

## The Independent Campus Program for Higher Education in Indonesia: The Role of Government Support and the Readiness of Institutions, Lecturers and Students

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### Abstract

This study seeks to analyze the relationship between the *Kampus Merdeka* (Independent Campus) program of Indonesia and the readiness of stakeholders in universities, specifically whether the latter has a positive influence on implementing the program. The research applied a quantitative approach, which is suitable when trying to assess the appropriateness of an implemented educational program, while the analysis was informed by relevant prior research. It was necessary to learn whether there are internal and external factors support an implementation, so this research was conducted among private universities in Region IV (West Java and Banten Provinces) of the Higher Education Service Institutions of Indonesia with a sample of 111 lecturers. Based on the data analysis, the readiness of universities, lecturers, and students, as well as government support, were found to positively influence the implementation of the Independent Campus Program. More precisely, the effect revealed by the  $R^2$  value was 10.4 percent. Of the four independent variables considered, the strongest influence came from government support, with an  $R^2$  of 7.7 percent, followed by lecturer readiness (4.7 percent), student readiness (4.7 percent), and campus readiness (3.6 percent). All four of these independent variables therefore had a significant influence on the implementation of the Independent Campus Program, suggesting that any such implementation of the program must proceed in line with the preparedness of the relevant stakeholders. Strong support from the government also seems to be very important, however, if the Independent Campus Program is to achieve its goal of enhancing the capacity and quality of higher education in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** *Campus Policy, Education Readiness, Lecturers, Students, Government Support*

### Introduction

The *Kampus Merdeka* (Independent Campus) Program was launched by Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture (*Mendikbud*) at the end of 2020. It aims to develop higher education in line with Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 22 of 2020 for the 2020–2024 Strategic Plan. The program's objectives were defined according to the eight key performance indicators (KPIs) that were stipulated in the ministry's Decree No. 754/P/2020. The Independent Campus Program seeks to enhance the capacity and quality of education in Indonesia's higher education institutions. Indonesia's higher education sector is very diverse, so the program's implementation has been designed by the government to take place in phases under a tiered system. According to

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statistical data from the Director General of Higher Education, the Ministry of Education and Culture supervises 3,169 tertiary education institutions, both public and private. Of these, 1,033 provide vocational education, while 2,136 are academic higher education institutions, such as universities (Directorate General of Higher Education, 2020).

The existing literature suggests that the readiness of higher education institutions and their lecturers and students, as well as government support, may influence the implementation of the Independent Campus Program in Indonesia, but no studies have yet analyzed in depth the effect of the abovementioned aspects of readiness and how they may help achieve the program's objectives (Solikhah & Budiharso, 2019). What is more, most studies have focused on the Independent Campus Program for just one institution, so their findings have limited generalizability.

Research has revealed how these institutions and their students have reacted to the program (Qorib & Harfiani, 2021). Most tertiary institutions, especially those in remote areas beyond the capital city, have not rushed to adopt the program, and the unique situation of each institution presents obstacles to implementing it, such as students lacking a good understanding of the program (Budiharso & Tarman, 2020; Subedi & Subedi, 2020; Wahyuni & Anshori, 2021). Curriculum digitization also faces challenges, because not all campuses have adequate cooperation networks and internet connectivity (Kalimullina et al. 2021; Karmini, Suda, Agung, & Suasti, 2020). In addition, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has prompted further challenges, such as requiring online teaching and social distancing measures, especially in the large cities where most universities are located (Qorib & Harfiani, 2021). An appropriate state-based reference framework for higher education is therefore needed (Peristiwo, 2020; Dube & Tsotetsi, 2019; Lucey, 2021). The Independent Campus Program needs students to be prepared, because it focuses on action learning, concept mapping, and value clarification based on information and communication technology (Ige, 2019). This transformation in educational policy must also accord with educational theory and practice during the transition, stabilization, and growth-potential periods (Strunc, 2020; Tarman & Chigisheva, 2019). We must therefore understand how the readiness of students and lecturers, as well as government support, can affect students' achievements, so education can continue to advance as a science and support optimal outcomes for graduates (Bekele & ago, 2020; Cantu et al., 2021; Waychunas, 2020).

With the above in mind, this research sought to investigate how the readiness of higher education institutions and their lecturers and students, as well as government support, influence the

implementation of the Independent Campus Program in Indonesia. This study is especially relevant given that this government program was recently launched at the end of 2020. Thus, as a relatively new intervention in the education sector, it warrants studies to help guide universities in how to implement the program in an optimal manner.

### Research Questions

Five relevant research questions were posed based on an analysis of the background:

1. How does an institution's readiness influence a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program?
2. How does the readiness of lecturers influence a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program?
3. How does the readiness of students influence a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program?
4. How does government support influence a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program?
5. How does the combination of all the above-mentioned factors influence a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program?

