

*Corresponding author: Aji Setyawan,
Universitas Negeri Semarang

E-mail:
Aji12setyawan@students.unnes.ac.id

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Implementation Of Self-Directed Learning Policy In The Internship Program (Msib) At Pt Mikro Bisnis Digital Sejahtera

Aji Setyawan, Nurul Fatimah

Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Political Sciences, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

Abstract: This research aims to determine the implementation of Merdeka Belajar policy in the Internship Program (MSIB) at PT Mikro Bisnis Sejahtera. This type of research is qualitative, which was carried out at PT Mikrobisnis Digital Sejahtera. Data sources used primary and secondary data. Primary data employed observations and interview results. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with four informants in this research, divided into two main informants and two supporting informants. Secondary data utilized company data, books, scientific literature, and the data analysis technique uses qualitative data analysis. The research results indicated that the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum had been carried out in PT Mikrobisnis Digital Sejahtera, which is a company that provides digitalization programs. Combining an approach with the principles of experiential learning and deep student involvement, internship programs can become an effective way to prepare students for success in the world of work. At the end of the learning, there is a capstone project. This is the final project of the program to complete the project directly with the specified one.

Keywords: Micro Sector, Digitalization, People Market, MicroApps, NIB, OSS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Merdeka curriculum currently faces challenges in maintaining consistency and high educational standards, while giving students the freedom to determine partner learning paths can increase creativity and motivation. The risk of breaking down the integrated curriculum structure can reduce unity in education. The direct off-campus learning process often encounters difficulties in fulfilling the needs of diverse students.

Merdeka Curriculum is required to overcome the crisis and learning gaps that have long occurred in Indonesia regarding the teaching and learning process. Based on national and international studies, many Indonesian children experience learning loss so that partners find it difficult to achieve basic competencies as students. Merdeka Curriculum aims to provide equal opportunities for all Indonesian children to achieve their best potential partners through quality education.

Merdeka curriculum through the internship program also provides opportunities for students to develop important soft skills, such as communication, teamwork and problem solving. Research has revealed that these kinds of soft skills play a crucial role in professional success, and practical experience in the workplace can provide a strong foundation for its development (Ployhart & Bliese, 2023). With Medeka Curriculum that allows students to take



the initiative in choosing projects -internship projects that match the partner's interests and goals, partner can optimize opportunities to develop these skills.

A study shows that internships can be an effective recruitment source for companies, by allowing partners to identify and evaluate potential talent before offering full-time employment (Leung & Su, 2022).

The Certified Independent Study and Internship Program (MSIB) is one of the Merdeka Campus programs designed to ensure students in getting the best competencies, the latest competencies and the leading competencies to face the world of the future. The Merdeka Campus MSIB program facilitates students the opportunity to hone their skills by studying and working directly in the industrial world. The main purpose of establishing a Certified Internship program on the Merdeka campus is because of the imbalance between college graduates and the needs of the labor market in the field. Many university graduates find it difficult to find work due to a lack of work experience during their studies and the skills required by industry.

MSMEs and people's markets are productive businesses owned by individuals or organizations that meet the criteria for micro businesses. As stated in UU No. 20 of 2008, according to the definition of MSMEs, these are divided into several sections, which include micro, small and medium enterprises. According to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (KemenkopUKM) in March 2021, the number of SMEs in Indonesia reach 64.2 million. Product domestic value 61.07 percent or IDR 8,573.89 trillion (Kemenkeu.co.id). MSMEs also have a big influence on the Indonesian economy.

The implementation of Merdeka curriculum in internship programs, such as MSIB (Business Industry Study Internship) was carried out in one place, namely at PT Mikro Bisnis Sejahtera. This company offers great opportunities for students to develop practical skills, increase understanding of the industrial world, and prepare partners to respond to challenges faced at work. With this approach, students have the freedom to determine their own partner's learning path, according to the partner's interests, skills and career goals. Study show that Internship programs supported by Merdeka curriculum can increase student involvement and motivation, as well as produce graduates who are better prepared professionally (Shin et al., 2019).

Based on the Merdeka learning program through internships, such as MSIB, students can learn from direct experience in the field, facing real situations in the business world, and practice the theory learned in class. Several studies show that this kind of experiential learning can strengthen understanding of concepts and improve transfer knowledge to context work (Kolb, 2023). Thus, Merdeka curriculum in the internship program allows students to integrate theory with practice, increasing the relevance of partner education to industry demands. Thus, this curriculum in the internship program can create mutually beneficial relationships between higher education personnel, students and the industrial world. Based on this literature, the aim of this research is to know the implementation of the Self-directed Learning policy in the Internship Program at PT. Mikro Bisnis Sejahtera.

