

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In this chapter consist of previous study, some patinent idea, and conceptual framework.

#### **A. Previous Study**

To avoid assuming similarity with this research, the researcher included relevant previous research results. Previous research aims to obtain comparison and reference materials so the researcher includes the results of previous research as follows:

The first research from Rara (2023) conducted research on the title “Communication Challenges in Participating in the Student Exchange Program”. The purpose of this research is to find out what challenges students experience when participating in PMM activities. These results are shown by students when communicating with lecturers, students at the destination campus, PMM students, and the community at the PMM activity location. These difficulties occur due to factors such as differences in cultural backgrounds, language differences, new environments, misunderstandings, lack of confidence, and different accents (Rara, 2023).

The second is from Sitorus (2023) conducted research on the title "Pandangan mahasiswa Outbound Universitas HKBP Nommensen Medan terhadap kegiatan Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka" The purpose of the research is to find out students' views on the activities of the independent student exchange program, and to find out

students' understanding of student exchanges and what obstacles and obstacles students experience when participating in student exchange activities. The results of this study indicate that there are several obstacles faced at the registration, selection, announcement and implementation stages. The obstacles experienced were file completeness, difficulty using the application, courses at destination universities that did not match the semester courses running at the original university, and difficulty adapting to a new environment (Sitorus et al., 2023).

The third is from Januariska (2022) conducted research on the title “Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka Inbound Batch 2 di Universitas Jambi Oleh Mahasiswa Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya”. The aim of this research is to describe the activities carried out during the Merdeka Student Exchange Program batch 2 at Jambi University and the conversion courses from the sending university. Based on the results, the study shows that the Merdeka Student Exchange (PMM) program activities are highly beneficial for students in enhancing their soft skills and hard skills, broadening academic knowledge, and expanding friendships across various ethnicities, religions, and races from Sabang to Merauke (Arlista Dewi Januariska, 2022).

The fourth is from Alang (2023) conducted research with the title “Challenges in Joining Student Exchange Program through Blended Learning: A Study at English Study Program of UKI Toraja”. The purpose of this study is to find out what are the challenges faced by students when joining the student exchange program (MBKM) by students of the English study program. Based on the research results obtained, students face several challenges including, lectures through the blended learning method affect

their interest in attending lectures, the number of media used and poor network conditions hinder the lecture process. So that this needs to be considered by related parties and other students who are interested in participating in the student exchange program in order to prepare themselves for the possibility of facing similar challenges (Alfaris Ginardo Sampe Alang, 2023).

The fifth is from Kristin (2023) conducted a study entitled “Students Competence in Joining Student Exchange Program”. The purpose of this study was to determine the competence of students in joining the student exchange program. Based on the results of the research obtained that the level of competence in participating in the student exchange program has increased. These results are indicated by an increase in student skills, an increase in hard skills from the student exchange program including: socializing skills with work teams, public speaking, and self-confidence and soft skills Academic Knowledge Thinking Skill, Communication skills, skills management. Data obtained from positive statements 82.1%, and from negative statements 76.6%. The average score of the data is 79.5%. The results of this study concluded that the level of competence of students who participated in the student exchange program was at high competence (Pipin Kristin, 2023).

According to the research studies above, it can be concluded that there are several similarities and differences with this research. The similarity is researching about Student Exchange Program. Meanwhile, the difference is that the previous research above examined communication challenges, Obstacles faced at the registration ,selection, announcement, and implementation stages, student exchange activities,

challenges in joining Student Exchange program, and student competence. While the researcher wants to know students experiences when participating in the Student Exchange Program.

## **B. Some Patinent Idea**

### **1. Best Practice**

A best practice is a technique or procedure that has been shown to be effective in achieving optimal results in a particular situation, based on actual experience or research. Students have the opportunity to gain learning experiences beyond their study program and are geared towards developing 21st century skills required in the 4.0 era, such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creative thinking, and caring (Brawijaya, 2021).

Experience is an integral aspect of human daily life. Every individual considers experience as something very valuable, and it can be shared with others to serve as a guide and source of learning (Rama, 2019).

According Vesely (Stenström dan Laine 2006) in (Alwazae, 2016) Best practice as a way of thinking, oriented towards learning, feedback, and constant reflection on what works and why, or even what doesn't work. However, there is an important contrast between the definitions of BPR. Tuominen et al. (2004, cited in Stenström and Laine 2006, 12-13) have devised the following classification of “good practice” definitions:

1. Definitions that emphasize functionality: Good practices can be anything that works fully or partially; they can be a set of useful functions that result in learning. - Good practices have worked well elsewhere; they have proven to be good and they have

produced good results. - Good practices are results that can be transferred elsewhere as a functional set. 2. Definitions that emphasize process: - Good practices mean profitable methods that help achieve the goals defined for an activity, pave the way for action, and make the company more profitable. - Good practices include the same elements as benchmarks although the associated data collection procedures are more research-based. Therefore, the author will examine the 4 best practices, namely: Preparation, Selection, Process, and evaluation.

