The Impacts of Management Capacity on the Implementation of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* Policy in Higher Education

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Abstract

This research aimed to examine the impacts of management capacity on the implementation of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* policy in higher education. This research used the quantitative method with a correlational descriptive technique. The respondents were the head of the departments and the secretary of the departments. The data collection technique used in this research was a Likert scale questionnaire consisting of 5 alternative answers. The data analysis technique used was a product-moment correlation and simple linear regression analyses by using the SPSS Version 24 program. The results showed that management capacity had a significant effect on MBKM implementation of 57.5%. The rest was affected by other variables. The implication of this research is the need to increase the capacity of higher education management so the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* policy can be implemented more optimally.

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Introduction

Higher education in Indonesia still produces graduates who are not ready to work due to limited skills and abilities to meet the demands of the world of work (Oksari et al., 2022). These conditions prompted the government to issue regulations and reform governance and bureaucracy in the education environment in Indonesia (Anggraini et al., 2022). Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Culture has made a new policy named *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)* known as a "freedom to learn independent campus". The *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)* program is a program that accommodates a higher education to prepare students to become graduates who are capable in the fields of science and technology, have character, and can face the challenges of the world of work (Puspitasari & Nugroho, 2021). This MKBM facilitates students to obtain learning on and off campus (Aan et al., 2021). This learning helps graduates prepare with skills that are in line with the needs of the industrial world and the world of work (Arifin & Muslim, 2020) that are ready to compete. In this case, the study program seeks to develop a curriculum that adapts to the times and produces graduates who are ready to work according to the expected learning outcomes (Nanggala & Suryadi, 2021).

As a new policy in the education world, it is sure there are readiness and challenges to implement it. It gives the meaning that in the implementation of independent learning, many factors influence it. One of them is the leadership of the school principal, teachers, student activities, learning facilities and resources, and school committees (Munthe, 2020). When directed at higher education, these factors can come from university leadership, human resources, knowledge and competence, facilities, finance, and university partners. Several preparatory programs were surely carried out before the independent learning policy was implemented, but there were still several obstacles, so the policy was not implemented properly. Among the obstacles are that not all lecturers have adequate competence to implement a new curriculum, cooperation with university partners is not yet optimal, the allocation of financial resources has not been properly budgeted, and facilities such as the availability of technology are still not optimal. Another obstacle is the lack of socialization in the MBKM program, so the study programs have difficulty recognizing the number of credits and compiling the MBKM curriculum. The MBKM activity process is partly online, and the collaboration process between higher education is complicated. It is not easy to get partners for collaboration (Bhakti et al., 2022), limited funding, which mostly comes from students, academic information systems to facilitate activities are still not optimal, the human resource capabilities available within the study program environment are inadequate, lack of information regarding the technical implementation of the MBKM program (Sintiawati et al., 2022).

Researchers suspect that the management capacity in higher education has a significant effect on the successful implementation of independent learning. The rationale is that implementing the independent learning policy requires a certain amount of management capacity so that the implemented program can be successful and efficient because implementing a program without qualified management capacity will be one of the factors

causing the lack of success of a program. Having the capacity to implement a program indicates the university's readiness and seriousness to be able to implement programs optimally.

Referring to the definition and function of capacity, the implementation of the independent curriculum is also influenced by the availability of management capacity. Therefore, it is necessary to know how significant the influence of management capacity on curriculum implementation is. So far, several research has been conducted related to the independent learning curriculum, including research on the Implementation Analysis of the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* curriculum (Nita et al., 2022), the implementation of the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) (Alawi et al., 2022; Kholik et al., 2022; Wardhani et al., 2022), the effect of the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* on CPL (Pohan & Kisman, 2022), the effect of MBKM on student soft skills (Setiana et al., 2022) and student hard skills (Rahmawanti & Nurzaelani, 2021). However, until now, no analysis of the effect of management capacity on the implementation of independent learning has been carried out. Knowing the extent to which management capacity affects independent learning is essential since it can analyze which factors need to be improved. Therefore, this research is paramount to determine how management capacity affects the implementation of independent learning and is a novelty of research related to independent learning.

