

## **THE INVOLVEMENT OF SUPPORTING STAFF IN THE MBKM PROGRAM AT UNIVERSITAS ISLAM MALANG**

**Sonny Elfiyanto , Ifit Novita Sari, Dwi Fita Heriyawati**

Universitas Islam Malang  
Jl. Mayjen Haryono 193 Malang  
E-mail: sonny.elfiyanto@unisma.ac.id

**Abstract:** This study aims to investigate the involvement of supporting staffs at the Universitas Islam Malang about the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM). Supporting staff is an essential factor in improving the implementation of the MBKM program. Their involvement is beneficial for lecturers and students participating in this program. The supporting staff realized that this program impacted the development of their institution. There were 328 who participated in filling in the questionnaire, and 37 staffs were voluntary to be interviewed. The data collection was carried out by filling out questionnaires and supported by structured interviews to explore their answers in the questionnaire. From the data collection results, the supporting staff wanted to be more involved in the MBKM program. Moreover, through this program, they believed that the performance indicators of the Universitas Islam Malang can be increased and will improve their welfare if this program is successful. Also, they hope that this program can be developed well if they are involved in a sustainable workshop or seminar related to the MBKM program).

**Keywords:** involvement, supporting staff, MBKM

based on the National Education System Law 2003, No. 20, Chapter I Article 1, supporting staff is a community member who devotes him/herself and is appointed to support the implementation of education in one institution. Therefore, the supporting staff mentioned here is a community member with has specific criteria and standards established to support the performance of the educational process in teachings, such as educators, school principals, supervisors, laboratory assistants, librarians, researchers, and administrative, technical staff for education administration (Sisdiknas, 2003).

The main task of supporting staff is in charge of carrying out administration, management, development, supervision, and technical services to support the educational process in education (Sari, 2013). The supporting staff has a central role in assisting an institution's quality of human resources, especially in the current globalization era, which is accelerating very fast due to the rapid progress of science and technology. Their existence can be additional energy for an institution to move forward to be independent and excellent. The rapid development of science and technology is a challenge for them as they are required to keep up with the pace of development, especially with the current pandemic conditions that have hit Indonesia and the world. Hence, the government needs to implement the MBKM program, which is expected to accelerate the performance of the supporting staff to improve their skills.

Excellent education is education that is able to bring all the elements of the academic community to reach some achievements, especially with excellent and systematic guidance. Hopefully, all universities in Indonesia can become excellent universities since it can boost the prestige of the university's name. Moreover, it proves that the Director-General of Higher Education has recognized the university, and one of the examples is the Universitas Islam Malang (UNISMA). Nowadays, based on Indonesia's universities' rank, UNISMA is placed in the 44<sup>th</sup> out of 4.670 universities, either State Universities (PTN) or Private Universities (PTS). Then, UNISMA becomes the nine best universities in East Java according to the Ministry of Education and Culture from 350 PTN and PTS.

Further, UNISMA is the best campus among 217 universities under Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama Higher Education Institution (UNISMA, 2021). In addition, the development of higher education has been mandated through the Regulation of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia No. 22 in 2020 concerning the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education and Culture for the Year 2020-2024. Thus, UNISMA wishes to fulfill this mandate to be one of the best in Indonesia. In the regulation, there are three development targets, namely: 1) increasing the quality of learning and the relevance of higher education, 2) improving the quality of lecturers and supporting staff, and 3) realizing the quality management of the Directorate General of Higher Education. Therefore, it is hoped that universities can realize these three targets through the capacity building and quality of educational processes and management. One of the objectives of the Minister of Education Regulation above is the improvement of the supporting staff's skills, so the involvement of the staff is one of the supporting factors for the success in applying for the MBKM program.