### Hypotheses

After formulating the problem based on a review of the literature, the following research hypotheses were proposed:

- Ha1:** Campus readiness ( $X_1$ ) has a positive influence on a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program ( $Y$ ).
- Ha2:** Lecturer readiness ( $X_2$ ) has a positive influence on a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program ( $Y$ ).
- Ha3:** Student readiness ( $X_3$ ) has a positive influence on a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program ( $Y$ ).
- Ha4:** Government support ( $X_4$ ) has a positive influence on a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program ( $Y$ ).
- Ha5:** The readiness of campuses ( $X_1$ ), lecturers ( $X_2$ ), and students ( $X_3$ ), as well as government support ( $X_4$ ), has a combined positive influence on a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program ( $Y$ ).

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**Literature Review**

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**Freedom of Learning and Independent Campuses**

Freedom of learning is where educational institutions are given the freedom and autonomy to operate independently of the bureaucratic system. *Merdeka Belajar–Kampus Merdeka* (MB-KM), which translates as *Freedom of Learning–Independent Campus*, is a policy aimed at encouraging students to master various disciplines, so they can perform competitively on entering the workforce (Dewobroto, 2020). Furthermore, the *Program Kompetesi-Kampus Merdeka* (PK-KM), which translates as the *Independent Campus Competition Program*, is an open-competition program that continues the concept of freedom of learning from the so-called Institutional Support System (ISS). The PK-KM takes place over three years, with proposals being submitted each year. Its goal is to help generate capable graduates that are physically and mentally healthy, intelligent, adaptable, creative, innovative, skilled, productive, and representative of the values of Pancasila, the foundational philosophy of Indonesia (Directorate General of Higher Education, 2020).

Among the key instruments for implementing this program are the eight key performance indicators (KPIs) stipulated by the Ministry of Education and Culture. These measure the quality of eight forms of experiential learning for developing students’ knowledge and skills, namely through internships and fieldwork practices, teaching assistant roles in educational units, research, humanitarian projects, entrepreneurial activities, independent studies and projects, themes based on real work, and domestic and overseas student exchanges (Directorate General of Higher Education, 2020). The hierarchy used by the PK-KM in 2021 for universities is divided into three tiers, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
*PK-KM Leagues and Degree of Funding*

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Higher Education Criteria	League 1	League 2	League 3
The number of active students in the 2019/2020 academic year	>18,000 (a) Minimum IDR – N/A (b) Maximum IDR 10 million/active student (c) Companion funds 10%	5,001–18,000 (a) Minimum IDR 1 billion (b) Maximum IDR 8 million/active student (c) Matching funds 7.5%	1,000 – 5,000 (a) Minimum IDR 500 million (b) Maximum IDR 5 million/active student (c) Matching funds 5%
Program Scope	(a) Undergraduate study program (b) Postgraduate study program (c) New programs in potential fields (d) Maximum 5 study programs	(a) Undergraduate study program (b) Maximum 3 study programs	(a) Undergraduate study program (b) Maximum 2 study programs
	(e) Program ISS	(c) Program ISS	(c) Program ISS

Source: (Directorate General of Higher Education, 2020)

A brief description of the development goals for each PK-KM league is given below:

- a) Each university, whether public or private, can only propose one measure based on the eight KPIs.
- b) Tertiary institutions that fall into the PK-KM's League 1 are expected to accelerate their transformation to become globally competitive. A proposal can involve five study programs, both undergraduate and postgraduate (master's and doctoral). It can also propose programs at the institutional level for managing an independent campus or ISS. The proposed budget must be in line with the proposed program's scope and number of active students, with a maximum limit per program of IDR 10 million for every active student. New study programs that have yet to be developed within the necessary scientific disciplines should be based on the projected number of students, with this being four times the number of new students each year. The proposed program should achieve the stipulated KPIs within three years.
- c) Universities that fall into the PK-KM's League 2 are expected to become more relevant and improve their educational quality by implementing the Independent Campus Program. Proposals should include a maximum of three study programs at the undergraduate level and courses at the institutional level that are suitable for the ISS system. The budget is set according to the proposed programs' scope and the number of active students on each study program, with the minimum budget being IDR 1 billion and the maximum budget being IDR 8 million per active student. The proposed programs must achieve the desired KPIs within a maximum of three years.
- d) Universities included in the PK-KM's League 3 are expected to improve their management and human resources and innovate in the field of learning. Proposals should involve two programs at the undergraduate level, but they can also propose a program at the institutional level that is suitable for the ISS system. The budget is set according to the proposed programs' scope and the number of active students on each study program, with the minimum being IDR 500 million and the maximum being IDR 5 million per active student. The proposed programs must achieve their designated KPIs within a maximum of three years (Directorate General of Higher Education, 2020).

The budgets for the PK-KM Leagues cover eight categories: 1) curriculum support equipment; 2) experts; 3) staff development; 4) workshops, seminars, and partnership development; 5) learning

innovation; 6) student assistance and incentives; 7) financing for other components, with a maximum limit of 20%; and 8) internal management (Directorate General of Higher Education, 2020).