2. Literatur Review

Self-Directed Learning Theory is a concept that emphasizes individual ability to organize, manage, and control the partner's own learning process. According to this theory, individuals have an active role in determining what partners learn, how partners learn, and how partners evaluate the partner progress (Budiarto, A: 2020). This concept places the individual as the main agent in learning, making it possible to choose resources, methods, and learning objectives according to personal needs and interests (Dewi, SS: 2021). Education according to a number of experts mentioned that it has provided the perspective regarding the Merdeka Curriculum and the importance of analyzing policies This is from the perspective of theoretical studies. According to Darmawan and Winataputra (2020), the Merdeka Curriculum seeks to strengthen student independence and facilitate student-centered learning

by emphasizing empowerment and development of 21st century skills. Moreover, according to Riyanto (2019), Merdeka curriculum aims to free the students from the shackles of a curriculum that is too theoretical and promote the learning that is more contextual and relevant to real life.

Research by Wijaya, A. (2022) highlights the importance of integrating the Merdeka Belajar policy in the context of internship programs. Several partners found that successful implementation of this policy depends on strong support from the company and a structured approach in integrating Merdeka Belajar elements into the internship curriculum. Similar findings are reinforced by other research conducted by Kusuma, B. (2020), which highlights that the active involvement of companies and internship supervisors in the learning process is key in realizing the vision of Merdeka Belajar. However, research by Zainal, M. (2023) shows that the main challenge in implementing this policy is the lack of understanding and awareness of Self-Directed Learning concept among stakeholders, including companies and apprentice students.

Research by Yulianto, D. (2021) emphasized importance evaluation and monitoring the effectiveness of the Merdeka Belajar policy in the internship program. Partners suggest that the development of clear and systematic metrics to measure the achievement of learning outcomes as well as the participation of apprentice students in the program is necessary to ensure successful implementation of the policy. This finding is in line with research conducted by Darmawan, B. (2024), which emphasizes the need for ongoing monitoring to evaluate the impact of the Merdeka Belajar policy in the long term.

The results of research by Bambang, A. (2020) highlight the important role of technology in supporting the implementation of the Self-Directed Learning policy in internship programs. Several partners found that the integration of digital learning platforms and online collaboration tools can increase the accessibility and flexibility of learning for apprentices. In addition, technology also enables more effective monitoring of learning progress and achievement of individual learning goals. This finding is in line with research conducted by Widodo, W. (2019), which shows that adapting technology in an educational context can help facilitate Self-Directed Learning and increase student engagement.

However, research by Erfan, E. (2023) shows that while technology can be a useful tool, challenges related to accessibility and the digital divide among apprentices also need to be considered. Mitra suggests that companies and educational institutions must ensure that all students have equal access to the technology needed to support Merdeka Belajar learning. In this context, training and technological support is also necessary for students who may have limitations in using technology.

In addition, research by Kurniawan, K. (2021) highlights the importance of local community involvement in supporting the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar policy in internship programs. Partners find that collaboration between companies, educational institutions and local communities can create more diverse and contextual learning opportunities for apprentices. In addition, community involvement can also help strengthen the connection between the world of education and work, creating a stronger bridge for the integration of students into the workforce.

On the other hand, research by Zulkarnain, Z. (2019) highlights the need to increase cooperation between various stakeholders, including companies, educational institutions, government and community organizations, in supporting the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar policy. Partners emphasize the synergy between various parties that can create more holistic environment learning and support for apprentice students. Moreover, cross-sector collaboration can also help overcome administrative and regulatory obstacles that may hinder its policy implementation.

Research by Zahara, Z. (2022) highlights the importance of considering diversity in internship students and the needs of partners in designing internship programs that support the Self-

Directed Learning principle. Partners found that an approach that is inclusive and responsive to students' individual needs can increase the effectiveness of learning and student participation in the program. These findings underline the importance of a personalized and differentiated approach in supporting the Merdeka Belajar vision.

Furthermore, research by Yusuf, Y. (2020) highlights the important role of formative evaluation in supporting the implementation of the Self-Directed Learning policy in internship programs. These found that regular feedback and independent reflection helped apprentices monitor their own progress and increased learning effectiveness. In addition, formative evaluation also allows companies and tutors to customize learning approaches according to learner needs and preferences. Zahara, Z. (2022) also shows that the need for integration of active and collaborative learning principles in supporting the implementation of the Self-Directed Learning policy in internship programs. Partners find that approach that encourages active students' participation in the learning process and collaboration between peers can increase learning motivation and partner learning outcomes. These findings underscore the importance of transforming traditional learning approaches into more interactive and learner-centered approaches.

