

ABSTRACT

TIARA DWI ANINDA 2022, *Student Experiences of Participating in the Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka (PMM) Program: A Study of English Department Students at One University in Jambi*. English Education Study Program. Faculty of Teacher Training Education of Universitas Jambi in Academic year 2023/2024. The first supervisor is Dr. Mukhlash Abrar, S.S., M.Hum. The second supervisor is Dr. Masbirotroni, S.Pd, M.Sc. Ed.

In the modern era characterized by pervasive technology and information access, students need crucial competencies outlined by the Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21), including critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration skills. To address these demands, the Merdeka Belajar - Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program was introduced in Indonesia, focusing on self-directed and student-centered higher education. Within the scope of MBKM, the Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka (PMM) program provides students with diverse learning experiences and academic credits. This research delves into the experiences of English Department students in PMM, focusing on their adaptation to online learning and cross-cultural interactions, highlighting socio-cultural challenges. The study, utilizing a qualitative phenomenology approach with ten participants through Zoom meetings and semi-structured interviews, through the interviews it identifies three primary challenges, which are cultural adjustments to a new environment, language and communication difficulties, and academic challenges intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants employ three coping strategies, emphasizing adaptive approaches, resilience, and self-care, involving academic methods, time management, technology use, program engagement, peer support, and collaboration. The findings contribute insights for enhancing future MBKM activities, enriching the discourse on 21st-century education and student-centered learning in higher education.

Key words : Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka, Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka, Challenge