

Implementation of Independent Campus at Private Universities in North Sumatra

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Abstract. The Independent Learning Independent Campus gives students the right to study for three semesters outside the study program. The expected goal of the program is for university graduates to have superior competencies and personalities relevant to the demands of the industrial revolution 4.0 and society 5.0. This study aims to describe the implementation profile of the Independent Learning Independent Campus through a survey method at 211 private universities in North Sumatra. Data collection techniques used online questionnaires, and data analysis used descriptive statistics. The percentage of activities that were most participated by students in the Independent Campus activities were Internships/Practice (30.55), Teaching Assistance in Education Units (12.65%), and Village Building (27.07%). An alternative solution to increase the quantity and quality of student participation in the Independent Campus activities is to strengthen the internal management of sustainable institutions.

Keywords: Independent Learning Independent Campus, Internal management strengthening

1. Introduction

The Independent Learning Independent Campus Policy has four main agendas, namely (1) Opening of New Study Programs, (2) Higher Education Accreditation System, (3) Higher education policy to become Public Universities Legal Entities, and (4) Right to study for three semesters outside the study program. Independent Campus policy provides flexibility in fulfilling the study period and load for undergraduate or applied undergraduate students through 1) following the entire learning process in a study program at a university according to the period and study load; and 2) following the learning process in the study program to fulfill some of the time and learning load and the rest following the learning process outside the study program [10]. Through Independent Learning Independent Campus, students have the opportunity for one semester or the equivalent of 20 (twenty) credits to study outside the study program at the same university; and a maximum of 2 (two) semesters or equivalent to 40 credits of studying in the same study program at different universities, learning in various

study programs at other universities; and/or learning outside of Higher Education [10]. Learning at Independent Learning Independent Campus program is also expected to provide challenges and opportunities for developing creativity, capacity, personality, and student needs, as well as developing independence in seeking and finding knowledge through realities and field dynamics such as ability requirements, real problems, social interaction, collaboration, self-management, performance demands, targets, and achievements. The Independent Learning Policy of the Independent Campus is also expected to encourage students to master various practical sciences for entering the world of work. Independent Learning Independent Campus allows students to choose the courses they will take.

The form of Independent Learning Independent Campus activities can be carried out inside the Study Program and outside the Study Program, including (1) Student Exchange, (2) Internships/Work Practices, (3) Assistance Teaching in Education Units, (4) Research/Research, (5) Humanitarian Projects, (6) Entrepreneurial Activities, (7) Independent Studies/Projects, and (8) Building Thematic Real Work Villages/Lectures [10]. The technique for implementing the eight Independent Learning activities on the Independent Campus is regulated in the Free Learning Guidebook-Independent Campus [4]. Experiential learning programs with flexible pathways are expected to facilitate students to develop their potential according to their passions and talents. The essence of the Independent Learning Independent Campus activity is a collaboration between universities and external parties, both with the Industry and the World of Work or other parties, such as State-Owned Enterprises and Regional-Owned Enterprises.

The impact of the Independent Learning Independent Campus activity was very positive in improving the cognitive and psychomotor domains of the students involved as well as increasing the competence and capacity of lecturers [9]. Mitigating obstacles to the implementation of Independent Learning Independent Campus is necessary so that the program's objectives can be consistently achieved. Implementing the Independent Learning Independent Campus program also impacts increasing experiential learning to build students' hard and soft skills, fulfilling graduate learning achievements, and increasing lecturer capacity [2].

In addition to the positive impact, the Independent Learning Independent Campus implementation, which began in 2020 at private universities, is still experiencing various problems. The dominant problems are related to the adaptation of the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework's curriculum in the Independent Learning Independent Campus application, the limitations of partner campuses, the budget allocation, and the quality and productivity of lecturers and students that still need to be improved [16][17].

