

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

The Ministry of Education and Culture published the *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) policy to achieve the national higher education goals. MBKM arose from the assumption that not all universities in Indonesia could produce graduates with abilities and skills in the world of work. In response to this need, the government, in collaboration with educational institutions, established the MBKM program. The *Merdeka Belajar - Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) program has become a significant initiative to improve the quality of higher education. This program highlighted that learning did not only happen in the classroom; it could happen anywhere that could help learning.

The MBKM program allowed fifth-semester English education students to actively engage in *Pengenalan lapangan Persekolahan* (PLP), allowing them to build teaching skills and gain hands-on experience from the early stages of their academic journey. The program helped students to apply the theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom to real-world settings. This was relevant to the MBKM program's goal of encouraging students to master various fields of science within their areas of expertise and preparing them to compete in the global environment.

In the MBKM program, there were several activities that students could participate in, including a program to prepare students for the school environment, namely *Pengenalan Lapangan Persekolahan* (PLP). A systematized and high-quality education process was necessary to produce teachers with talent and qualifications (Kharisma, 2021). This activity helped prepare students to develop their competence to become teachers. Students could

develop their teaching skills as pre-service teachers and gain experience. Through this program, students could also explore educational problems that occurred in schools and then try to provide solutions to these problems.

The modification of the curriculum, such as the transition from the previous curriculum, posed a unique challenge for fifth-semester English education study program students participating in the PLP MBKM program. The relevance lay in how these changes impacted their preparation as future English teachers. Involvement in MBKM and active participation in PLP were not just complementary to the curriculum but also integral parts of the academic journey for English education students at Jambi University, preparing them to face global challenges in the field of education.

The researcher conducted this study at Jambi University, specifically in the English education study program. Jambi University was one of the universities that supported its students' participation in the *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) program, such as the *Pertukaran Mahasiswa Merdeka* (PMM), *Pengenalan Lapangan Persekolahan* (PLP), *Kampus Mengajar* (KM), and *Magang Bersertifikat*.

The researcher was interested in conducting this research because of the experience she gained during the PLP MBKM in the fifth semester of 2022. Researchers gained experience, knowledge, and challenges during these two months. Several research studies discussed regular PLP, usually carried out during the seventh semester, but only a few discussed PLP MBKM, usually carried out during the fifth semester. Therefore, the researcher wanted to explore the challenges of teaching English education study program students at Jambi University faced during PLP MBKM and their strategies to overcome those challenges. The research was written entitled “The Challenges of *Pengenalan*

Lapangan Persekolahan (PLP) Faced by English Education Students in the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) Program.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background, the research questions are as follows:

1. What are the challenges of teaching faced by English education students in the PLP MBKM program?
2. How do the English education students overcome the challenges of teaching in the PLP MBKM program?

1.3 Objective of the Research

Based on the research questions above, the objective of this research are as follows:

1. This study aimed to explore what are the challenges of teaching faced by English education students in the PLP MBKM program.
2. This study aimed to explore how do the English education students overcome the challenges of teaching in the PLP MBKM program.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The results of this study have some important significance in the context of higher education and experiences for English education students.

1. Educational institutions

The researcher's contribution is to provide recommendations that educational institutions can implement to better support their students in undergoing PLP activities. These recommendations may include additional training, mentorship from more experienced teachers, and increased support from the university.

2. The student

This research described English education students' challenges or difficulties during their PLP MBKM. The researcher's contribution is not only to identify the challenges but also to propose effective strategies to overcome these challenges. By knowing the challenges and appropriate strategies, students can improve their skills in classroom management, interaction with students, and adaptation to the school environment.

3. Curriculum Development

The study results will be able to be used as feedback for educational institutions to improve their PLP program, ensuring that it will be more effective in preparing students to become professionals ready to enter the world of work.

1.5 Limitation of the Research

To simplify this research, the researcher limits the research by only focusing on the challenges of teaching faced by English education students during PLP MBKM and their strategies to overcome the challenges. This study has some limitations, but its results provide valuable insights that students can learn from to improve their ability to teach in the future.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms.

a) MBKM Program:

In Indonesia's current curriculum development context, MBKM is one of the foremost curriculum objectives at the higher education level (Rahmatullah & Syamsu, 2021). This program is designs to motivate students to develop various competencies.

b) *Pengenalan Lapangan persekolahan (PLP)*:

PLP is a practical field activity in which students observe the academic environment in a school. This activity aims to gain teaching experience, enhance teaching skills, and enable students to take a step closer to becoming professional educators.

c) *Analytical Approach*:

A method or strategy used to examine, study, or evaluate a subject or problem by breaking it down into its essential components or parts is known as analytical approach (Mccarthy, 1991).