Akdon (2015:130) explained that the key success factors are factors that influence and function to further focus the organization's strategy in order to achieve the vision and mission effectively and efficiently. The key to success is in the form of opportunities, strengths, challenges, constraints, and weaknesses faced including resources, funds, facilities and infrastructure used by government agencies in their activities (Farhurohman et al., 2017). According to (Utami 2016,37) The characteristics of good best practice are originality, innovative, elaborative, inspirational, empirical. According to Indyanzi, et al. (2022:17) best practice is used to describe the best experiences of teachers and individuals in solving problems as part of their professional duties (Ardhianti et al., 2023). Through the selection process, educational institutions can obtain human resources who meet the criteria to carry out certain tasks (Saadah & Jamilus, 2024).

The Merdeka Student Exchange Program provides an opportunity for students who register to choose several recipient universities as a place to carry out lectures.

However, the final decision regarding student acceptance remains in the hands of the Recipient Universities. The choice of cooperation partners or universities chosen by students in this program contributes positively to the study program in improving accreditation, both at the national and international levels (Alifah et al., n.d.).

The Merdeka Student Exchange Program is a learning initiative that allows students to collaborate for one semester, gain learning experience at public and private universities in Indonesia, and strengthen a sense of unity in diversity (D. Sinaga et al., 2023). Student exchanges can shape student attitudes such as appreciating the diversity of cultures, views, religions, beliefs, opinions or original findings of others, cooperating, having social sensitivity or social care for the community and the environment (Susilawati, 2021).

Student motivation will have a positive impact on the learning process during lectures. Motivation plays an important role as one of the driving factors in improving learning outcomes and academic achievements (Anas & Aryani, 2014).

One of the required conversions in this PMM program is that students are required to follow the Nusantara module, with the hope that they can learn and understand the culture, customs, and social characteristics of the community in higher education (Aulia et al., 2023). The PMM program provides students with the opportunity to experience the process of learning and living in an environment that has cultural and ethnic differences. This experience can broaden their understanding and appreciation of the diversity of cultures, traditions, and customs of others (Rahmat et al., 2024). Students need self-adjustment because of the potential culture shock that can be

experienced by students (Mufidah & Fadilah, 2022). Student exchanges can shape student attitudes such as appreciating the diversity of cultures, views, religions, beliefs, opinions or original findings of others, cooperating, having social sensitivity or social care for the community and the environment (Susilawati, 2021).

Evaluation as a foundation for future improvements and enhances the quality of programs activities being implemented. The evaluation process of a program is crucial because it provides recommendations and improvements for subsequent programs (Nurfadhliyah Awaliyah et al., 2023).

It can be concluded that the Merdeka Student Exchange Program (PMM) aims to enhance students' learning experiences outside their study programs by providing opportunities for collaboration across various universities in Indonesia. This program focuses on developing 21st-century skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creative thinking, and empathy. Learning motivation is crucial as one of the driving factors in improving learning outcomes. Additionally, PMM encourages an understanding of cultural and social diversity through the Nusantara module, which aims to broaden students' perspectives. PMM not only contributes to the improvement of academic program accreditation but also strengthens the sense of unity in diversity. The final decision regarding student acceptance rests with the host university, ensuring an effective learning experience and consistent outcomes. Evaluation serves as a basis for improvements for future programs.

## 2. Student Exchange

Curriculum Merdeka Belajar is an important innovation in higher education, which focuses on student empowerment, curriculum flexibility, and competency-based learning. The merdeka student exchange Program serves as a forum for students to get to know the diversity of culture and science, as well as an arena to explore the application of this innovative curriculum (Mahasiswa & Batch, 2024). Merdeka Student Exchange (PMM), a program designed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikbudristek), fulfills off-campus learning in order to liberate students by converting course credits. The Merdeka Student Exchange Program (PMM) is a domestic student exchange program for 1 (one) semester which will invite the nation's future students to gain learning experience at the best universities throughout Indonesia. Through this program, students will get credit recognition up to 20 credits. (Pendidikan et al., 2023). Students are given the freedom to choose universities in Indonesia, especially universities that have cooperated in student exchange. The program aims to provide students with the opportunity to learn and explore the academic environment outside the island, with the main goal of broadening their horizons, skills, and cultural understanding (Ningsih & Raharja, 2024). According to the Directorate General of Higher Education, the objectives of the Merdeka Student Exchange program are to foster students' love for the cultural diversity of the country, support the strengthening of competencies that can be valuable provisions for students' careers in the future, prepare students to become future leaders of the nation and state (M. A. Sinaga et al., 2023). The Nusantara Module is one of the



courses that must be taken by students who take part in the PMM program. The Nusantara Module is intended to maximize the meeting space between students on various islands, increase knowledge and understanding, and increase the meaning of tolerance (Anwar, 2022).