Conceptually, curriculum change is a routine activity that must be carried out in response to the development of Science, Technology, and the Arts, community needs, and the needs of graduate users. So university adaptability is needed in dealing with new policies in higher education management, such as Independent Learning Independent Campus. Considering the complexity of implementing the Independent Learning-Independent Campus in Private Universities, as identified above, it is necessary to analysed the implementation profile. The analysis is also expected to be able to formulate facilitation for private universities in accelerating the implementation of the Independent Campus policy.

2. Method

The survey method [14] was used to reveal the profile of the implementation of Independent Learning Independent Campus, which was carried out at 211 private universities in North Sumatra. The data was collected using an online questionnaire, and 187 private universities uploaded the answers to the questionnaire. The data analysis technique used descriptive statistics followed by in-depth interpretation to formulate alternative solutions to the problems in implementing the Independent Learning Campus at Private Universities in North Sumatra.

3. Result and Discussion

In North Sumatra, according to 2021 Performance Report for Higher Education Service Institutions Region I North Sumatra, there are 211 private universities consisting of universities, institutes, colleges, academies, and polytechnics with a total of 1,139 study programs as describe in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of Private Universities and Study Programs in North Sumatra

No	Type of Private College	Amount	Number of Study Programs
1	Universities	44	668
2	Institutes	13	113
3	Colleges	72	213
4	Academies	69	89
5	Polytechnics	13	56
Total		211	1,139

The Independent Campus Independent Learning policy has been implemented by 59.68% of 187 private universities in North Sumatra. However, campuses not carried out based on field surveys are still in the preparation phase and refinement of institutional normative documents, especially those related to the curriculum. Regarding the management unit of Independent Learning Independent Campus, as many as 39.78% of campuses already have it. Meanwhile, campuses that do not yet have an Independent Campus management unit technically integrate the task of coordinating the implementation of Independent Campus Independent Learning into the details of the study program tasks with intensive coordination with the university.

In terms of institutional quality related to obtaining accreditation from 1,139 study programs, 2.37% were accredited A, 45.56% were accredited B, 40.38% were accredited C, 3.42% expired, and 8 study programs applied for reaccreditation, 25%. As for the institutional accreditation rating, data shows that from 211 private universities, 1 accredited A (0.47%), 20.85% accredited B/Very Good, 32.22% accredited C, 8 Unaccredited and not yet accredited 90 or 42.65%.

Survey data shows that from 187 private universities, the number of active students registered is 248,931. The Independent Learning Independent Campus implementation at Private Universities until the end of 2021 was attended by 23,804 or 10% of the number of active students. The low number of students who carry out Independent Learning activities at the

Independent Campus requires an improvement strategy through realistic programs considering the educational resources available at each university. Furthermore, considering that the implementation of 8 types of Independent Learning activities at the Independent Campus is also closely related to study program performance data, universities must encourage and facilitate student participation in these activities. The data on independent learning activities for separate campuses can then be used to fulfill accreditation forms expected to contribute to efforts to increase the accreditation ratings of universities and study programs. The profiles of the types of activities and students who carry out Independent Learning Independent Campus activities at are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Students Participating of Independent Learning Independent Campus in North Sumatra Private Universities

Types of Learning Activities	Amount	Percentage
1. Student Exchange	1,297	5.45
2. Internships/Work Practices	7,272	30.55
3. Teaching Assistance in Education Units	3,011	12.65
4. Research	1,866	7.84
5. Humanitarian Projects	1,074	4.51
6. Entrepreneurial Activities	2,047	8.60
7. Independent Studies/Projects	793	3.33
8. Building a Thematic Real Work Village	6,444	27.07
Total	23,804	100.,00

Private universities in North Sumatra mainly carry out the types of Internships/Work Practices (30.55%) activities. The Building a Thematic Real Work Village activity was ranked second. The dominance of these two activities is natural because Internships/Work Practices and Building a Thematic Real Work Village were carried out by many universities before the independent campus program was implemented in 2020. Teaching Assistance in Education Units activities are also the types of activities that are widely carried out (12.65 %) by the private university. Teaching practice in schools is a learning practice in educational study programs carried out by students in schools and has also been implemented before the Independent Campus program was implemented.