Methodology

Research design, site, and participants

This research was quantitative using the correlational method to determine the effect of the management capacity in the implementation of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* in higher education. The population of this research were all deans and heads of departments in study programs at four faculties. This research used population research where all samples were as the research population. The distribution of research samples is in the following table.

Table 1. *Research sample*

No.	Departments	Deans, Heads, and Secretary of Study Programs	Total
1	Faculty of Islamic Business Economics	Dean	1
	Syariah Banking (S1)	Head of Department and Secretary of Department	2
	Sharia Business Management (S1)	Head of Department and Secretary of Department	2
2	Faculty of Computer	Dean	1
	Information System (S1)	Head of Department and Secretary of Department	2
	Digital Business (S1)	Head of Department and Secretary of	2

		Department	
	Accounting Computerization (D3)	Head of Department and Secretary of Department	2
3	Faculty of Agriculture	Dean	1
	Agribusiness (S1)	Head of Department and Secretary of Department	2
	Food Technology (S1)	Head of Department and Secretary of Department	2
4	Faculty of Teacher Training and Education	Dean	1
	English Education (S1)	Head of Department and Secretary of Department	2
	Guidance and Counseling (S1) (S1)	Head of Department and Secretary of Department	2
Total			22

Data collection and analysis

The instrument used in this research was a questionnaire using the Likert scale model with five alternative answers, namely Always (SL), Often (SR), Sometimes (KD), Rarely (JR), and Never (TP). Before the questionnaire was used in this research, it was tested to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument. The questionnaire trial results show that the research questionnaire was valid and reliable. Valid and reliable questionnaires were used as instruments to collect data in field research. Data collection was carried out directly by submitting a questionnaire to respondents and using Google Forms.

Before the questionnaire was filled in, the researchers explained in advance the purpose of distributing the questionnaire and the procedures for filling out the questionnaire. The research data were analyzed using a simple regression method with the help of SPSS Version 24 software. Data analysis included 1) data description, 2) analysis prerequisite test, normality test, linearity test, and homogeneity test, 3) testing the hypothesis by determining the level of influence through correlation analysis, significance level, analysis of the coefficient of determination, and simple linear regression analysis.

Findings

Normality test

Based on research data processing, it obtained that the normality test with the SPSS application informed that the Kolmogorov Smirnov test results a significance value of 0.200. The criterion for testing the normality test via the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is the sig value. Kolmogoro-Smirnov test $\geq$ 0.05, the data is said to be normal, and if sig. Kolmogorosmirnov test <0.05, the data is not normal. Based on this, the significance value exceeded alpha 5% (0.05), which was 0.200, which means that the data were normally distributed, so the prerequisite test for normality was fulfilled.

Table 2. *Normality test results*

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		Management Capacity	The Implementation of MBKM
N		22	22
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	114.36	135.45
	Std. Deviation	14.144	21.874
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.088	.149
	Positive	.067	.145
	Negative	-.088	-.149
Test Statistic		.088	.149
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200[c,d]	.200[c,d]

