

**CHALLENGES AND EFFORTS OF LEGAL EDUCATION IN THE PANDEMIC TIME
IN IMPROVING THE ROLE OF EDUCATION
THROUGH MERDEKA BELAJAR KAMPUS MERDEKA**

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic has given an idea of the continuity of the world of education in the future through technology assistance. However, technology still cannot replace the role of teachers, lecturers, and learning interactions between students and teachers because education is not only about acquiring knowledge but also about values, cooperation, and competence. In this case there are several problems, namely what challenges occurred in legal education during the pandemic, as well as what efforts were made to overcome the challenges faced by legal education during the pandemic in increasing the role of education. The research method was an empirical legal research method, a research method that functions to see the law in a real sense and to examine how the law works in society. So that this pandemic situation becomes another challenge for the creativity of each individual in using technology to develop the world of education, especially law, an innovation is being carried out which is currently being developed by the Faculty of Law, Suryakancana University to implement policies in the field of education to be able to adjust in carrying out the learning process. This adjustment is realized through the policy of *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MB-KM), in which students are given the opportunity to gain a wider learning experience and new competencies through several learning activities outside their study program.

***Keywords: Challenges and Efforts, Legal Education, Pandemic Period, Merdeka Belajar
Kampus Merdeka***

INTRODUCTION

Education is one thing that is very important to build human civilization for a long time. Education is the most crucial thing in every country, among developed countries, developing countries, and remote countries (poor countries). The progress of a country is greatly influenced by how advanced education is in that country, in other words education can be a measure of a country's progress. Education in Indonesia has actually become a priority for the state when referring to the mandate of the constitution. Article 31 paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution clearly states that "Every citizen has the right to education". In Article 31 paragraph (4) it is also explained that "the State prioritizes the education budget of at least twenty percent of the state revenue and expenditure budget as well as from the regional income and expenditure budget to meet the needs of the provision of national education". The Indonesian constitution clearly mandates education to be very important. However, in the reality it is still quite difficult to make this happen (Sujatmoko, 2010).

The Indonesian government, in this case the Minister of Education of the Republic of Indonesia, issued a circular on the Implementation of Education Policies in an emergency for the Spread of Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19). The current Covid-19 pandemic has led to a new normal (new order) which requires the entire community, especially at Suryakancana University, including the participation of parents in adapting to the world of education. Students who have taken education from kindergarten to university are group that has various dynamics, as a result of their psychological development, so they are looking for various forms of norms within themselves and society to carry out education in the current pandemic (Masrul, 2020).

One of the things that is regulated is the learning process from home. Learning from home is done online, of course this method is not free from problems. Many problems are found in this online distance learning process. Considering that education is very important to be obtained by all Indonesian citizens, making Indonesia a developed country. The policy of learning from home using online learning has several problems, the most important of is from the aspect of access to learning media. In this online learning method, technology-based learning media such as smart phones or laptops are very important for the learning process to take place (Alika, 2020).

Students are expected to be able to use this learning media to support learning activities from home during the emergency period of the Covid-19 outbreak. By using technology-based learning media, the distance learning process can be maximized. However, this positive thing is actually a problem in Indonesia, especially in areas with the frontier, outermost, and least developed (3T) categories, especially in remote and remote areas.

Distance learning by means of online is not a solution for the learning process during the Covid-19 emergency period in the 3T region, this is due to the lack of availability of technology access in the 3T region. To create public welfare in the context of education, meaning that all citizens have their right to education, good governance is needed in regulating all these problems. The Ministry of Education and Culture has indeed instructed to carry out learning from home by issuing a circular regarding the delivery of education during this pandemic. However, the instruction is only an abstract and general rule that does not concretely regulate how technical learning is for the various conditions of students all over the country.

There are many details that must be considered and need derivative regulations from the regional government and related education offices to handle them. Currently many parents are still confused about how to keep students studying in the midst of this pandemic, especially students who are in the 3T area, which is far from access to technology, especially law learning for Law Faculty students in practicing justice or moot court, it raises problems. The Covid-19 outbreak should be used as a momentum for the Indonesian Government to see that the Indonesian education system is still far from perfect. Indonesia is still not ready to face the changes in the industrial revolution 4.0. This problem requires the collaboration of all elements in order to advance Indonesian education in the future (Adityawibowo, 2018).