The Independent Campus Program seeks to 1) improve the quality of teaching and learning, as well as the relevance of higher education; 2) improve the skills of lecturers and other staff in higher education; and 3) achieve a high-quality level of management in line with the ambitions of the Director General of Higher Education. The program promotes four policies. First, campuses become autonomous legal entities with the ability to introduce new study programs with A and B accreditations (Wahyuni & Anshori, 2021; Hidayah, 2021). They can therefore develop new study programs provided that they collaborate with businesses, non-profit organizations, multilateral institutions, and/or other public/private universities ranked in the top 100QS, albeit not in health and education fields. Second, the higher education accreditation system, which is a systematic or automated process, must be performed by universities every five years. Third, the program makes it easier for institutions to transition from State Universities (SU) to Public Service Bodies (PSB) and ultimately to Legal Entities (LE), something that was previously limited to tertiary institutions with an A accreditation. Fourth, the program offers students the opportunity to study for three semesters outside their study program by shifting the Semester Credit System (SCS) away from the notion of “learning hours” to one of “working hours.” Under this new system, students can take courses outside their study program for up to two semesters or the equivalent of 40 credits (Bernie, 2020; Qorib & Harfiani, 2021). This is because learning takes place not just in the classroom but also through internship programs, student exchanges, entrepreneurship, research, independent study, and teaching activities in remote areas.

### **The Influence of Lecturer Readiness on a Successful Implementation of the Independent Campus Program**

The readiness of lecturers relates to aspects of competency (Yuniawan, Mulyono & Setiowati, 2015). When lecturers are mentally and physically prepared, they are more likely to possess the pedagogical skills, personal characteristics, and social and professional skills (Sagala, 2009) needed to develop suitable learning plans and strategies and apply them competently. Indeed, the plans and strategies for a successful implementation must be carefully considered and formulated (Dina, 2018), and the readiness of lecturers is an important aspect. Lecturer competence also

influences students' motivation to learn and consequently their academic progress, so universities must ensure their lecturers are sufficiently capable if they want to deliver successful teaching and learning programs. If lecturers are unprepared, it will be hard to achieve the desired goals (Prasetio, Sary & Laturlean, 2017).

An outcome-based education (OBE) curriculum and suitable information systems are needed to support an independent campus in Indonesia. The flexible learning offered by an independent campus prompts lecturers to be more agile in cultivating an innovative and unfettered culture while meeting the community's needs (Muhammad et al., 2020). Research has found that lecturers are affected by changes in financial support from higher education institutions, with loan-based maintenance assistance and the introduction of fees believed to have encouraged consumerist attitudes. Changes in attitudes and behaviors due to financial policies have damaged the profession in terms of competency, job satisfaction and retention rates, and recruitment (Rolfe, 2002).

### **The Influence of Student Readiness on a Successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program**

The study of Wahyuni & Anshori (2021) at Medan State University revealed that students realize the importance of learning discourse on an independent campus, although some students disagree with the program. The study found that this arises due to low student literacy and a lack of engagement from stakeholders. Students also believe the program will make it more challenging for them to graduate as they planned. Another study found that universities want to produce graduates who can adapt to industrial needs, so the skills of graduates in Indonesia need to be developed by adopting the concept of an independent campus for educational goals programs (EGPs), learning outcomes (LO) programs, and student apprenticeship programs (Lestari, Kusumanto, Hasri & Akmaluhadi, 2020).

Amril and Hardiani (2021) found that students have a strong interest in becoming entrepreneurs, so an implementation of the Independent Campus Program can cultivate their ambitions by enhancing the entrepreneurship-learning process and equipping students for future entrepreneurial endeavors. The digitalization of academic systems can also support these potential entrepreneurs' creativity based on local wisdom (Karmini, Suda, Agung & Suasti, 2020). According to Munadi, Alwiyah, and Umar (2021), to support students' readiness during a program's implementation, their emotional maturity needs to be considered and developed through extracurricular and co-

curricular activities and guidance counseling, so they can learn to think scientifically. Emotional maturity reflects in areas like teamwork, leadership, and sportsmanship (Munadi et al., 2021).

### **The Influence of Government Support on a Successful Implementation of the Independent Campus Program**

The government plays an important role in the success of educational programs. Without government support, the development of a high-quality education system is impossible, as programs will fail without massive, targeted funding (Astawa, 2017). One study found that government support also encourages students to enroll in higher education programs (Chatterjee, Bhattacharjee, Tsai & Agrawal, 2021).

Several cases have shown that limited government support often hinders the successful implementation of educational programs (Wimala, Akmalah, Irawati & Sururi, 2016). The government should therefore support lecturers in understanding how to implement the Independent Campus Program. Various government-funded training initiatives also help to improve the teaching abilities of lecturers. Government support can also help guide institutions through the Independent Campus Competition. This can be useful for universities wanting to submit a program proposal and accelerate their transition to a competitive university (Directorate General of Higher Education, 2020).