3. Research Method and Materials

This research used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. According to Bogdan and Tylor quoted by Lexy.J. Moleong, a qualitative approach is a research procedure resulting descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed events (Moleong, 2018). A descriptive qualitative approach was used to describe and explain in detail the implementation of the Self-Directed Learning policy in the internship program (MSIB) at PT Mikro prosperous business.

The types of data used are primary data and secondary data. This type of data was obtained through collection techniques. Primary data were from interviews and observations. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with four informants in this research, who were divided into two main informants and two supporting informants. First informant was Kaka mentor INAmikro, who is in charge of supervising the process of making the NIB, the second main informant was the liaison between the mentor and the client. The supporting informant was the client who would make the NIB, while the supporter informant 2 created the client's NIB. Secondary data were obtained through company data, scientific journals, and books used as research sources.

Qualitative data analysis research was carried out based on the data obtained and then developed into a hypothesis (Sugiyono, 2019). Data analysis in this research includes data reduction, data presentation, and verification. The researchers carried out data reduction by summarizing and sorting important data from various data regarding the implementation of the Self-Directed Learning policy in the internship program (MSIB) at PT Mikro Bisnis Sejahtera. The researcher presented the data by translating the informants' answers into explanatory text regarding the implementation of the MSIB Self-Directed Learning policy at PT Mikro Bisnis Sejahtera. The verification stage was the stage of providing an overview of the conclusions of the research. Data verification techniques used triangulation data, such as method, source, and theory triangulations. Method triangulation was carried out by interviewing informants to obtain the truth of the information. Triangulation source was done to support data interview such as seeing picture of NIB manufacturing activity. Triangulation theory used to distinguish findings research (Anggito, A, & Setiawan, 2018).

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Implementation of MSIB in PT. Microbusiness Digital Prosperous



PT Mikrobisnis Digital Sejahtera empowers the Microbusinesses sector and people's markets and play a crucial role in national economic development. PT Mikrobisnis Digital Sejahtera has designed an educational program about empowering the microbusiness sector and people's markets regarding financial and marketing digitalization for the microbusiness sector, which is expected to improve the quality of the microbusiness sector in the city Semarang and the city of Demak.

The process of implementing MSIB involves placement in the division (mentor) field, which requires the author to go directly to the field to face traders through face to face. On this internship opportunity, the author, as a mentor, carried out the main objective of the INAmikro program, which has a social mission to help traders in changing their partner's business from stage to traditional, which is slowly improving to become more modern and changing the business level of traders so that they move up in class or have a higher turnover.

The MSIB program, that these students participated in, was conducted at PT Mikrobisnis Digital Sejahtera with working hours five days a week, Monday to Friday with eight working hours (09.00 – 17.00 WIB). Because the writer positions in the division field, the writer has flexible working hours. This is known by the company and has become the company's direction. In the process of internship activities, teamwork is always prioritized by each team member to carry out the tasks given by the mentor. That teamwork is necessary to make things happen activity, which is more effective and efficient. At the start of our internship, the researchers often miscommunicated due to a lack of teamwork and many errors occurred during trader/UMKM data registration activities, but they were able to adapt to teamwork and communicate more with each other to make the internship activities run smoothly.

MSMEs have a big influence on the Indonesian economy. Therefore, PT Mikrobisnis Digital Sejahtera in this case seeks to contribute to the progress of MSMEs in Indonesia with INAmikro programs. This program is a kind of people's market program in the micro and ultra-micro sectors, which has several programs, such as coaching and mentoring for micro traders/entrepreneurs so that MSMEs can increase their business turnover with the help of the MikroApps application.

Since 2022, INAmikro is committed to expanding several regions in Indonesia, where previously this program was called JAKmikro, formed in 2017. At that time, JAKmikro discovered five important points of problems faced by traders in general. With support and assistance from the Regional Government, City Government and Central Government as well as related institutions to help increase the existence of micro traders, then it has an expanding impact on Jakmikro on a larger scale. Therefore, Jakmikro changed its name to INAmikro or Indonesia micro. The expansion of the JAKmikro program, which later became INAmikro was motivated by the same cases that occurred and were faced in other areas outside Jakarta. Currently, INAmikro continues to strive for regional expansion and has developed in several regions in Indonesia, namely Jakarta, North Sumatra, Central Java, Solo, DIY and West Java.