According to National Education System Law 2003 (*SISDIKNAS*, 2003) supporting staff or educational staff are the community members who devote themselves and are appointed to support the implementation of education. Supporting staffs are staff in charge of planning and carrying out administration, management, supervision, and technical services to help the educational process in academic units. According to BNSP (2020), supporting staffs are educational staff, including school/madrasah principals, education unit supervisors, administrative staff, library staff, laboratory personnel, technicians, study group managers, tutors, and cleaning staff. Further, according to Longman Dictionary (n.d.), supporting staff are employees whose work is helping a company or organization to operate, for example, technical or administrative workers. In essence, supporting staff is an administrative staff in the education unit, supporting the educational process.

The *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) is one of the government's policies. According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, as a representative of the Indonesia government, this policy has a goal to align science and technology development in universities with existing problems in Industry, Business, and the Working Environment or in Bahasa Indonesia is *Industri, Dunia Usaha, dan Dunia Kerja* (IDUKA). Currently, the government wishes that all of the universities in Indonesia can join and participate in realizing innovative teaching and learning. In order to make the university students as agents of change that can equip with skills, knowledge, and attitudes (UNISMA, 2020).

The MBKM program, firstly, was launched by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr. Nadiem Makariem, in 2020. This program aims to increase the link and match between the development of science and technology in higher education and the needs/solutions of problems in industry, business, and the working environment. Also, this program aims to encourage students to master various knowledge that is in line with the employer's needs (Junaidi, 2020).

Participation is the involvement of a person in a situation either mentally, thought, emotion, or/and feeling that encourages him/her to contribute to achieving the goals determined. Then, take responsibility for completing these activities (Wiratno, 2016). Then, explains that participation can be broadly defined as the basic psychological need for each individual (Normina, 2016). Therefore, it defines a human being who always wants to be in a group or community and wants to be involved in every activity around their society.

Mas (2011) defines that participation is a process when citizens, as individuals and social groups and organizations, take part and influence the process of planning, implementing, and monitoring policies that directly affect their lives.

Consequently, participation is defined by many people as taking a role or taking part in an activity. This shows the involvement of an action. Etymologically, the word participation comes from English. According to Longman (n.d.), participation is a noun that has a meaning for people who take part in an activity or event. Thus, participation is a concept that refers to a person's participation in various activities in a program. This participation becomes a reason and a belief in specific values obeyed by a human being in one environment.

As we know, few studies on the involvement of support in the MBKM program make this study a factor leading to minimizing the gap. Besides, it can be a reference for future research related to the role of the supporting staff in the MBKM program. This study has a research problem, *Is there any involvement of the supporting staff at Universitas Islam Malang in the MBKM program?*.

## METHODS

### Subjects

There were 328 participants from all supporting staff at UNISMA who participated in this study. Next, from this number, there were 37 staff who were willing to be interviewed regarding the MBKM program implemented in this university; furthermore, the staff came from various divisions. For the data collection, before they did the questionnaire and interview, they received an overview of the MBKM program through seminars and workshops, which has been implemented at UNISMA since the 2020-2021 school year. Related to the supporting staff who voluntarily participated in this interview, they have been working at UNISMA for five months to thirty years. Their age is between 20 and 54 years old. For gender, the distribution is very proportional because there are 12 males and 25 females. For the latest education, 26 children have passed S1, and there is 1 child who has S2. For more details, please see Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Participants Interviewed**

Category	Sub-category	Number of supporting staffs
Gender	Male	12
	Female	25
Age	20 – 25 years old	6
	26 – 30 years old	22
	31 – 35 years old	5
	36 – 40 years old	2
	41 – 45 years old	1
	More than 45 years old	1
Educational Background	Senior High School	6
	Diploma	4
	Bachelor	26
	Master	1
Working Experience	0 – 5 years	24
	6 – 10 years	10
	11 – 15 years	2
	16 – 20 years	-
	More than 21 years	1

### Data Analysis

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method to determine the involvement of supporting staff in implementing the MBKM program at Universitas Islam Malang. The questionnaire was in Bahasa Indonesia and was distributed online on December 10, 2021. The supporting staff could do the questionnaire after they finished following the presentation from the MBKM team from UNISMA.