Through its policy, the government has implemented *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (Freedom to Learn, Independent Campus) in every Higher Education, both Public and Private, especially in Faculty of Law, Suryakancana University, is expected to be an answer to these demands. Independent Campus is a form of learning in higher education that is autonomous and flexible, so that it creates a learning culture that is innovative, non-restrictive, and in accordance with the needs of students, especially during the current Covid pandemic.

In the description above, there are several problems, namely the challenges and efforts of legal education during the pandemic era in increasing the role of education through *Merdeka Belajar, Kampus Merdeka*. So, in this paper the theme is "Challenges and Efforts of Legal Education in the Pandemic Period in Increasing the Role of Education through *Merdeka Belajar, Kampus Merdeka*".

METHOD

The research used the empirical legal research method, a research method that functions to see the law in a real sense and examine how the law works in the community. Since this study examined people in the relationship of life in society, the empirical legal research method can be said to be sociological legal research. It can be said that legal research is taken from facts in a society, legal entity or government agency (Soekanto dan Pamudji, 2001).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

It is hoped that the Policy for the Freedom to Learn can become answers to new study programs, changes in the higher education accreditation system, the ease with which state universities become legally incorporated PTNs, and the right to study for 3 (three) semesters outside the study program. Students are given the freedom to take SKS outside the study program of three

semesters: 1 (one) semester of opportunity to take courses outside the study program and 2 (two) semesters to carry out learning activities outside of college.

The learning process in *Kampus Merdeka* is a manifestation of student-centered learning which is essential. Learning in the Independent Campus that provides challenges and opportunities for the development of innovation, creativity, capacity, personality and student needs, as well as developing independence in seeking and finding knowledge through reality and field dynamics such as skill requirements, real problems, social interactions, collaboration, self-management, demands, performance, targets and achievements (Laporan Akhir Hibah Fakultas Hukum UNSUR dari Kemendikbud, 2020).

The purpose of this activity is to improve the competence of graduates, either soft skills and hard skills, to be more ready and relevant to needs era, prepare graduates as superior future leaders of the nation who have a good personality. Experiential learning programs with flexible pathways are expected to facilitate students to develop their potential in line with their passions and talents. Furthermore, more specific aim of the proposal is to increase cooperation with partners in implementing the MBKM program curriculum and obtain models of cooperation among study programs and partners in implementing MBKM policies to be a reference. Development of the MBKM curriculum for Law study program, Faculty of Law, Suryakancana University include the creation of standard operational procedures for students, lecturers, field supervisors, and monitoring and evaluation in the MBKM program outside the study program for 3 (three) semesters, especially outside the study program in Higher Education and the implementation of Internships / Job Training, Village Building Program / Thematic Real Work Lecture and Humanitarian Project, also generating good practices in higher education in compiling and implementing the MBKM program curriculum that has graduate learning outcomes in accordance with KKNi and SN-Dikti (Laporan Akhir Hibah Fakultas Hukum UNSUR dari Kemendikbud, 2020).

Policy Scope of MBKM provides opportunities for students to gain a broader learning experience and new competencies. For this reason, the scope of activities to be carried out by the Law Studies program at the Faculty of Law, Suryakancana University in implementing the MBKM curriculum is as follows: Students Exchange with other study programs at Suryakancana University, namely the English Language Education Study Program, Agribusiness Study Program and Study Program of Technical Information. Internships / work practices with the following internship locations: Private Companies, Regional Government, Cianjur District Attorney, Cianjur District Court, Religious Courts, Cianjur Police, Advocate Office. Building a Village / Thematic Real Work Lecture, with locations in Villages in Cianjur Regency. Humanitarian Project, with project locations in the Regional Government, PMI, and BPBD in Cianjur Regency (Laporan Akhir Hibah Fakultas Hukum UNSUR dari Kemendikbud, 2020).

Challenges of Legal Education During the Pandemic Period in Increasing the Role of Education Through Freedom to Learn, Independent Campus

The target of the MB-KM program is an effort in the framework of curriculum reorientation, especially for students in Semester 5, Semester 6 and Semester 7. In semester 5, students can take 20 credits of courses (SKS) at other faculties in the same university and in semester 6 and semester 7 students can take an Internship / Job Training Program, Village Building Program / Thematic Real Work Lecture and Humanity Projects totaling 40 credits. This target needs to be supported by various instruments that must be prepared in a patterned, planned manner and can be evaluated periodically, one of which is in the form of policy formulation at the tertiary education level related to the implementation of the MBKM curriculum collaboration program in the form of regulations, decrees, preparation of guidelines/guidelines that become implementation references. MBKM curriculum cooperation program at the study program level and preparation of standard operational procedures for students, lecturers, field supervisors and monitoring and evaluation as well as developing a model of cooperation with the institutions in question (Laporan Akhir Hibah Fakultas Hukum UNSUR dari Kemendikbud, 2020).