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

This study applies a quantitative research design, because it is deductive and detailed in nature, and because it seeks to establish the relationships between four independent variables and one dependent variable. According to Neuman (2003), quantitative research must be conducted systematically to ensure a valid analysis. This study analyzed data that was collected through a questionnaire.

### **Sample**

The population for this study comprised all the 24,099 lecturers at private universities within Higher Education Service Institutions (LLDIKTI) Region IV (West Java and Banten Provinces). From this, a sample of 111 private lecturers was selected using random sampling, with every



member in the population having an equal probability of being chosen (Apuke, 2017). The sample comprised 61 female and 50 male lecturers, all aged 30–55 with at least two years of teaching experience in tertiary education. See table 2.

**Table 2**  
*The characteristics of the sample*

University	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Bina Bangsa University	13	16	29
Serang Raya University	10	14	24
Banten Jaya University	7	10	17
Pamulang University	8	9	17
Tangerang Muhammadiyah University	12	12	24
Total	50	61	111

### Data-Collection Tools

The research instrument comprised a set of indicators that were analyzed based on theories and findings from previous related studies. Replies were expressed on a four-point Likert scale as strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). In this case, the researcher omitted a neutral option, because doubt is an ambiguous attitude that does not reflect positive or negative attitudes.

The questionnaire comprised 21 items (see Table 3), with there being three dimensions for each of the studied variables.

**Table 3**  
*Research Instruments*

Variable	Dimension	Items	Total
Campus readiness	Leadership understanding	2	5
	Campus support	2	
	Engagement from the entire community	1	
Lecturer readiness	Lecturer understanding	2	5
	Readiness to guide students	2	
	Lecturer competence	1	
Student readiness	Student understanding	2	5
	Readiness to attend courses off-campus	2	
	Readiness for community service	1	
Government Support	Socialization policy	1	3
	Supporting funds	1	
	Guidebook	1	
Successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program	Campus performance	1	3
	Competitiveness	1	
	Campus sustainability	1	
Total		21	21

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The Cronbach's Alpha was greater than 0.60 for all the five variables, confirming that all the items were valid, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4**  
*Results of the Reliability Test*

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</b>	<b>Num. of Items</b>
Campus readiness	0.800	5
Lecturer readiness	0.811	5
Student readiness	0.798	5
Government support	0.879	3
Successful implementation	0.756	3

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### **Data Collection**

The primary data for this research comprises the results of the distributed questionnaire survey, which was developed based on previous research studies and relevant theories. It was implemented in Google Forms and then sent to the respondents. The formulation of operational definitions, instrument grids, and indicators was determined in detail. At the time of study, the Indonesian government mandated social distancing measures that excluded direct observation, so observation took place remotely to ascertain the readiness of campuses of several universities. Observations were guided based on the dimensions of each variable of interest. Secondary documentary data were obtained from the guidebook for the Independent Campus Competition provided by the Directorate General of Higher Education.

### **Data Analysis**

For the first stage, the researcher evaluated the consistency and suitability of the collected data based on defined criteria. This was required to test the research hypotheses. In the second stage, the obtained data were coded and transferred to a computer for processing with the SPSS 26.0 application. During this stage, the researcher thoroughly ensured the accuracy of the processed data to avoid any data-cleaning errors. In the third stage, the data analysis's results were entered into a table for interpretation. Finally, the results were discussed, and the findings were supported by theoretical studies.

## Results and Discussion

### Classical Assumptions and Descriptive Statistics

Before testing the hypotheses, a classical assumptions test was performed, including a normality test, linearity test, and the homogeneity test. Following this, a descriptive test was performed for each variable as in table 5.

**Table 5**

#### *Normality Test*

N		$\bar{X}_1$	$\bar{X}_2$	$\bar{X}_3$	$\bar{X}_4$	Total Y
		111	111	111		130
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	26.0692	74.6538	10.9231	26.0321	22.4538
	Std. Deviation	3.55726	8.71487	2.52619	3.52351	3.15764
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.090	.077	.116	.074	.120
	Positive	.082	.077	.096	.073	.087
	Negative	-.090	-.066	-.116	-.114	-.120
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.021	.873	1.318	.834	1.318
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.248	.431	.062	.054	.058

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

In the calculations' results (see Table 5), the significance figures for the variables  $X_1$ ,  $S_2$ ,  $X_3$ ,  $X_4$ , and Y were all normally distributed with Kolmogorov Smirnov Z coefficients of  $X_1 = 1.021$ ,  $X_2 = 0.873$ ,  $X_3 = 1.318$ ,  $X_4 = 0.834$ , and  $Y = 1.318$ , with an overall significance greater than 0.05. In other words, the level of normality for the sample did not significantly differ from that of the population.

