

Promoting Transformative Learning Through Independent-Study Campus (MBKM) During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of transformative learning in the implementation Independent-Study Campus (MBKM) in the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University. This type of research is qualitative. The population of this study was MBKM implementers at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University consisting of study program coordinators, MBKM Faculty units, and students as MBKM targets. The sample was determined using a purposive technique. Data were collected from observations, interviews, and written documents. Data were analyzed using interactive analysis covering data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Transformative learning was seen from the ability and willingness to learn quickly and it revealed that the stakeholders of the implementation of MBKM in the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University had applied transformative learning by synergizing through the ability and willingness in mentoring and guidance, the ability and willingness in designing learning, and the application of technology in learning. Meanwhile, the willingness to collaborate and synergize with industry and partners (graduate users) showed that the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University had implemented various programs and there was a willingness to collaborate and synergize with industry and partners (graduate users). This is in line with the objectives of implementing MBKM in universities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed various aspects of life, including education. The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia issued a circulation letter number 4 Year 2020 on March 2020 which emphasizes the implementation of a learning from home or distance learning policy. The distance learning system has been proven to greatly contribute to the rough participation of higher education to reach the predetermined target by the government (Newbury, 2013). It is because distance learning enables learning beyond distance, anywhere and anytime (Tello, 2008). Furthermore, Joksimović, Gašević, Loughin, Kovanović, & Hatala (2015) argue that distance learning has been proven to provide consistent and positive effects by maintaining interaction intensely.

The activity restriction policy is applied nationally to stop the spread of the Covid-19 (Daniel, 2020; Wang, Zhang, Zhao, Zhang, & Jiang, 2020). Besides, this policy is to motivate the community, especially students to apply a healthy lifestyle by increasing physical activities, regular sleep patterns, and good personal hygiene (Abidin, Hudaya, & Anjani, 2020; Mason et al., 2018). Online learning emphasizes the student's independent aspect. The online learning system is relevant to the MBKM (Independent-Study Campus) policy initiated by the government which is based on student-centered learning. The Independent-Study Campus provides challenges and opportunities for students' development. The MBKM policy emphasizes the importance of innovation, creativity, personality, and developing independence in social interaction, collaboration, and self-management. Through this program which is designed and implemented well, the student's soft skills and hard skills will be strongly built (Dirjen Dikti, 2020). The changes in learning in the Higher Education Institution are characterized by the shift from direct learning or face-to-face learning to online learning. The 'new normal' era is characterized by the learning paradigm-shifting from direct learning to blended learning. The implementation of blended learning faces some challenges as not all students or educators have the access, perception, and acceptance of the use and utilization of technology (Suprijono, 2020) This study tries to examine the utilization of technology in learning during a pandemic.

Along with the issue of the Independent-Study Campus policy which supports learning during the pandemic, higher institutions are demanded to produce graduates that can compete for both at national and international levels (Baharuddin, 2021; Fatmawati, 2020; Moore, Dickson-Deane, & Galyen, 2011). This demand is not easy to be fulfilled., especially in a short period of time. Introducing transformative methods in learning as an effort to change learning, belief, behavior, and attitudes are processes requiring extra effort. Higher institutions should solidify their resources to transform students to be individuals who have perceptions and perspectives which lead to the changes of life strategies under the threat of disaster and environmental changes (Sharpe, 2016). The consequence of transformative learning is the individual's ability to reflect on challenges and problems. The results of transformative learning are expected to be able to build the freedom, independence, and responsibility of each individual (Zunariyah, Demartoto, & Ramdhon, 2018). This study tries to examine the utilization of technology in learning during a pandemic.

The education activities during the Covid-19 pandemic are done from home so that the students are demanded to be independent in self-management and learning time. Transformative learning theory is a learning perspective that emphasizes the critical dimension of learning that enables students to know and reassess the assumption structure and hopes that build their thought, feeling, and actions. This meaning structure is a transformative individual framework covering cognitive, social, moral, and affective aspects (Mezirow, 2009). This article focuses on the implementation aspect of Independent-Study Campus to be a transformative learning method amid the Covid-19 pandemic in higher institutions. The innovative and flexible learning approach in building interaction between students and educators is expected to offer transformative learning concepts to provide positive impacts in supporting the implementation of the Independent-Study Campus program.