The other five types of Independent Campus activities require alternative strategies to increase the number of students who carry out these five activities. The university's internal policies must immediately be established regarding implementing the Independent Learning Independent Campus. Review of statutes and strategic plans owned by private universities need to be reviewed and, if necessary, revised to accommodate policies, programs, and activities contained in the Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 3/2020. The next effort is to stipulate the Chancellor's regulations and decisions regarding the Independent Campus's implementation. Complete policy support regarding the Independent Learning of the Independent Campus will be able to facilitate and support the implementation of Independent Campus programs and activities, which of course, must be designed by implementing an accountable performance-based education financing plan. The implementation process of the Independent Campus also requires monitoring and evaluation as the embodiment of the Internal Quality Assurance System so that the performance targets of the Independent Campus can be evaluated. The monitoring and evaluation results can be utilized in the context of sustainable

quality development through the determination of strategies, programs, and activities to improve the quality of the implementation of the Independent Campus.

Implementing the 8 Independent Learning Independent Campus activities requires strategic partnerships and collaborations between universities and external parties. This collaboration will also be utilized and contribute significantly to strengthening the quality of study program accreditation. In principle, improving the quality of study program accreditation is one of the scopes of policies for improving vocational higher education in the National Medium-Term Development Plan IV (2020-2024) related to education, namely: increasing quality and competitive human resources. Therefore, cooperation between study programs with industry and the world of work is very strategic is needs to be established and carried out intensively to strengthen graduate employability competencies through improving the learning process, which aims to provide students with experience in real work situations.

The Independent Learning Campus Policy is also supported by a funding transformation policy from the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology through 3 schemes, namely Incentives based on the achievement of Key Performance Indicators (for state universities), Matching Fund (for state universities and private universities). And the Competitive Fund (for state universities and private universities). However, the survey results show that the percentage of private universities that receive various grant schemes related to the funding transformation is still deficient at 17.75%. Therefore, a strategy is needed to strengthen the competence of private university managers in formulating the proposed Independent Campus competitive fund scheme [8]. The policy of funding transformation has been carried out under the Directorate General of Higher Education since 2003. The strategy for funding universities systematically and gradually leads to a block grant system that gives universities greater autonomy to manage and utilize funds with greater accountability demands. The aim is to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability for using development funds. The block grants are allocated, among others, through a competition scheme based on study programs and institutions that started in 1995. The objectives of these various grants are to improve the quality of leadership, the quality, and relevance of graduates, the academic atmosphere, internal management, sustainability, and efficiency and effectiveness.

The Independent Learning-Independent Campus policy has implications for changes in higher education organizations. Change can be defined as the movement of employees and organizational leaders from the organization's current mode of operation (status quo) to the innovation of future operational methods [3]. Any structure, strategy, process, culture, and system causes an organization to operate differently from the conditions above, including an organizational change.

Cooperation is one of the priorities of the strategic role of collaboration in the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education and Culture 2020-2024 with the development plan: Improving quality and competitive human resources. The strategy carried out by the Ministry of Education and Culture to increase the number of world-class universities is to encourage support from the business/industry world through internship opportunities, research and commercial collaboration, resource sharing, and funding and implement the Independent Campus initiative that encourages interdisciplinary studies and experience in industry/ community for vocational and academic higher education students. The survey results related to cooperation between private universities and external strategic partners are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Private Universities Cooperation with External Parties

Types of Cooperation	Amount	Percentage
Education, Research, and Community Service	146	25.09
Twin Program *	38	6.53
Joint Degree*	3	0.52
Double Degree*	4	0.69
Transfer and/or Acquisition of Credit Scores and/or Other Similar Units*	9	1.55
Assignment of Senior Lecturers as Coaches at Universities That Need Coaching	12	2.06
Lecturer and/or Student Exchange*	42	7.22
Sharing Various Resources *	39	6.70
Development of Centre for Indonesian and Cultural Studies	12	2.06
Scientific Periodic Publishing	43	7.39
Apprenticeship *	81	13.92
Organizing Joint Seminar*	64	11.00
Joint Research*	63	10.82
Visiting Professor	14	2.41
Graduate Distribution	12	2.06
Total	582	100