**Table 6**

#### *Test for the Homogeneity of Variances*

		Levene Statistic	f1	df2	Sig.
Total	Based on Mean	0.628	4	128	0.434
	Based on Median	0.657	4	128	0.554
	Based on Median and with adjusted d.f.	0.659	4	62.32	0.572
	Based on trimmed mean	<b>0.658</b>	4	128	0.476

The test for the homogeneity of variances (Table 6) showed that the Cronbach alpha is 0.658 and significant, so it can be concluded that the data is homogeneous, thus allowing the researcher to continue to the next testing stage.

**Table 7**  
*Linearity Test*

Linearity test	F	Sig.	Conclusions
X <sub>1</sub> —Y	43.440	0.000	Linear
X <sub>2</sub> —Y	12.328	0.000	Linear
X <sub>3</sub> —Y	4.315	0.000	Linear
X <sub>4</sub> —Y	16.543	0.000	Linear

The test for linearity took the significance coefficient and compared the significance value of the F coefficient with the selected alpha, which was 5% (0.05), so if the significance value is greater than 0.05, it is not linear. The results of the analysis (Table 7) show the following coefficients: F (X<sub>1</sub>—Y) = 43.440 with a significance of 0 < 0.05; F (X<sub>2</sub>—Y) = 12.328 with a significance of 0 < 0.05; F (X<sub>3</sub>—Y) = 4.315 with a significance of 0 < 0.05; F (X<sub>4</sub>—Y) = 16.543 with a significance of 0.000 < 0.05. All the tests therefore indicated linearity, meaning that any increases in the variables for the readiness of campuses (X<sub>1</sub>), lecturers (X<sub>2</sub>), and students (X<sub>3</sub>), as well as government support (X<sub>4</sub>), are always accompanied by an increase in the variable for the successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program (Y).

**Table 8**  
*Descriptive Analysis*

Descriptive	X <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>3</sub>	X <sub>4</sub>	Y
Valid	111	111	111	111	111
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	26.0692	74.6538	26.8167	22.4538	22.8838
Std. Error of Mean	.31199	.76434	.19088	.27694	.27984
Median	26.0000	74.5000	27.0000	23.0000	23.0000
Mode	26.00	73.00 <sup>a</sup>	27.00	22.00 <sup>a</sup>	23.00 <sup>a</sup>
Std. Deviation	3.55726	8.71487	1.47857	3.15764	3.15764
Variance	12.654	75.949	2.186	9.971	9.971
Skewness	-.402	-.293	.026	-.591	-.354
Std. Error of Skewness	.212	.212	.309	.212	.212
Kurtosis	1.334	1.294	.841	1.372	1.324
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.422	.422	.608	.422	.422
Range	22.00	52.00	5.00	19.00	19.00
Minimum	13.00	45.00	28.00	11.00	11.00
Maximum	35.00	97.00	20.00	30.00	30.00
Sum	3389.00	9705.00	2209.00	2919.00	2919.00

The data in Table 8 shows that the readiness of campuses (X<sub>1</sub>) has a mean of 26.06, a median of 26.00, a mode of 26, and a skewness coefficient of 1.334, which is greater than 0.5, so the distribution is slightly squinted to the right. The kurtosis value of 0.841, meanwhile, is greater than 0.263, so the distribution has a platikurtic horizontal peak.

The readiness of lecturers ( $X_2$ ) has a mean of 74.6, a median of 74.00, a mode of 73, and a skewness coefficient of -0.293, which is less than 0.5, so the distribution is slightly squinted to the left. The kurtosis value of 1.294, meanwhile, is greater than 0.263, so the distribution again has a platikurtic peak.

The readiness of students ( $X_3$ ) has a mean of 26.8, a median of 27.00, a mode of 27, and a skewness coefficient of 0.026, which is less than 0.5, so the distribution is slightly squinted to the right. The kurtosis value of 0.841, meanwhile, is greater than 0.263, so the distribution has a platikurtic peak.

Government support ( $X_4$ ) has a mean of 22.45, a median of 23.00, a mode of 22, and a skewness coefficient of -0.591, which is greater than 0.5, so the distribution is slightly squinted to the left. The kurtosis value is 1.372, meanwhile, which is greater than 0.263, so the distribution has a platikurtic peak.

The Independent Campus Program (Y) has a mean of 22.88, a median of 23.00, a mode of 23, and a skewness coefficient of -0.354, which is smaller than 0.5, so the shape of the distribution is slightly squinted to the left. The kurtosis value of 1.324, meanwhile, is greater than 0.263, so the distribution has a platikurtic peak.

### Hypotheses Testing

#### **RQ1: The Influence of Campus Readiness on a Successful Implementation of the Independent Campus Program**

Analyzing the data for the first hypothesis yielded the results shown in Table 9.

**Table 9**  
*Output for  $H_1$*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.190	0.036	0.027	2.81133

Source: Results of the SPSS 26.0 analysis

Table 9 reveals that campus readiness influences the successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program with an R-value of 0.19 and an  $R^2$  squared of 0.036 (3.6 percent), with a t-statistic of 2.364 and a significance value of 0. This indicates that private universities understand the importance of timely preparation for the Independent Campus Program. Indeed, there is no reason not to, and universities currently have a positive attitude toward this government policy. The adoption of suitable technology, however, must also reflect the vision of the Independent Campus Program.