The basis for the implementation of the MBKM is the Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture Number 3 Year 2020 concerning the National Standard of Higher Institutions. A curriculum is a set of plans and settings covering objectives, content, and material as well as the method used as the basis

for the implementation of learning to achieve the goals of Higher Institutions. The Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture Article 11 explains that (1) Characteristics of the learning process as mentioned in Article 10 verse (2) letter a, cover interactive, holistic, integrative, scientific, contextual, thematic, effective, collaborative, and student-centered. The design of the MBKM curriculum requires collaborations between stakeholders so that the implementation of the curriculum runs well. Establishing a partnership between parties is a strategic step to educate the young generation during the Covid-19 pandemic. Especially, in the implementation of the MBKM curriculum, a collaboration of the higher institution, government, private parties, and Non-Governmental Organizations should be well-planned to produce high-quality graduates who meet the need of business, industry, and community.

The concept of the MBKM curriculum is in the perfection process in which the design is handed to the higher institutions that have the autonomy, and the implementation process is adjusted to the need and readiness of the concerned higher institution. The concept of the curriculum is still in the implementation process in each higher institution adjusted to the condition and needs through an MOU program between higher institutions both domestic and abroad, and company or other community institutions. As the basis for the concept of MBKM curriculum in the guide book of forms of learning activities in accordance with the Regulation of the Ministry of Education Number 3 Year 2020 Article 15 verse 1 can be done in the Study Program and outside the Study Program.

As the graduates are prepared to be useful, the improvement of personal awareness and social awareness needs to be built as the basis for the potential and superior characteristics of each individual. This is the core of transformative learning. Transformative learning is closely related to changes in identity and perspective towards oneself and the environment. The concept of identity is wider than the meaning perspective, framework, and thinking habit because it covers all learning dimensions and mental processes which cover cognitive, emotional, and social situations as well as the environment (Illeris, 2014).

Transformative learning is learning process-oriented to transforming students into persons who can make a decision effectively (Low & Nelson, 2005). Transformative learning becomes an empowerment model so that individuals can build a healthier and more productive relationship, are able to solve problems and make better decisions, practice self-management, be ready to achieve goals optimally, and act wisely and responsibly. Therefore, transformative learning should be student-centered and focused on dialog activities to have an interactive process and relevant learning with the frame of reference. It aims to help students to be able to develop themselves in a real-life context.

The last definition of transformative learning is varied with different places and contexts. The direction and objective of transformative learning is not only one model but tend to the creation of new models with the various approach. McGonigal (2005) proposes the implementation phase of transformative learning. The first is activating event, a condition or perspective owned by an individual that has limitations lacks, and is less accurate. The second is identifying current assumptions, a phase where individuals are in a dilemmatic situation which triggers to reidentify various basic assumptions to know and understand more about other people's perspectives. The third is encouraging critical self-reflection, a phase where people start to doubt the truth of basic assumptions or beliefs. The fourth is encouraging critical discourse, a strengthening of the self-reflection process to get a more comprehensive understanding. The fifth is the opportunity to test a new paradigm/perspective, a phase where people are interested to use a new perspective in seeing, understanding, or interpreting reality or experience.

Even though the implementation model may vary, the objective of transformative learning needs to be understood to turn back the main task of education, namely to develop people with good character, aware of the existence, and do good things to others and the environment. Education, with any type of model, is not only to develop students' personal capacity of critical-reflective in cognitive, emotional, and spiritual but also the attachment to the social and environmental frame. The realization needs to go through the identification of key aspects and arrangement of the implementation model which is systematic and according to the characteristics of transformative learning. The established learning model should be the practical representation of transformative learning by adjusting the choices of supporting

strategies and methods. The key process of the transformative method needs to be always considered in the arrangement of the implementation model (Naim, 2018). This study tries to reveal the teacher's mental attitude as a form of transformative learning, namely the ability and willingness to learn quickly and to collaborate and synergize with industry and partners (graduate users) (Sari et al., 2021). Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of transformative learning in the implementation of MBKM in the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University.