The objectives of student exchanges include: 1) Students can study at various campuses, both at home and abroad, and live with families in the destination location. This will broaden students' horizons regarding the concept of Unity in Diversity and strengthen brotherhood between cultures and tribes. 2) Building student friendships between regions, tribes, cultures, and religions, thereby increasing the spirit of national unity and integrity. 3) Organizing knowledge transfer to reduce the educational gap, both between universities in the country and between domestic and foreign higher education (Jenderal & Tinggi, n.d.). The Merdeka Student Exchange Program (PMM) involves the exchange of students from different regions for one semester, with a duration of about 6 months. In this program, students can choose and continue their studies at another university, moving from their home campus to different locations across Indonesia. The motivation to participate in PMM is a key factor that encourages students to get involved in the program (Taba & Yuliana, 2023).

It can be concluded that the Merdeka Learning Program (PMM) is a higher education initiative aimed at empowering students through curriculum flexibility and competency-based learning. This program allows students to participate in domestic student exchanges for one semester at top universities in Indonesia, with credit recognition of up to 20 SKS. PMM also emphasizes cultural understanding and

tolerance through the Nusantara Module, designed to broaden students' perspectives. By studying in different academic environments, students can develop a wider range of skills and knowledge, while their motivation to participate in this program becomes a key factor in increasing their engagement.

### 3. Definition of MBKM

*Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* is a policy of the Minister of Education and Culture which aims to encourage students to master various disciplines in preparation for entering the world of work. This policy is in line with Permendikbud Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Higher Education Standards. In the perspective of humanism, independent learning provides opportunities for students to learn independently and take responsibility for themselves. Students have the right to participate in learning outside the study program, both on and off campus, through various activities such as student exchanges, internships or work practices, teaching assistance in educational institutions, research, humanitarian projects, entrepreneurial activities, independent studies or projects, and Thematic Real Work Lecture (KKNT) programs. Student participation in these activities can provide valuable experiential learning as preparation for future life. To realize the intended learning experience, universities need to establish cooperation with the business world and the government, with the aim of increasing the professionalism of the academic community. This collaboration will affect curriculum development, the determination of learning outcomes, and the placement of lectures outside the university. The *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)* program continues to be implemented,

and the quality and meaning of learning can be achieved by applying humanistic learning principles, such as learning how to learn, independent learning, self-motivation, and affective education. With this approach, the educational objectives of MBKM which are expected to develop hard skills and soft skills, prepare students to be better prepared to face the needs of the times, and prepare graduates as future leaders of a superior and characterized nation can be achieved optimally (Susilawati, 2021). *Kampus Merdeka* is an approach to learning in higher education that is independent and flexible, which aims to create a learning culture that is innovative, not limiting or restrictive, and in accordance with student needs (Jati et al., 2021). Merdeka learning aims to make the learning process more meaningful. The Kampus Merdeka program provides challenges and opportunities for students to develop their creativity, capacity, and personality, and meet individual needs. In addition, this program encourages independence in seeking and finding knowledge through direct experience and dynamics in the field. Aspects that are considered include the skills needed, challenges faced, social interaction, collaboration, self-management, performance demands, and targets and achievements that must be achieved (Sintiawati et al., 2022). *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* is a transformation that is applied in the learning process, from preschool education to higher education (Santri Fahmi, 2022). The main objective of *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)* is to give universities the freedom to be more independent and innovative, so that they can produce quality graduates (Purwanti, 2021).

It can be concluded that through the MBKM policy, which includes activities such as student exchanges, internships, research, and humanitarian projects, students can gain valuable learning experiences. To achieve optimal results, universities need to collaborate with the business world and the government, which will influence curriculum development and learning outcomes. The MBKM program aims to develop both hard and soft skills in students and prepare them to become outstanding future leaders. With a humanistic approach, MBKM creates an innovative and flexible learning culture, providing challenges and opportunities for students to develop their creativity and capacities, as well as enhancing the quality of education from the elementary level to higher education.