Note: The * sign is an activity that private universities have carried out in North Sumatra that is relevant and has the potential to increase student participation in the Independent Learning Independent Campus activities

The implementation of the Independent Learning Independent Campus, in addition to having an impact on universities, also has an effect on external partners with an indication that all partners express their agreement regarding the implementation of the 8 Independent Learning Independent Campus activities [15]. However, potential problems in the performance of Independent Campus need to be analyzed, especially regarding the implementation of collaboration between universities with industry and other external parties. Other potential problems include how the mechanism and design of student exchanges and internships consider the quality of study programs and universities, geographical situation, conditions, support for human resources, and students' socioeconomic status. Next is the mechanism and design of quality assurance for study programs and institutions [15], especially if it is linked to the new accreditation policy as an integrative policy package for Independent Learning-Independent Campuses as regulated in Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No 5/2020 concerning Accreditation of Study Programs and Institutions. Other potential problems related to the adaptation of the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKN) Curriculum and budget allocations that are still far from adequate are other problems encountered in implementing the Independent Campus [16]. Meanwhile, the obstacles experienced by the

industry in implementing the Independent Learning Independent Campus are related to the readiness of internal management to accommodate activities with learning achievements that must be achieved by students [7].

The number of collaborations in Table 3 is 582, which is relatively small compared to private university study programs in North Sumatra, which amounted to 1,139. Higher education partnerships with external partners in implementing independent campuses and in developing human resources, based on the data in Table 3, still require an increase in quantity and quality. Efforts that need to be made to increase student participation in implementing Independent Learning Independent Campus (table 2) need to consider campus readiness. This readiness is related to human resources, especially lecturers who will be assigned as supervisors in the implementation of 8 types of independent learning activities on a separate campus. Other aspects are governance and internal management, curriculum, funding and infrastructure, and other elements.

One of the potential problems related to university governance and management is regulation. They are mainly associated with converting off-campus activities, equivalent to 20 credits. Although the Ministry of Education and Culture has made regulations, internal obstacles on campus related to the conversion of credits are still encountered because, in one semester, several courses were converted into off-campus activities. In addition to regulatory problems in universities, the obstacle faced in implementing the Independent Campus is the unpreparedness of the lecturers for new habits, especially in the current new average era. Some educators, in this case, the lecturers, still have difficulty adapting to changing conditions even though the world has moved dynamically with disruptive changes. Lecturers should be dared to leave their comfort zone to collaborate with students as agents of change [4].

4 Conclusion

Implementing Independent Learning in Independent Campuses at Private Universities in North Sumatra still requires a strategy to increase the quantity and quality because the percentage of students who carry out activities is 10%. Strengthening internal management can be done by revising institutional normative documents such as the five-year Strategic Plan, which ideally integrates 8 Independent Learning activities at Independent Campus as a priority for annual programs and activities.

The Performance Indicators in the Strategic Plan of Private Higher Education should ideally be reviewed and revised by integrating the Main Performance Indicators of Higher Education Service Institutions [13], especially those related to the Independent Campus. A relationship between activities, outputs, and performance indicators with the annual target will strengthen the internal management of private universities in implementing the Independent Learning of the Independent Campus because internal policies support it. The funding strategy with the money follows function principle will be implemented because the education financing base has met the performance-based regulation. It should be used as an alternative is the formation of a unit in charge of the Independent Learning Independent Campus Program to accelerate the implementation of the 8 Independent Learning activities of the Independent Campus.

Private universities in North Sumatra also need to develop policies and quality manuals for the Independent Learning Independent Campus that are integrated with the university's internal quality assurance system that has been implemented. In formulating policies and quality

manuals for the Independent Learning Independent Campus Program, it is better to refer to the policies and quality manuals from the quality assurance system that has been applied in universities and then socialized and referred to in the implementation of the Independent Campus. The strategic quality assurance efforts also need to be evaluated for performance and followed up for continuous improvement.

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