized mentoring. This contrast underscores the role of contextual factors, such as class size and rural-urban dynamics, in shaping program outcomes.

Students submitted daily and weekly reports documenting their activities, challenges, and progress. These reports were uploaded to the MBKM platform and reviewed by the DPL. Field findings confirmed that SMP Negeri 3 Watampone students fulfilled this requirement.

Technology integration emerged as another key component at SMP Negeri 3 Watampone, particularly through the training of teachers in digital tools such as Canva. This mirrors findings from (Handayani et al., 2024), who showed that digital literacy workshops significantly enhanced teachers' confidence in developing interactive materials. Conversely, (Alanoglu et al., 2022) reported generational resistance to technology in Aceh, with older teachers showing reluctance due to infrastructural and skill-related barriers.

Learning assistance involved not only classroom support but also administrative help and digital literacy workshops. For example, KM students

conducted Canva training sessions for teachers, as advised by their DPL. While administrative support was limited due to the school's existing capacity, non-academic mentoring activities such as student organization development were also successfully carried out. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) were conducted mid-assignment to assess progress and identify areas for improvement. This process aligns with standard program management practices. The final seminar served as a closing event, during which students presented outcomes and received feedback. DPL representatives attended this session, which also included the official withdrawal of students from the school (Chiu et al., 2022).

Post-Assignment

After completing their service, KM students reported back to their respective universities. This step was critical for academic credit recognition and administrative accountability. Each university applied its conversion policy based on internal guidelines. Students also compiled a comprehensive final report detailing all activities from initiation to conclusion. These reports were submitted via the MBKM website and served as a prerequisite for receiving benefits such as tuition waivers and certificates.

While administrative reporting was addressed in this study, long-term sustainability mechanisms were notably absent, a challenge echoed in broader literature. (Azmita et al., 2023) found that although teaching practices improved during the Kampus Mengajar assignment, many schools struggled to maintain momentum after the volunteers' departure. (Batri, 2019) identified similar issues in South Sulawesi, citing a lack of follow-up funding and mentorship. However, (Arts et al., 2020) reported a more positive outcome, where the institutionalization of volunteer-initiated systems such as digital attendance tracking sustained positive changes for over a year.

One noted challenge was the inconsistency in credit conversion across universities. While the program guidebook allows for a 20-credit conversion, implementation varied due to differing institutional policies. This highlights the need for standardized credit recognition mechanisms across higher education institutions (Read & Arnold, 2020).

In conclusion, the Kampus Mengajar program at SMP Negeri 3 Watampone was implemented according to the planned phases: pre-assignment, core assignment, and post-assignment. The findings reveal that while most procedures were implemented smoothly, there were notable challenges including disparities in institutional perceptions and limitations in student capacity. These factors merit attention to improve program delivery in future iterations. Strengthening inter-institutional coordination and providing ongoing support for student capacity development are essential to maximize the impact of this national education initiative.

Overall, the findings from SMP Negeri 3 Watampone contribute to the growing body of evidence supporting the effectiveness of the Kampus Mengajar

program in enhancing school quality through structured preparation, implementation, and accountability. Nevertheless, systemic challenges such as inconsistent credit recognition and the lack of sustainability mechanisms post-assignment remain pressing concerns. Future research and policy reforms must address these areas to ensure the long-term success and scalability of the program.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, the implementation of the Teaching Campus at SMP Negeri 3 Watampone has taken place through three main stages: (1) Pre-Assignment, (2) Assignment and Reporting, and (3) Post-Assignment. In general, the implementation of this program has provided positive benefits for the learning process, especially in increasing student involvement in academic assistance at school. However, several challenges need further attention. Some of the main obstacles in the implementation of this program include the capacity of students in the learning assistance process that still requires improvement, differences in perceptions between Kemenristekdikti and Higher Education regarding the recognition of semester credit units (SKS) for Teaching Campus students, and the absence of a measure of program effectiveness that can be used as a reference for evaluating success. In addition, the sustainability aspect of the program after the assignment period ends is also a major concern, so that the impact that has been created is not temporary.

To overcome these obstacles, concrete steps are needed, such as pedagogical training that is more planned and has a measurable impact to improve student competence in the academic mentoring process. In addition, clearer regulations are needed through the Decree of the Ministry of Education and Science regarding the recognition of semester credit units for students participating in this program. With the existence of structured regulations and recognized by the Ministry of Education and Science.

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