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

The results of data normality can also be seen in the following figure.
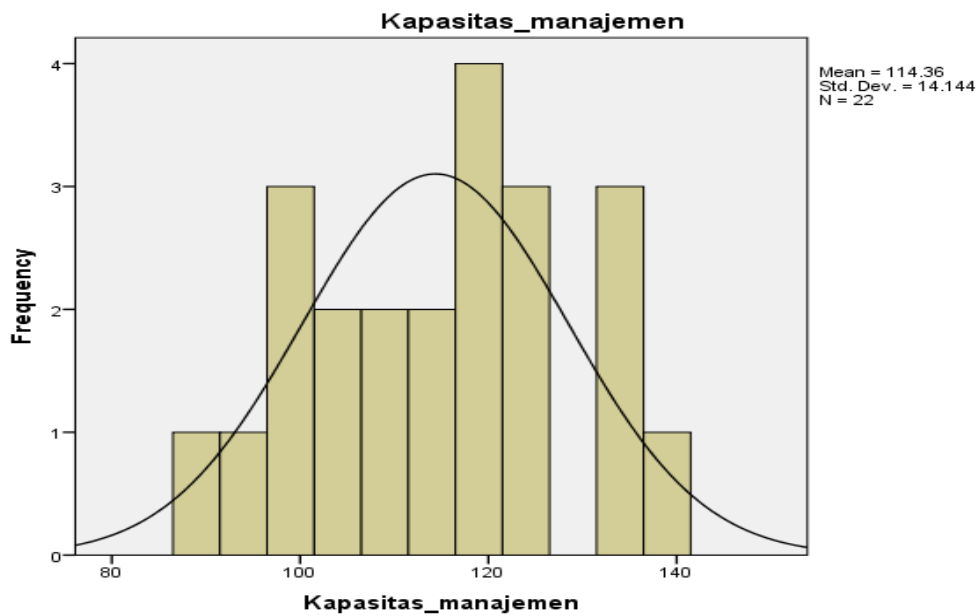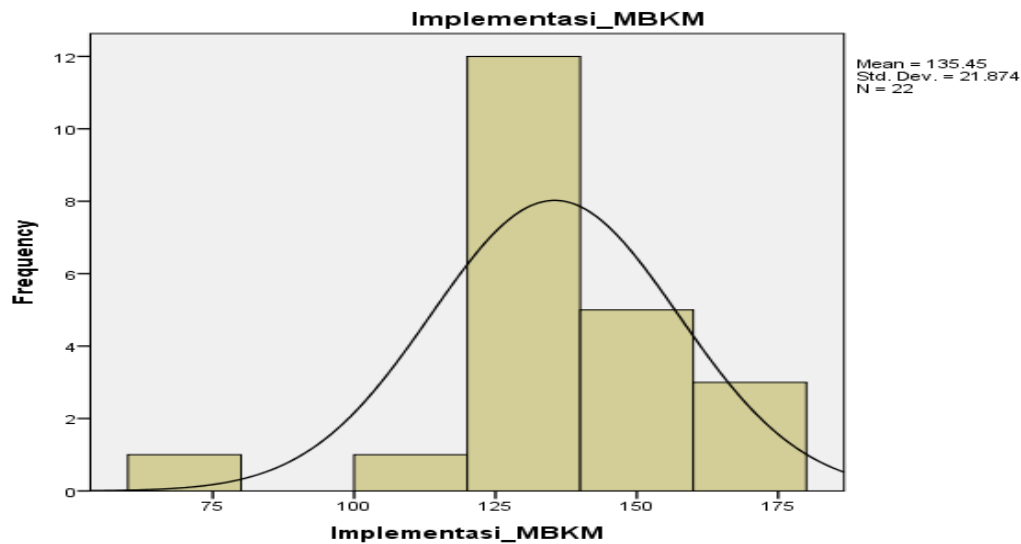
Figure 1. *Management capacity*

Figure 2. *The implementation of MBKM*

Source: Processed research data in 2023

Linearity test

The results of the data linearity test show that the data is linear. The results of data processing with statistics show that the sig. Deviation from linearity ≥0.05, namely 0.068 by the rules of linearity testing, if the value is a significant deviation from linearity with the category if the value is sig. ≥ 0.05 means the data is linear, and if sig. ≤ 0.05, then the data is not linear. Therefore, the model is linear. In detail, the results of the statistical linearity test are in the following table.

Table 3. *Linearity test results*

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
The implementation of MBKM * Management capacity	Between Groups	(Combined)	9941.455	18	552.303	15.631	.022
		Linearity	5774.502	1	5774.502	163.429	.001
		Deviation from Linearity	4166.953	17	245.115	6.937	.068
	Within Groups		106.000	3	35.333		
	Total		10047.455	21			

Source: Processed research data in 2023

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing in this research was to find out whether there is an effect of management capacity (X) on the implementation of MBKM (Y) at Universitas Ma'soem. To determine the effect, it used a simple regression analysis. The test was carried out using a significant level of 0.05, which was tested using the SPSS 24.0 simple linear regression program. Based on the results of testing simple linear regression analysis, below are the results.