The strengths of the implementation of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* Curriculum in the Law Study Program Suryakancana University are as follows: Accreditation of the Legal

Studies Program from BAN-PT is accreditation A, support from university leaders and faculty leaders in implementing MBKM, complete facilities and infrastructure and support the process of implementing *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka*, also very adequate human resources, both lecturers and educational staff (Laporan Akhir Hibah Fakultas Hukum UNSUR dari Kemendikbud, 2020).

Obstacles or constraints in the implementation of the Study Program Applying the Collaboration of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* at Law Study Program Suryakancana University are as follows: Time constraints in the preparation of various administrations for the implementation of the Study Program to implement Freedom to Learn Curriculum Collaboration on the Independent Campus. The MBKM Grant awardees have various activities, respectively, in Tridharma Perguruan Tinggi activities so that the scheduling of meetings or discussion of guidelines sometimes changes and is often done in the afternoon until evenings and holidays.

Partners in the implementation of MBKM at Law Study Program Suryakancana University have a busy schedule so that to determine the schedule for the discussion of the MoU and the cooperation agreement is carried out repeatedly or back and forth. Good experiences gained from the implementation of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* Curriculum Collaboration at the Suryakancana University Law Study Program are as follows: The Law Study Program makes it easier to determine the profile of graduates desired by graduate users, changes in curriculum is more systematic, directed and measured and students gain knowledge and experience because there is an opportunity to take part in studying outside the study program for three semesters. (Laporan Akhir Hibah Fakultas Hukum UNSUR dari Kemendikbud, 2020).

Efforts Made by Legal Education During the Pandemic Period in Increasing the Role of Education through *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka*

Various forms of learning activities outside of higher education, including doing apprenticeship / practical work in industry or other workplaces, carrying out community service projects in villages, teaching in educational units, participating in student exchanges, conducting research, conducting entrepreneurial activities, making independent studies / projects and participating in the humanitarian program of these activities are options which can be taken by students in learning on campus. All of the above activities must be implemented with guidance from the lecturer. An independent campus is expected to provide contextual field experiences that will improve student competence as a whole, be ready to work, or create new jobs (Arsendy, Sukoco & Purba, 2020).

An independent learning (*Merdeka Belajar*) program that is well made and implemented, the students' hard and soft skills will be firmly formed. *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* is one of the policies of the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makariem. One of the programs of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* policy is the right to study three semesters outside the Study Program. This program is the mandate of various regulations / legal foundations for higher education in order to improve the quality of learning and higher education graduates.

In order to prepare graduates who are well prepared in facing social, cultural, world of work, and technological changes that are increasingly developing rapidly in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, student competencies must be further strengthened in accordance with existing developments. The study program is challenged in developing an adaptive curriculum and is able to adapt to the increasingly rapid developments of the times without leaving the goal of producing graduates according to predetermined learning outcomes. In addition, in implementing the MBKM policy, collaboration and cooperation with partners or other parties related to their scientific fields are required and participate in supporting the desired learning outcomes. The situation that occurred in the field with the existence of this MBKM policy, the study program experienced difficulties in developing curriculum and its implementation. This requires a curriculum development guide and a cooperation model for the implementation of MBKM.

The implementation of the activities of Law Study Program Law Faculty Suryakancana University in implementing the MBKM Curriculum Collaboration consists of several targets to be achieved, such as formulation of Suryakancana University Academic Regulation that regulates the MBKM Curriculum, the formulation of Suryakancana University Rector's Decree on the Implementation of the MBKM Curriculum Collaboration Program, the creation of guidelines for

the implementation of the MBKM curriculum cooperation program in Law study program Suryakancana University.