The ability and willingness to learn fast and collaborate can be done with transformative learning which is still low this far. With the MBKM program, it is expected that Tadulako University, especially the Faculty of Economics and Business, can increase its ability and willingness to learn fast and collaborate with partners. The collaboration requires technical support in the form of an integrated system to accommodate MBKM activities (Hermanto, Kusnanto, & Fadilah, 2021). Furthermore, MBKM is important as the results of a previous study by Kuncoro, Handayani, & Suprihatin (2022) concluded that students who took part in the MBKM program had a slightly higher average score for soft skills than those who did not do this program.

2. METHODS

This study was designed using a qualitative approach. One of the keys to qualitative study is having a flexible design (Brown, 2015). Moreover, Brown (2015) states that qualitative analysis looks at issues related to understanding and implementation, and even closely relates the meaning and the topic of study. Findings in qualitative research emphasize categories, not statistical analysis or figures (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

The population of this study was MBKM implementers at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University consisting of study program coordinators, MBKM Faculty units, and students as MBKM targets. The sample of the study was determined using a purposive sampling technique. This technique determined the criteria based on certain considerations, namely the people who are involved in the implementation of MBKM in universities, especially at the Faculty of Economics and Business.

Data were collected from observations, interviews, and written documents. The key to the qualitative study is observation and interviews (Hamilton & Finley, 2020). Meanwhile, written documents were used to support field data collected through observation and interviews. Furthermore, data were analyzed using interactive analysis covering data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to analyze the role of transformative learning in the implementation of MBKM. MBKM program is the implementation of collaborative learning (Kuncoro et al., 2022). MBKM provides eight types of activity, namely teaching assistance, research assistance, internship, student exchange, humanitarian project, thematic community service (KKN), independent research, and entrepreneurship (Dikti, 2020). This study tries to reveal some actions that can be done by teachers in transformative learning, namely abilities and willingness to learn fast and willingness to collaborate with industry and partners (graduate users) (Sari et al., 2021). The detailed results of the study are presented below.

Table 1. Conclusion of Interview Results

No.	Questions	Conclusion of Interview Results
		Abilities and willingness to learn fast
1.	To what extent can transformative learning of the implementation of MBKM make or demand lecturers and students to	The learning transformation through MBKM programs highly requires collaboration among study programs, lecturers, and students to work together to realize the goals of MBKM. The study program itself has facilitated lecturers and students to realize the MBKM program, for example demanding lecturers to mentor and guide students to take part in a research grant program,

be willing and active in the learning process?	implementing teaching programs using the Semester Learning Plan (RPS) based on case methods and project-based learning. The study program has always built collaboration with partners to support the MBKM program to run accordingly so that the number of partners continues to increase every year including the Business and Industrial World (DUDI), the government, and universities. Besides, students are also facilitated to access grants and participate in competitions concerning MBKM activities such as internships, entrepreneurship, and student exchanges at the university, national, and even international levels. Currently, the MBKM program becomes the right foundation for learning transformation, especially for study programs.
2. Do all lecturers use or adopt technology (network-based) in the learning process?	During the COVID-19 pandemic, learning methods have significantly changed. All aspects of learning apply technology because it has become a shared need between lecturers and students. Network-based technology is the solution, namely, utilizing a learning management system (LMS), Google Classroom, Zoom, Whatsapp, and others. Lecturers utilize network-based learning methods during the pandemic.
3. What innovations do lecturers make during learning?	Many innovations are made by lecturers, including digitalizing teaching materials, digitalizing the teaching process, and using more varied teaching media.
4. To what extent do lecturers design learning media?	Lecturers plan to learn starting by preparing effective RPS for each subject. The RPS covered appropriate teaching materials and media for each week. The selection of learning media has been planned since the beginning of arranging RPS for each subject because it is adjusted to the content and context of the materials.
Willingness to collaborate and synergize with industry and partners	
5. To what extent are academics willing to collaborate and synergize with industry or partners (graduate users) during the learning process in the MBKM era?	Lecturers' willingness is varied because each lecturer has their own passion for teaching, but the study program has motivated and provided information-related learning and collaboration with the Business and Industrial World (DUDI) so far.
6. Has the lecturer designed and divided learning materials for the classroom and outside the classroom (in the field), especially for collaborative materials?	Moreover, the study program has been prepared from the RPS document that will be used by lecturers, and the lecturers are demanded to cooperate and always update and provide information related to any material updates or RPS. The RPS has divided based on the case method and a team-based project that will be filled by practitioners.