Table 4. *Linearity test results*

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.388	23.930		.267	.792
	Management capacity	1.122	.206	.772	5.437	.000

a. Dependent variable: The implementation of MBKM
Source: Processed research data in 2023

Based on the test results, the value of constanta (a) is 6.388, while the value of management capacity (b/regression coefficient) is 1.122, so the regression equation is $\hat{Y} = \alpha + bx$, namely $\hat{Y} = 6.388 + 1.122$ X. It means that if management capacity (X) is 0 (zero), then the MBKM (Y) implementation has a value of 6.388. The regression equation $\hat{Y} = 6.388 + 1.122$ X explains that each increase in management capacity by 1 scale will have an effect on increasing MBKM implementation by 0.331 scale. Meanwhile, the MBKM implementation value already exists at 6,388 scales without management capacity. For example, if a university has a management capacity score of 100 on a scale, then the next MBKM implementation can be predicted at 6,388 + 1,122x 100 = 118,588. Based on the table above, the regression coefficient t is 5.437, and the significance level is 0.000. A significant value of 0.000 means less than 0.05 (0.000 <0.05), so the hypothesis Ha is accepted. It means that the regression coefficient = 1.122 is significant and can be used to influence the implementation of MBKM at Universitas Ma'soem. Furthermore, to test the significance of the regression, this equation is then tested for significance with the F test. The summary of the results of the analysis of the significance calculation (F test) is in the following table:

Table 5. *F Test of regression significance management capacity (X) on MBKM implementation (Y)*

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5774.502	1	5774.502	27.028	.000[b]
	Residual	4272.953	20	213.648		
	Total	10047.455	21			

a. Dependent Variable: The implementation of MBKM
b. Predictors: (Constant), management capacity
Source: Processed research data in 2023

The calculation results of the table above show that F count = 27,028 with ϱ = 0.000 < α 0.05. It means that the regression equation $\hat{Y}$ = 6.388 + 1.122 X is significant at the 95% confidence level and can be used to affect the MBKM implementation. To determine the effect of management capacity (X1) on the implementation of MBKM (Y), it can be seen from the R-value. Based on statistical tests, an R-value of 0.496 is obtained with an R-square value of 0.246. In detail, the results of calculating the value of R are in the following table.

Table 6. *The effect of management capacity (X1) on MBKM implementation (Y)*

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.758[a]	.575	.553	14.617

a. Predictors: (Constant), Management capacity
b. Dependent Variable: The implementation of MBKM
 Source: Processed research data in 2023

The calculation results in the table above show that the correlation coefficient (ryx) is 0.758. Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination (r2) is 0.575. It means that the magnitude of the influence of management capacity on MBKM implementation is 57.5%. This 57.5% figure is obtained by applying the formula proposed by Usman (2010), which states that the effect value of an independent variable on the dependent variable can be determined by performing calculations using the following formula KP = r2 x 100%, can be calculated that KP = 0.575 x 100% = 57.5%. After reviewing the analysis results above, the research hypothesis stating "management capacity affects the implementation of MBKM at Universitas Ma'soem" can be accepted at the 95% confidence level. Furthermore, the management capacity factor has significant predictive power on MBKM implementation. The effect of management capacity on the implementation of MBKM at Universitas Ma'soem is 57.5%.

Discussions

The hypothesis proposed in this research is the effect of management capacity (X1) on the implementation of MBKM (Y) at Universitas Ma'soem. After testing the hypothesis, the result shows that the hypothesis proposed is accepted. It means that management capacity has a significant effect on the implementation of MBKM at Universitas Ma'soem. It is evidenced by the t-test results, which show that the regression coefficient t is 5.437 and the significance level is 0.000. A significant value of 0.000 means less than 0.05 (0.000 <0.05), so the hypothesis Ha is accepted. It means that the regression coefficient = 1.122 is significant and can be used to affect the implementation of the MBKM held at Universitas Ma'soem.