Development of the MBKM curriculum for Law study program Faculty of Law Suryakancana University includes planning, learning process, assessment, and learning evaluation including financial allocation mechanisms and conversion procedures, as well as quality assurance based on the learning outcomes of graduates of the study program; The creation of standard operational procedures for students, lecturers, field supervisors, and monitoring and evaluation in the MBKM program outside the study program for three semesters, especially outside the study program in Higher Education and the implementation of Internships / Job Training, Village Building Programs / Thematic Real Work Lectures and the Humanitarian Project as an option for students to support MBKM policies including financial procedures, conversion and credit recognition; Development of a curriculum collaboration model among study programs and several parties, including curriculum collaboration with other study programs at the same tertiary institution, curriculum collaboration with non-tertiary institutions in this case with institutions that are relevant to learning materials at the Faculty of Law, especially in the implementation of Internships /Job Training, as well as with institutions related to the implementation of the Building Village /Thematic Real Work Program and various institutions relating to the Humanitarian Project (Laporan Akhir Hibah Fakultas Hukum UNSUR dari Kemendikbud, 2020).

The follow-up plan for MBKM after the program assistance of study program implementing the curriculum collaboration of *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* completed is the quality assurance unit at the university that organizes *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka*, three semesters right to study outside the study program is required to have a formal mechanism evaluating and monitoring students periodically. To ensure the quality of the program, monitoring and evaluation are carried out starting from the preparation, implementation and assessment stages. Assessment / evaluation is one of a series of activities to improve quality, performance and productivity in implementing industrial apprenticeship programs. The focus of evaluation is on individual students, namely the achievements achieved in the implementation of internships by students.

The next step is to conduct an evaluation, it will obtain about what has been achieved and what has not been achieved by students while participating in the activity. Evaluation can provide information related to what abilities students have achieved during the program. Assessment in the implementation of MBKM, 3 (three) semesters right to study outside the study program refers to 5 (five) principles in accordance with the Indonesian National Qualification Framework (KKNI), National Higher Education Standards, (SNPT), namely educational, authentic, objective, accountable, and transparently carried out in an integrated manner. The assessment is carried out during the activity (process assessment) and the result is in the form of a learning activity report (outcome assessment). Process Assessment is carried out by means of observation (personality and social) as the main technique. Meanwhile, the assessment of results is carried out at the end of the program using reports made by students. The assessment is carried out by a companion from a third party related to the activities taken by the accompanying student and lecturer (Laporan Akhir Hibah Fakultas Hukum UNSUR dari Kemendikbud, 2020).

The Law Study Program at Faculty of Law created a system in the form of an online survey about student experiences and assessments of the quality of the independent study program that was undertaken for one semester outside the study program. This can be used to get feedback from students as a means of evaluation for universities in developing their next program. The outputs / products that have been produced by the Law Studies Program will continue to be implemented on an ongoing basis with the drafting of regulations in the form of a Rector's decision on the implementation of MBKM at Suryakancana University including budget allocated for the implementation of MBKM and the creation of monitoring mechanism. The institutions that are responsible for the implementation of outputs / products after this funding assistance program is completed by the Quality Assurance Agency at the University level and by the Quality Assurance Group at the study program level (Laporan Akhir Hibah Fakultas Hukum UNSUR dari Kemendikbud, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The challenges of legal education during the pandemic era in increasing the role of education through *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka*, namely lack of teacher / lecturer guidance, unstable internet access, availability of devices, inability to access online learning applications, lack of parental assistance, limited time in the preparation of various administrations of study program in implementing the collaboration of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* curriculum, partners in the implementation of MBKM at Law Study Program Suryakencana University have a busy schedule so that to determine the schedule for the discussion of the MoU and the cooperation agreement is carried out repeatedly or back and forth. Meanwhile the efforts made to increase the role of education through *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* are student exchange programs with other study programs at Suryakencana University, internships / work practices, Village Building / Thematic, Real Work Lectures and Humanitarian Projects. It is expected that there will be enough time in the preparation of various administrations for the implementation *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* curriculum collaboration. There is also a need to support and encourage relevant stakeholders, so that they can be concerned and earnest in participating in the implementation of MBKM will later be a determinant for the success of the education process at university. The recommendation is also related to the right to study for three semesters outside the study program so from eight semesters of study, students are not only required for theory and practice within the university, but are exposed to the world of work so that in the future students will not only have theoretical abilities, but also have the practical skills in the world of work. MBKM activities can inspire many things, especially in the policy in tertiary institutions which is aimed at providing space for universities to produce higher quality graduates. We also recommend that partners in the implementation of MBKM at Law Study Program Suryakencana University can also spend the time, so that to determine the schedule for discussing the MoU and cooperation agreements carried out repeatedly or back and forth.

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