Interviews with the participants of the study were conducted after they joined the seminar or workshop held by Universitas Islam Malang. Thus, from December 15 to December 16, 2021, we had a chance to do this step. Before an interview began, the researchers notified the interviewee about the selection process and guaranteed confidentiality. These interviews were approximately 10-20 minutes long and focused on four semi-structured interview questions. After the interviews, member checking was

applied in terms of credibility. Elfiyanto (2019) said that participants were able to assess intentions, fix errors, and volunteer extra information using this technique. The interview tapes were then transcribed, and the researcher emailed the transcriptions to the participants. The participants might make necessary changes to the interview transcripts and evaluate the papers to ensure their accuracy as needed.

An interview guide was developed to prompt supporting staff's understanding of their participation in implementing the MBKM program at UNISMA, their experiences of implementing the MBKM program, their obstacles, and suggestions regarding it. The detailed questions used in this study can be seen in Appendix 1.

After transcribing the interviews of the participants, the data was analyzed using the interpretational analysis method. The researcher requested three senior lecturers at UNISMA with doctoral degrees to serve as auditors during the data analysis. They looked over the interview process, the documents, and the transcripts. Furthermore, they acted as advisors during the research process, assisting in developing themes or patterns from the data. As a result, the researcher and auditors categorized the interview items and the participants' answers to important research questions and then read the answers several times. It is helpful to define response patterns based on this extensive reading. Eventually, the researchers and auditors summarized the participants' responses, strategies, and motives based on the data analysis.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Implementing the MBKM program at UNISMA is applied based on the Ministerial Regulation as mentioned on the website of MBKM program (<https://kampusmerdeka.kemdikbud.go.id/web/about/landasan-hukum>). Further, the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia said that this program needs to be applied, primarily related to the staff involved in this program.

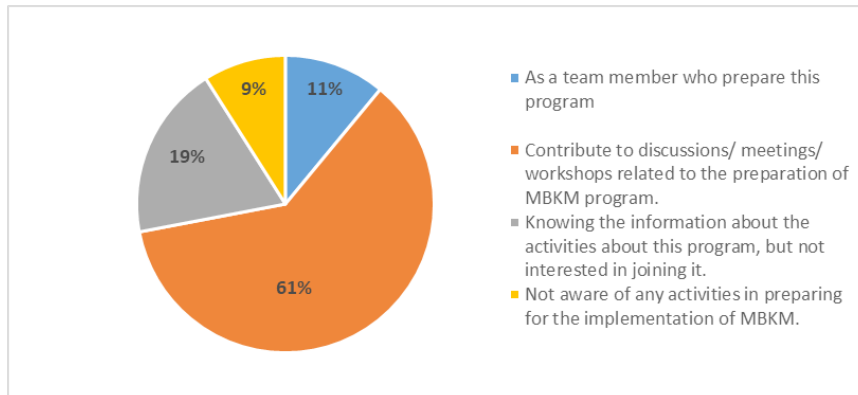


Diagram 1. The Involvement of Supporting staffs in MBKM Program at UNISMA

From diagram 1 above, 201 supporting staff, or around 61%, stated that they participated in discussions/ meetings/workshops related to the MBKM program at UNISMA. They argue that through those events, they know that their main task is to assist students and lecturers in managing the administrative job to help the MBKM program run smoothly. Likewise, during interviews with 37 staff, they all had the same perception that their job was to help in the administrative field. The services provided by the staff are to make a cover letter and validate the Study Results Card (*Kartu Hasil Studi*). As said by RR *“The services that I have provided to students are the preparation of transcripts and letters of recommendation, which are also one of the requirements for registering for the MBKM program.”* The same with RR, NS also stated that *“Until now, the services that have been provided related to the implementation of the MBKM program, related to our position as supporting staff at UNISMA, are providing classes, offering courses, collecting data, and inputting student identity who will join lectures in my faculty. In addition, also for equalizing scores according to the curriculum, we also deal with checking students' credit limit that can be taken and the period of study that is needed to be verified.”*

MTO also added that his duties as staff at UNISMA were “*To provide services that have been provided regarding the implementation of the MBKM program when I served as a TU staff (at) the agribusiness department and feeder admin. Regarding the activities that I have to do, I make transcripts of student grades, make cover letters for students to report, and enter conversion scores from MBKM activities that the head has approved of the department in the department feeder*”.