INAmikro's main goal is to improve quality and digitalize business owned by micro entrepreneurs so that it becomes a more modern business. In this internship activity, the writer who is positioned as a mentor division or who usually works directly in the field to interact with traders in the market has the task of helping micro entrepreneurs understand technology and digitalization through the MikroApps application, as well as helping traders to create an NIB as an identity for a business categorized according to its business field.

Merdeka is part of the Self-Directed Learning policy by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, which provides opportunities for students to hone their skills according to their talents and interests by plunge directly into the world of work in preparation for a future career (Fajar et al., 2022). Self-Directed Learning is one part of the campus program Merdeka, which aims to provide opportunities for students to learn and improve themselves through activities outside of lectures, but still recognized as part of the lecture. This program is intended for students who want to equip

themselves with specific and practical competencies needed by the business and industrial world. The competencies expected from the independent study program are learning specific and practical competencies as well required in the future, interact with experts to understand its application, and practice these competencies in a real project (Suryaman, 2020).

INAmikro opens the Self-Directed Learning internship program for various majors. This program provides an opportunity for people to learn and work in the field of MSME development. Through this implementation, universities that implement the Independent Campus curriculum learning process can provide students with freedom and opportunities wider to pursue internships in various fields they desire. Besides, they can design their own internship experiences, pursue students' special interests, and network within the industry. This implementation can make it easier to find internship activities within one platform focused on Apprenticeship and no-mixed with full-time work, so that when students graduate from college, they have independent skills.

Various research results indicate that there have been several efforts made from various sectors to succeed the implementation of this activity a success (Maisyaroh et al., 2021). The Merdeka Belajar curriculum in higher education provides learning that is autonomous and flexible, innovative, independent, and relevant to student needs. The use of technology in project-based consideration learning is thought to be able to improve students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor abilities (Khusna et al., 2022). There are several research results that emphasize the idea of freedom learning as well as a humanist philosophy that emphasizes freedom, independence and the ability to adapt an educational institution in determining the needs of students. As subjects of learning and control, students play an important role in education. As a fundamental model for generating student interest and fostering a positive learning environment, this idea provides freedom, hands-on experience, creativity, and positive attitudes and perceptions (Nadlir & Zamzami, 2023). However, there are several research results that show the implementation of MBKM has not been effective in terms of communication, resources and attitudes of implementers, especially in the resource dimension for human resource indicators and supporting facilities, which are important to pay attention to in implementing the MBKM program. Meanwhile, the dimensions of the bureaucratic structure are effective because they have been provided standard operating procedures in the form of guidelines or implementation manuals. Moreover, responsibility or authority in implementing policies and coordination channels has been well distributed (Tjaija, 2022).

The Merdeka Curriculum is synonymous with learning that supports students in learning, which is differentiated and very necessary for students to approach learning (Siringoringo et al., 2023). Education is very important in preparing people to maintain and improve the quality of life as dignified individuals (Wairisal et al., 2023). Freedom to learn by implementing MSIB is a new policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

4.2. Digitalization Program for the Micro MSME Sector through Mikro.Apps and Creation of a Business Registration Number (NIB)

The use of digital technology can provide convenience in various fields, this is expected to be reachable and utilized by Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs), especially business actors in traditional markets in Indonesia. This program aims to increase the implementation of digitalization in people's markets. This will help make it easier for traders to carry out buying and selling transactions just by relying on smartphones. PT Mikrobisnis Digital Sejahtera through the INAmikro program provides a solution to this problem by creating an application called MikroApps.

In its application, the intern participants (INAmikro Team) provide education to traders regarding its operation and benefits. This application has provided many benefits for its users. Some of the targets for implementing digitalization of people's markets using the MikroApps

application include non-cash payments via QR barcode scanning, recording traders' merchandise stock every day, recording financial reports to be able to find out the net income and losses earned by traders in each area. Besides the Casheer Apps feature can provide recording of purchases and sales.

The MikroApps application consists of five tabs, including the Profile Tab, Expenditure Tab, History Tab, Product Tab and Cashier Tab. Intern participants (INAmikro Team) will provide education to micro entrepreneurs regarding use MikroApps application, which will be useful for technological progress and convenience transaction activities of traders. The benefits obtained include being able to record various transactions that occur starting from income, expenditure to the amount of stock and how much capital is generated in every item, issued by business actors. Traders can also record financial reports that can be calculated daily or monthly, so that partners can know how much net and gross profit their partners generate. The MikroApps application also makes it easier for traders to carry out transactions online or what is commonly known as cashless.