The Independent Campus Program affects several fundamental aspects in higher education. Although the program's arrangements are clear for companies that offer internships for students, institutions must also ensure that internships are not abused as a source of cheap labor. The responsibility for adapting such programs is shared by universities and the non-educational partners, so students doing internships are not exploited.

The Chancellor of the Bina Bangsa University expressed his support for the Independent Campus Program, saying that his university strives to support the program fully. However, he said it was challenging to implement this program due to COVID-19 restrictions. The use of remote learning systems means a lack of face-to-face contact, thus presenting an obstacle to maximizing the benefits of the program. The implementation of the Independent Campus Program has therefore needed to be adapted, especially in terms of the curriculum, students, lecturers, and information systems. Higher education institutions typically build a curriculum-formulation team and develop a Basic Curriculum Framework (BCF), which serves as a guideline for developing curricula for all study programs, thus accelerating the implementation of the Independent Campus Program. A research team is also usually tasked with conducting studies for various policies, necessary resources and competencies, teaching-learning flexibility, synergy with partners in developing competencies, and the use of technology for learning and dissemination.

During implementation, various obstacles need to be overcome to achieve independence and excellence for higher education in Indonesia. In future, higher education institutions will also design multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary curricula that enable students to learn additional knowledge. In addition, several universities offer remote-based courses and overseas internship programs and student exchanges that may replace final assignments. Students are therefore given final assignments in the form of a thesis, scientific research, or internship program, assuming they understand the terms and conditions and have completed all the compulsory courses during their study period. Students can therefore learn in a more flexible way without being limited by time or distance.

Institutions understand that they must adapt in order to provide more flexibility for student learning. Some, such as the Bogor Agricultural Institute (BAI), have even implemented a major-minor curriculum, so students can take supporting study programs. There are also student-exchange schemes and summer classes. BAI has also developed a new curriculum for literacy in the three areas of data, technology, and humanity. A further project was developed with the

capstone method to encourage students to become more accustomed to collaborating across disciplines (Bernie, 2020) by integrating curricular education and student activities in order to strengthen the character and competitiveness of students.

The findings reveal that most tertiary institutions support the Independent Campus Program and seek to gradually improve their implementations. Previous studies have found that campus support is an inseparable part of successful higher education (Baker, 2013; Hinck & Brandell, 2000), because private tertiary institutions need professional and qualified lecturers and other educational staff, making it relatively easy to adapt to the Independent Campus Program. Several universities have not fully implemented the Independent Campus Program, but these have started to draft proposals for the Independent Campus Competition. When implementing the program, however, private universities may still be constrained by campus readiness, especially in terms of educational facilities.

Universities take the view that this program helps increase the flexibility for students to study across disciplines, so they can combine courses that suit their needs better than a prescribed combination. Learning is therefore tailored to the interests, talents, and requirements of the students. The Independent Campus Program also helps bring students closer to social reality, so they can learn to build social relationships and solve various social problems.

Through study programs, higher education institutions must prepare students to become productive graduates who can contribute to the economic development of Indonesia. Institutions therefore strive to follow the progression of science and technology. In addition, the budget ceiling for program proposals is quite large, even though it is for three years, so the Independent Campus Competition can be leveraged to maximize the potential for institutions to develop graduates for the global economy.

## **RQ 2: The Influence of Lecturer Readiness on a Successful Implementation of the Independent Campus Program**

Data analysis for the second hypothesis yielded the results shown in Table 10 below.

**Table 10**  
*Output for H<sub>2</sub>*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup> Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
2	0.218	0.047	0.039	2.79477

*Source: Results of the SPSS 26.0 analysis*

These results reveal that lecturer readiness promotes a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program, as expressed by an  $R$  of 0.218 and an  $R^2$  of 0.047 (4.7%) with a  $t$ -statistic of 2.317 and a significance of 0. Lecturers' perceptions appear to have a significant effect, with a positive response helping the program's success. Indeed, most respondents felt that lecturer readiness was needed to support the successful implementation of the program. Lecturers also play a big role in developing new study programs, and this presents great opportunities for lecturers at private universities. Lecturers' readiness also reflects in the quantity and quality of their activities for *Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi* (the three basic goals of higher education). To ensure lecturer readiness, soft skills and an organizational culture must be built, and compensation should be suitable (Polnaya, Nirwanto & Triatmanto, 2018). Indeed, prior studies have found soft skills, organizational culture, and compensation to positively influence lecturer performance.

Enhancing the skills and qualifications of active lecturers will support the implementation of an Independent Campus Program, because lecturers will be ready to meet the necessary quality standards for teaching and learning. Previous studies have proposed five stages of preparation: increasing knowledge, persuading, making decisions, implementing, and confirming. Lecturers, as educators, then become accustomed to freedom of learning (Kusumo, Ardhanariswari, Perdana & Indah, 2020).