**Table 2. Supporting Staff who are Learning the Guidebook of MBKM Program**

Option	Number
Done	182
Not yet	146
Total	328

Table 2 shows that there were 182 supporting staff who have studied the MBKM program through the guidebook at UNISMA. Thus, 52% of the staff have read and learned about this program. It is hoped that they can guide their office mate in understanding and implementing this program. So that this program can be applied thoroughly, however, they still want sustainable training or workshops to provide excellent service for the success of this program.

DTL, one of the staff at BAKAK (Bureau of Administration for Student Affairs and Religion), stated that “supporting staff need to be more involved in the MBKM socialization process to students. Also, staff are expected to be more active in seeking information related to the MBKM program. If students ask questions, they are not confused (*in*) answering (*student questions*). Supporting staff are also given more information about MBKM from the campus or, if necessary, inviting a person in charge of this program from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology to understand this program comprehensively. Supporting staff are also can be more involved in MBKM programs such as a student exchange program or participating as an assistant in the *Program Membangun Desa*”. Table 2 above indicates that UNISMA still needs to encourage the staff to be more involved in this program. If all staff understand their role, this program can run efficiently.

Based on the findings above, the supporting staff at UNISMA believe that the MBKM program is essential to be implemented on entire universities in Indonesia, especially at UNISMA, a university-based on the *Ahli Sunnah Waljamaah*. The staff also view that this program can increase UNISMA’s prestige at the national and international level and hopefully impact their welfare. In summary, there are three cases that can be seen from the analysis of the previous data.

First, they are involved in every workshop or training on the MBKM program provided by the university. Further, they are very active in digging up information about this new program because they want to provide the best service for students who want to benefit from the teaching and learning process. The statement of Mr. M supported the previous statement; he stated that “*This training must be carried out to improve the performance of teaching resources at the Universitas Islam Malang so that they are willing to be more involved in the administrative and management functions of MBKM activities. The MBKM program at UNISMA is very suitable, especially for improving the quality of graduates to face the work environment after graduating from college*”.

Second, the staff at UNISMA have an active role in implementing the MBKM program. As we can see in the interviews’ results, all respondents stated that they were involved in administrative arrangements, such as making letters of recommendation, printing the *Kartu Hasil Study*, and consulting services.

Third, they need for sustainable training either by the Ministry of Education and Culture or the campus, so that there is a shared vision and excellent service so that students from outside or joining the student exchange program can feel that this *green campus* is pleased to welcome them and accept them as part of the family of UNISMA civitas academia. As well, if there is a communication and service training for them since it is crucial. This training is beneficial to make them can communicate well and be friendly as we know that excellent and friendly service is the *face* of an institution. They will remember the excellent service and tell their friends or family that they were well received at this campus. The

above statement is in line with Ms. R's statement, which stated that "*The thing that must be improved is the way to serve students which must be given a good and correct explanation and also friendly and have to be patient because those are the key so that students do not consider that this university is bad. I want that they have a good impression of this campus. Please, do not let one word from us can make UNISMA becomes a worse university, and no one wants to study at Universitas Islam Malang.*"

The result of this research is the need for the supporting staff to be engaged in making this MBKM program successful, mainly if it can be supported by training or workshops to improve their abilities and understanding of this new program. Furthermore, the supporting staff are willing to be entangled more to provide excellent service to boost UNISMA's popularity at the international level.