INAmikro collaborates with Bank Mandiri, so the author and team will also direct traders to register for a Mandiri savings book and get a Bank Mandiri card easily without having to make a large deposit. In a cashless system, it has a QR barcodes feature to facilitate buying and selling transactions between traders and buyers. With this feature, if buyers will carry out the payment process without needing to use cash, making it easier for traders not to think about changing money. QR barcodes will also minimize human error when traders give change to buyers. The traders need to open the MikroApps application then scan the QR barcode, and the money will automatically go into the trader's balance.

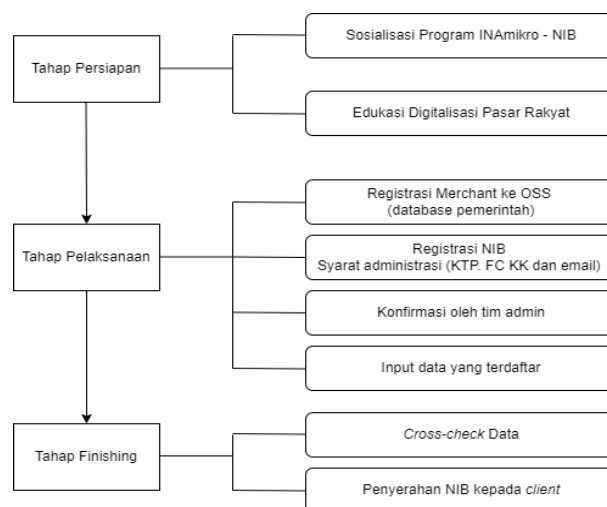


Figure 1 NIB Manufacturing Stage



Figure 2. NIB Example

Based on the analysis that has been carried out, there are field findings using the Self-Directed Learning Theory. The researchers took part in an internship program as part of an MSIB series (Certified Independent Study Internships), organized by the Ministry of Education, Research and Technology (Ministry of Education, Research and Technology). The following are some of the findings obtained by researchers after participating in the MSIB batch 4 program in 2023.

With this program, the researchers can implement the theories that have been obtained during college in the world of work. In the world of education, including college, generally someone only learns about something in theory. In fact, these theories are not necessarily used. Even if they are used, the approaches and adjustments are needed with the type of industry being run. The results of the analytical study found that this program can improve thinking and communication skills. Students will certainly be faced with problems that have not been encountered in the campus environment. Including during the process of working on projects that involve various parties, divisions or departments. Of course, students will learn a lot about how to solve these problems and communicate them to the various parties involved. Then, the implementation of this program can increase professional connections. With the MSIB program, students can have the opportunity to communicate and discuss with various parties who are experienced in their fields and they have expanded their connections, which is a very important thing for students to facilitate their career path.

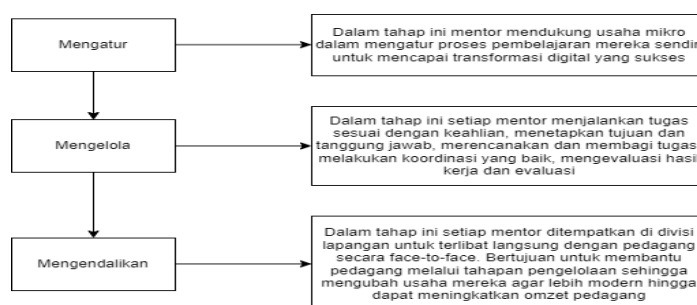


Figure 3. Aspect of Self-Directed Learning Theory

The results of Self-Directed Learning Theory explain that the learning method carried out by a person to improve knowledge, skills, and achievements is through their own initiative in planning, implementation, and evaluation. Various scientific literature states that self-directed learning can build a constructivism thought process to carry out the development of competencies, knowledge or skills independently by students facilitated by educators. The

results of other research studies also mention that independent learning strategies involve planning stages and the use of various learning tools.

5. Conclusion

The implementation of Merdeka curriculum was carried out through an apprenticeship process at PT Mikrobisnis Digital Sejahtera. This company provides a digitalization program for MSME traders. Besides, PT MDS also makes empowerment efforts to the people's market sector and MSMEs on E-commerce training to expand the marketing of MSME products. An apprenticeship program with Merdeka curriculum, such as MSIB at PT Mikro Bisnis Sejahtera offers great potential for learners to develop skills, experience, and connections that are essential in the preparation of a partner's career. By combining this approach with the principles of experiential learning and deep learner engagement, internship program can be an effective way to prepare learners for success in the world of work.

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