Helping lecturers to learn and develop in the three basic goals of higher education is mandated by Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 3 of 2020. Lecturer familiarization, however, can also help prepare lecturers for the Independent Campus Program by helping to bridge the gap between lecturers and students in various program activities. The literature indicates that a positive relationship between lecturers and students leads to a more conducive campus environment, especially in institutions with considerable sociocultural diversity (Chepchieng, Mbugua & Kariuki, 2006). This in turn can further support an implementation of the Independent Campus Program. Indeed, a healthy relationship between lecturers and students typically enhances students' academic, personal, and social outcomes. Lecturer competence also has a positive effect on students' motivation to learn (Lumbantobing, 2020). In addition, the readiness of lecturers should also help students to adapt to new learning programs, especially for off-campus activities.



### RQ 3: The Influence of Student Readiness on a Successful Implementation of the Independent Campus Program

Data analysis for the third hypothesis yielded the results shown in Table 11 below.

**Table 11**

*Output for H<sub>3</sub>*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
3	0.216	0.047	0.038	2.79574

*Source: Results of the SPSS 26.0 analysis*

Table 10 suggests that student readiness positively influences an implementation of the Independent Campus Program, as expressed by an R of 0.216 and an R<sup>2</sup> of 0.047 (4.7%) with a t-statistic of 2.3 and a significance of 0. The respondents seem to believe that student readiness is important to a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program. As explained earlier, the primary objective of this policy is to create competitively skilled graduates. Student readiness means that students are physically and mentally healthy, intelligent, adaptable, creative, innovative, skilled, and productive, and they have characters in line with the values of Pancasila. In reality, however, not all students are so well prepared, so they need support from lecturers and colleges to physically and mentally prepare themselves. Previous research suggests that lecturers are important determinants of students' academic achievement (Prasetio, Sary & Luturlean, 2017). A key instrument for supporting student readiness is the application of the eight Main Performance Indicators (MPIs) stipulated by the Ministry of Education and Culture. These cover procedures for quality assurance when implementing eight forms of experiential learning for developing students' knowledge and skills, such as through internships or fieldwork practices, teaching-assistance roles in educational units, research studies, humanitarian work, entrepreneurial activity, independent studies or projects, real-work themes, and student domestic and international exchanges (Directorate General of Higher Education, 2020). In addition, universities must improve by implementing a technology-based learning system.

### RQ 4: The Influence of Government Support on a Successful Implementation of the Independent Campus Program

Data analysis for the fourth hypothesis yielded the results shown in Table 12 below.

**Table 12**

*Output H<sub>4</sub>*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
4	0.277	0.077	0.068	2.75151

*Source: Results of the SPSS 26.0 analysis*

These reveal that government support has a positive and significant influence on a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program, as expressed by an R of 0.277 and an  $R^2$  of 0.077 (7.7%) with a t-statistic of 2.993 and a significance of 0.003. The effect of government support is the strongest of all the independent variables, stressing its importance to a successful implementation. As the provider of educational programs, the government plays a key role in their successful adoption, but without continued support, these educational programs are unrealizable (Astawa, 2017). Prior research posits that government support can also increase students' intentions to engage in higher education programs (Chatterjee, Bhattacharjee, Tsai & Agrawal, 2021).

The allocation of government funds to support the adoption of the Independent Campus Program is the most obvious form of support at this time. Government funding for higher education reached IDR 2.9 trillion in 2020 and will increase by a further 70 percent in 2021 to IDR 4.95 trillion. Three main approaches are used to encourage freedom of learning: 1) by providing incentives for state universities (SU) based on their achievements in the Main Performance Indicators (MPIs); 2) by providing suitable funding for cooperation with partners in other SUs and private universities (PU); and 3) by encouraging the implementation of the Independent Campus Program through a competition. The government also provides bonus funding for state universities that successfully improve their performance in the MPIs (Nasrun, 2020). Tertiary institutions previously only received basic allocation funds and discretionary funding aimed at disadvantaged tertiary institutions. In addition, local governments can determine the teaching needs of students in their regions, such as for sought-after competencies. Ultimately, however, government support from the Ministry of Education and Culture (*Kemendikbud*) provides the flexibility for universities to educate the nation's people in a way that will benefit society by providing students with new opportunities like internships at companies, which can provide work experience that will further support their abilities after graduation and help them overcome various socioeconomic problems in future life.

**RQ 5: The Influence of Campus, Lecturer, and Student Readiness, as well as Government Support, on a Successful Implementation of the Independent Campus Program**

Data analysis for the final hypothesis yielded the results shown in Table 13 below.