#### 4. MBKM Program

The MBKM policy is in line with Permendikbud Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Higher Education Standards (Nasrulloh&Sutisna, 2022). In Article 18, it is stated that the fulfillment of the period and learning load for undergraduate or applied undergraduate students can be done in two ways: 1) following the entire learning process in the study program in higher education in accordance with the period and learning load; and 2) following part of the learning process in the study program to fulfill part of the period and learning load, while the rest can be taken from the learning process outside the study program. Through MBKM, students have the opportunity to take part in learning outside the study program for 1 (one) semester or the equivalent of 20 (twenty) credits at the same university. In addition, they can also take learning for a maximum of 2 (two) semesters or the equivalent of 40 (forty)

credits in the same study program at different universities, or in different study programs at different universities, and/or take part in learning outside the university. The MBKM policy consists of 8 programs, namely: Independent Student Exchange, Internship/Practical Work, Teaching in Educational Institutions, Village Projects, Research, Entrepreneurial Activities, Independent Study/Projects, and Humanitarian Projects (Wijayanto et al., 2023). The Ministry of Education and Culture also launched the MBKM (*Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka*) program as part of a policy to develop human resources with character and improve their quality (Sciences, 2024). The purpose of MBKM is to improve the competence of graduates and prepare them as future leaders of the nation who are superior and have personality (Akuntansi et al., 2022).

The MBKM program basically gives each student the freedom to expand their experience outside the study program, with the hope of improving the quality of learning. In addition, this program allows students to gain various insights, knowledge, and experiences that suit their interests and talents, so that they are ready to be competitive in the global world (Apriliyani et al., 2022)

The policy of free learning has become a much-discussed topic in the world of education. The concept that emphasizes freedom in learning is applied to prepare students who graduate from universities, both public and private, to be able to face the times and changes that occur quickly (Fuadi & Irdalisa, 2022). The MBKM program is expected to improve the character and abilities of strong and better

students. By running this program, students are expected to have broader experience and knowledge, and become more competitive graduates (Apriliyani et al., 2022).

Therefore, the 8 MBKM programs are designed to create a flexible and independent culture. In this case, it is in line with the efforts of study programs in higher education to produce graduates who are ready to work. Before implementing MBKM, universities need to pay attention to the general requirements of MBKM.

It can be concluded that the *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)* policy is in line with the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 3 of 2020 concerning National Higher Education Standards, which provides students with the opportunity to study outside their study programs. Students can participate in the MBKM program for one semester (equivalent to 20 SKS) at the same university, or up to two semesters (equivalent to 40 SKS) at different universities or study programs. The MBKM program includes eight types of activities: Independent Student Exchange, Internship/Work Practice, Teaching at Educational Institutions, Village Projects, Research, Entrepreneurship Activities, Independent Study/Projects, and Humanitarian Projects. The goal of this policy is to improve the quality of education and student character, as well as to prepare them to be more competitive in the global market. By participating in this program, students are expected to broaden their perspectives and experiences, thus becoming graduates who are more qualified and ready to face future challenges.

### C. Theoretical Framework

The MBKM policy provides all students with the opportunity to develop skills according to their talents and interests through hands-on experience in the world of work in preparation for their careers (Wijayanto et al., 2023). *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* is a policy launched by the Minister of Education and Culture, with the aim of encouraging students to master various disciplines that are useful in entering the world of work, and to make the learning process more meaningful (Sintiawati et al., 2022). The MBKM Program, established by the Indonesian government, aims to provide students with the flexibility and opportunity to access a wide range of learning activities, both on and off campus. MBKM has several programs, one of which is Student Exchange. Merdeka student exchange is a program that allows students to study at other universities in Indonesia for one semester. According to (Faiz & Purwati, 2021) that student exchange programs can enable students to gain knowledge about various materials that have never been explored before so that students can independently think flexibly, comprehensively and provide opportunities to learn about various ethnicities, nations, cultures, races and religions so as to strengthen the basic values of national unity and integrity (Ekawati, 2023). According to Alang (2023) students face several challenges including, lecturers through the blended learning method affect interest in attending lectures, the number of media used and poor network conditions hinder the lecture process. The results of the last researcher, concluded that

the level of competence of students who participated in the student exchange program was at high competence. The results of the study discuss student competence, while this study discusses student experience. In the Student Exchange Program, students have successfully implemented the program and researchers want to know their best experiences.

Universitas Kristen Indonesia Toraja, located in Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi Province, is one of the universities that has implemented the PMM program. At UKI Toraja, the researcher will interview a student who has implemented PMM. From this, the researcher can make an explanation of how the student's experience in this study.