Table 1 shows the transformative learning applied by the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University. The implementation can provide added value for student competence as the activities implemented are still using traditional learning methods so far. Currently, changes in education are dynamic with the presence of rapid development of advanced technology. The initial idea of the Independent-Study Campus comes from the Ministry of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim in his speech on 9 September 2020, which is a policy that aims to support

students to master various fields of science which are useful for the future world of work. Independent-Study Campus (MBKM) provides chances for students to choose activities in accordance with their interests and talent. In other words, the MBKM program gives freedom and autonomy to higher institutions where the students can freely choose fields in accordance with their interests. This program is a form of autonomy and flexible learning in higher institutions to create a learning culture that is innovative, non-binding, and in accordance with the students (Suwandi, 2020).

Higher institutions are expected to be able to develop and facilitate the implementation of the MBKM program by creating guidelines for the activities focusing on the partnership between higher institutions and partners. The higher institutions are expected to provide and facilitate the MBKM program as amended in the Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture Number 3 Year 2020 which covers 9 programs, namely (1) Students Exchange, (2) Professional Work Practices, (3) Teaching Assistance in Education Units, (4) Research, (5) Humanitarian Projects, (6) Entrepreneurial Activities, (7) Independent Studies/Projects, (8) Projects/Developing Villages, and (9) National Defense Training.

The MBKM policy launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture is a framework to prepare graduates who are tough, relevant to the current demand, and ready to be the next leader with high nationalism. The objective of the MBKM program of "rights to learn 3 semesters outside the Study Program" is to improve the competence of the graduates, both soft skills and hard skills to be ready and relevant with the current demand, and to prepare them as the next leader with good character. The experiential learning program with flexible paths is expected to facilitate students in developing their potential in accordance with their passion and talent.

Table 1 presents that the implementation of MBKM result in significant changes in transformative learning including the ability and willingness to learn quickly and to collaborate and synergize with industry and partners. During the implementation of MBKM, transformative learning requires lecturers and students to be active. Study programs, lecturers, and students are required to work together to realize the goals of MBKM. The Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University has facilitated lecturers and students to realize the MBKM program. For example, lecturers are demanded to provide mentoring and guidance to students to participate in grant programs, implement teaching programs using case-based Semester Learning Plans (RPS) and team-based projects. The use of network-based technology is when all aspects of learning apply technology as it has become a shared need between lecturers and students. Network-based technology is a solution covering learning management system (LMS), Google Classroom, Zoom, WhatsApp, and others. Meanwhile, innovation and learning designs have also brought changes during the COVID-19 pandemic, where transformative learning becomes a solution by implementing digital learning as provided in Semester Learning Plans (RPS) whose content and context can guide students in online learning. Online learning has an impact on students in transformative learning (Cranton, 2010).

The transformative perspective emphasizes how students are given chances to know personal potential changes towards autonomous personality. Hardika (2012) states that transformative learning becomes a learning model oriented to transformation both in terms of changes or improvement of students' perspective to be a wiser individual in taking action, more mature in thinking, and wiser in making decisions regardless of what had been passed. Therefore, to create effective learning, external situations need to be considered and planned in a way to active, support and maintain internal processes in learning. Thus, learning has a close relationship with teaching, which means that educators' effort to make students learn.