**Table 13**  
*Results for H<sub>5</sub>*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup> <sub>Square</sub>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> <sub>Square</sub>	Std. Error of the Estimate
5	0.322	0.104	0.070	2.74925

Source: Results of the SPSS 26.0 analysis

**Table 14**  
*Regression Analysis*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	91.861	4	22.965	3.038	.021 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	793.630	105	7.558		
	Total	885.491	109			

Source: Results of the SPSS 26.0 analysis

The results in Tables 13 and 14 show a combined influence of campus, lecturer, and student readiness, as well as government support, on a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program with an F-value of 3.038 and a significance of 0.021 (<0.05). In addition, the combination also yielded an R of 0.322 and an R<sup>2</sup> of 0.104 (10.4%) with a t-value of 1.979 and a significance of 0, indicating that an implementation is more likely to succeed when all four dimensions support each other. Indeed, the combined effect is much greater than when considering any one independent variable alone. Previous studies have indicated many factors that may inhibit the success of a tertiary education program, such as misperceptions and unpreparedness among managers, students, and lecturers and a lack of government support (Yuniawan et al., 2015). In this study, the stakeholders' perceptions of, and readiness for, the Independent Campus Program were found to be positive, but private universities should in future establish a special division to manage any implementation of the Independent Campus Program.

The government's aim behind the Independent Campus Program is to produce graduates who meet the needs of today's globalized industry. Unfortunately, the government has not yet addressed all the inequalities in higher education, such as the disparity in ranking scores among different institutions. It is essential to remedy this to provide the best possible foundation for the Independent Campus Program. Steps have therefore been taken to 1) accelerate the skills development of lecturers, 2) update teaching methods, and 3) build educational facilities and infrastructure (Nasrun, 2020).

Campus, lecturer, and student readiness, as well as government support, for the Independent Campus Program is closely related to performance in the eight MPis, because it means institutions, lecturers, students, and the government can work together to achieve the program's goals and

transform higher education in Indonesia. First, student readiness is expected to translate into graduates who go on to take up good, well-paid jobs. Second, campus readiness provides opportunities for students to gain off-campus experience through internships, village projects, teaching, research, entrepreneurship, and higher-level studies. Third, lecturer readiness provides opportunities for lecturers to seek new experiences beyond their institutions, such as in industry or other institutions. It also provides opportunities for lecturers to develop their teaching practices and make them more relevant to industry. Lecturer readiness also supports the research and outreach work of lecturers, which in turn benefits the community and attracts international recognition. Fourth, campus readiness also presents opportunities to collaborate with excellent partners, whether it be in the form of curricula, internships, or student exchanges. Campus readiness can also support collaborative and participatory learning through project-based evaluations and case studies, as well as encourage the establishment of study programs with international accreditation or certification.

There are seven considerable challenges to the Independent Campus Program, however: 1) not being able to secure the commitment of lecturers, thus hindering the introduction of new study programs in tertiary institutions; 2) curriculum-adjustment constraints due to the teaching period being reduced from eight semesters to five semesters; 3) constraints on lecturer performance and load management; 4) constraints on fulfilling the two-semester study obligation for a total of 20 credits/semester or 40 credits/year; 5) socialization constraints in the form of not securing the participation of all stakeholders in the program's implementation; 6) unclear student funding in the program's implementation, such as whether it will be funded by students, the institution, or government; and 7) a recognition of students developing competencies, competitiveness, and readiness (Agung, 2020).

Based on the discussion of the results, the readiness of campuses, lecturers, and students, as well as government support, must all be in place to support the educational transformation through the Independent Campus Program, so higher education in Indonesia can be recognized globally. Without support from all stakeholders, it will be hard to achieve the program's objectives. It is certainly worth striving for commitment from these four important elements to support an implementation of the Independent Campus Program. In future, the participation of national companies should also be secured to develop better community management.

The findings of this study are novel in terms of studying the factors that influence the success of the Independent Campus Program (Y), specifically the readiness of campuses (X<sub>1</sub>), lecturers (X<sub>2</sub>), and students (X<sub>3</sub>), as well as government support (X<sub>4</sub>). Previous studies, in contrast, have focused more on curriculum maturity, cooperation, budgets, and stakeholder assistance. Another novelty of this research is that it was conducted among private university lecturers in Indonesia, whereas other studies have focused more on state universities, most of which are already established in terms of resources and income.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

In summary, our findings revealed that the readiness of higher education institutions, lecturers, and students, as well as government support, all have a positive and significant effect on a successful implementation of the Independent Campus Program, with a combined effect of 10.4%. The strongest influence (7.7%) was found for government support, followed by lecturer readiness (4.7%), student readiness (4.7%), and campus readiness (3.6%). The four independent variables therefore have a strong influence on an implementation of the Independent Campus Program. Thus, based on the perceptions of private higher education lecturers, the readiness of the campus, lecturers, and students, as well as government support, are needed to ensure the success of the Independent Campus Program.

This study has the implication that the Independent Campus Program should be preceded by first ensuring the preparedness of universities, lecturers, and students for the program while securing government support to achieve its goals, which involve improving the capacity and quality of higher education in Indonesia. Further research is needed, however, to delve deeper into the technical model for the Independent Campus Program. Future research could also build upon this study by investigating the readiness of all universities in Indonesia, both private and public.

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