## CONCLUSION

This study investigated the involvement of supporting staff in the MBKM program, which has been implemented at UNISMA since the 2020-2021 academic year. In this study, the staff at UNISMA realized the importance of the MBKM program on campus prestige, as seen from almost half of them who had read the guidebook on MBKM, and they were very enthusiastic if the university held training, seminars, or workshops on the implementation of MBKM. Further, they suggested that training on excellent service, especially in writing and speech, will add their value as the staff. According to them, the program launched by the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology can improve lecturers' performance and increase students' ability, which in turn can make students become graduates who quickly adapt and work according to the fields they study. The students also feel that this program can increase their welfare as the campus progresses. They are delighted and proud to be involved in the MBKM program.

The results obtained from this study can be compared with other universities that have also implemented the MBKM program. Besides, the way on how to manage the supporting staff at UNISMA can be a reference for comparative studies for staff from other institutions. UNISMA's supporting staff can also learn from other universities implementing the MBKM program. Learning from other institutions can gain new insights that can be used to improve their abilities to enhance this program. Another advantage is that the supporting staff can learn to solve problems dealing with this program. Further, it would be excellent if there was a questionnaire for the services, they provided to the students who participated in the MBKM program. Then, through this questionnaire, they could use it as a reference and self-reflection to improve themselves to become excellent service staff.

However, there was still a limitation in this study. This study only interviewed approximately 10% of the entire supporting staff at UNISMA. If this study could be conducted by interviewing half of the entire staff, the results would be more comprehensive. For further research, it is possible to listen to a more significant number of staff's opinions because this research will provide a different point of view and fill the research gap. Thus, the involvement of the civitas academia is needed in this MBKM program because all elements are complete with each other. The same perception, supported by a straightforward guidebook, makes the staff, students, and lecturers are able to introduce this good program to the public.

## REFERENCES

- BAAK UNISMA. (2020). *Panduan Implementasi Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka 2020*. BAAK UNISMA. Retrieved December 1, 2021, from <http://baak.unisma.ac.id/kebijakan-mbkm/>.
- BSNP. (2020). *Standar Pendidik dan Tenaga Kependidikan*. <https://bsnp-indonesia.org/standar-pendidikan-dan-tenaga-kependidikan/>
- Elfiyanto, S. (2019). Indonesian English Teachers' Beliefs on Self-Written Corrective Feedback. *Bulletin of the Graduate School of Education, Hiroshima University. Part II, Arts and Science Education*, 68 volume number, 81-89. <http://doi.org/10.15027/48476>

- Junaidi, A. dkk. (2020). *Panduan Penyusunan Kurikulum Pendidikan Tinggi Di Era Industri 4.0 Untuk Mendukung Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka*. Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi Kementerian Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan. Retrieved August 1, 2021 from <http://dikti.kemdikbud.go.id/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/BUKU-PANDUAN-PENYUSUNAN-KURIKULUM-PENDIDIKAN-TINGGI-MBKM.pdf>
- Longman. (n.d.). Participation. In *Longman*. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from <https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/participation>
- Longman. (n.d.). Support staff. In *Longman*. Retrieved December 15, 2021, from <https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/support-staff>
- Mas, S. R. (2011). Partisipasi masyarakat dan orang tua dalam penyelenggaraan pendidikan. *El-Hikmah*.
- Normina, N. (2016). Partisipasi Masyarakat Dalam Pendidikan. *ITTIHAD*, 14(26).
- Sari, I. N. (2013). Pengembangan Keterampilan Tenaga Kependidikan melalui Pendekatan Spiritual. *Ilmu Pendidikan-Jurnal Kajian Teori Dan Praktik Kependidikan*, 40(2), 152-158.
- SISDIKNAS, U.-U. (2003). *UU RI No. 20 Tahun 2003*. Jakarta: Sinar Grafika.
- Wiratno, B. (2016). Partisipasi masyarakat dalam pendidikan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Sosial*, 26(1), 28-34.