The regression equation obtained is $\hat{Y}$ = 6.388 + 1.122 X. This regression equation explains that when the management capacity (X1) is 0 (zero), then the MBKM implementation (Y) has a value of 6.388. The regression equation shows that when there is an increase in management capacity by one scale, it will increase the implementation of MBKM by 1.122 scale. The effect of management capacity on the implementation of MBKM is 57.5%. It means that the management capacity factor has significant predictive power on the MBKM implementation at Universitas Ma'soem. In other words, the MBKM implementation can be determined by the level of management capacity at Universitas Ma'soem by 57.5%.

The description above means that the higher the management capacity possessed by higher education, the more it will improve the implementation of MBKM. Vice versa, if the organization is lacking or even not optimal in terms of its management capacity, the MBKM implementation will also not be carried out optimally. One of the problems facing the world of education today is the low quality of education in each educational unit. Various efforts have been made by the government, such as increasing the competence of teaching staff through training, research, and procuring books (Phaka et al., 2023), and management capacity in education units (Suryana et al., 2018). This effort is essential to pay attention in implementing a program (Giovannella et al., 2020).

The implementation of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* itself is based on the demands of knowledge, competencies, and skills development in the 21st century (Thahir et al., 2023). Therefore, the change and increase in management capacity are the primary capital in implementing this program policy (Zahroh, 2014). Independence means the freedom to choose alternative policies between continuing the existing curriculum or offering new designs that will provide innovation and experiences for students.

Superior student competencies must be prepared along with the needs and developments of the times. In higher education, it is not only trying to achieve learning outcomes, but education must also prepare superior management capacities and the values needed to be successful in implementing existing policies. Management capacity in higher education is required to be able to design and implement innovative learning processes so that students can achieve learning outcomes including aspects, attitudes, knowledge, and skills optimally and relevant (Riyadi et al., 2022; Rodiyah, 2021; Sintiawati et al., 2022). The implementation of *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* needs to see the readiness of all existing management capacities at the university.

Research that has explored management capacity in higher education is capital for improving performance (Nguyen, 2016; Viacava & Pedrozo, 2010) and developing innovation (Gurlek, 2020; Rahman et al., 2020; Santoso et al., 2018) as well as the quality of education (Seale, 2015) because it is the main asset that is considered in implementing a policy (Castro, 2019; Jackson, 2019; Saleh & Mujahiddin, 2020). Increasing management capacity needs to be done to be able to equip and prepare all stakeholders (Thahir et al., 2021) so that they can provide quality academic services (Sunaengsih et al., 2021) and produce excellent student graduates, generations who are responsive and ready to work in facing challenges era. Therefore, this management capacity becomes a constructive effort to implement the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* policy in higher education.

The explanation above shows that for each institution, management capacity development is the main agenda in improving quality and implementing policies or programs for the sustainability and existence of the institution. Increasing management capacity in the education world manifests a thing that distinguishes between good and vice versa. Therefore, management capacity is the main issue that will guarantee an educational institution in achieving status during competition in the world of education. Education is an empowerment process that is expected to empower students or learners to become intelligent human beings, knowledgeable and knowledgeable human beings, as well as educated human beings because quality education is an obligation that must be carried out by all educational institutions or higher education.

Conclusion

Based on the research and the results of data analysis and discussion of the influence of management capacity on the implementation of MBKM at Universitas Ma'soem, the conclusion is that management capacity has a significant effect on the implementation of MBKM at Universitas Ma'some. The effect is equal to 57.5%. Therefore, management capacity can be used to affect and improve the MBKM implementation at Universitas Ma'soem. It also means that management capacity is a factor that needs attention to improve the implementation of MBKM at Universitas Ma'soem. This research implies that every organization needs to pay attention to the level or ability of the organization in terms of its management capacity. Organizations/institutions need to pay attention to the extent to which they have the ability level to implement a policy.

Disclosure statement

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Acknowledgments

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