Based on the concept of transformative perspective, each student can interpret his/her learning experience. Each student will be able to believe that the learning experience will offer different concepts, more than the instrumentalist approach, namely having the capacity to see, interpret, criticize, and find meaning or a new perspective about the learning experience in a just and democratic society. Being an autonomous learner is the objective of transformative learning which is characterized by the freedom of thinking of students as the frame of reference. Freedom of thinking will improve the

freedom of taking action. Informed action or actions full of consideration is the key to transformative learning.

Online learning in the perspective of Independent-Study is a form of learning transformation involving a process that emphasizes the use of learning media as tools and creativity with a student-centered approach. In line with the demand of the Industry 4.0 era and Society 5.0, an educational system framework is required to address challenges in producing graduates with high quality and new literacy skills such as data literacy, technology literacy, human resource literacy based on religion. UNESCO sets four pillars of education, namely, learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and earning to live together to produce graduates who learn skills, literacy skills, and life skills.

MBKM prepares graduates who are strong in facing social, cultural, employment, and technological changes that are growing rapidly in the industrial revolution 4.0 era and Society 5.0. Transformative learning in relation to MBKM, does not only look at the ability and willingness to learn quickly, but also focuses on the willingness to collaborate and synergize with industry and partners. The results of the interviews showed the willingness of academics to collaborate and synergize with industry or partners. The results of the study show that the willingness of lecturers is varied because each lecturer has their own passion for teaching, but the study program has motivated and provided information related to learning and collaboration with the Business and Industrial World (DUDI). Moreover, during the implementation of MBKM, lecturers design learning models inside and outside the classroom with partners based on case methods and team-based projects where these methods will be filled in by practitioners.

Students' competence should be strengthened in accordance with the rapid and dynamic environment needs. The graduates should meet the need of business and industry but also should cope with the rapid development. The transformative learning experience in the implementation of the MBKM curriculum is the method and approach taken by lecturers by delivering materials in inspiring and educative ways that also bring changes. The transformative learning method provides certain impressions for the listener, even motivates students to do actions or to make changes. In short, transformative learning instruction done by the lecturer in the classroom is interactive and experiential. Interactive instruction refers to discussions and sharing among students. Discussion and sharing will give students chances to react to ideas, experiences, perspectives, and knowledge of lecturers or groups as well as give new ways of thinking. Interactive instruction is developed in the range of grouping and interactive models which cover class discussion, small group discussion or group work, or pair work even though done online. Meanwhile, experiential learning uses inductive sequences, is student-centered, and is oriented to activities. Emphasizing the learning strategy through experience is a learning process. Methods and strategies of teaching and learning are not only transfer of knowledge but also the relationship between all parties which produce positive values and have impacts on the development of knowledge and character changes.

The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of science, especially the implementation of MBKM concerning transformative learning. It is important to apply transformative learning, especially to students who have only received learning using traditional models. Transformative learning can promote change with an approach that challenges students to be more critical of the surrounding environment (Eschenbacher, 2020).

4. CONCLUSION

Currently, transformative learning can be applied during the COVID-19 pandemic. Transformative learning is in line with the objectives of MBKM, where they have a relationship that can bring changes to the learning model. The previous learning model still uses the traditional approach, while in the implementation of MBKM, changes occur significantly. Transformative learning is seen from the ability and willingness to learn quickly and the willingness to collaborate and synergize

with industry and partners. In the implementation of MBKM, the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University has applied transformative learning by synergizing the ability and willingness in mentoring and guidance, the ability and willingness to design learning and the application of technology in learning. Meanwhile, in terms of the willingness to collaborate and synergize with industry and partners, the Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University has run various programs with a high willingness to collaborate and synergize with industry and partners. This is in line with the objectives of MBKM. Based on the results of this study, future studies are expected to explore broader and more complex problems in several faculties or universities as this study still has a relatively narrow scope so the results may also have a less significant effect on transformative learning implemented by other faculties or universities.

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