

The Students' Perception and Satisfaction in the Kampus Mengajar Program at Seventh Semester of Universitas Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sorong

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ABSTRACT

This study examines students' perceptions and satisfaction toward the *Kampus Mengajar* program among seventh-semester students at Universitas Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sorong. The program, part of the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) initiative, aims to provide students with teaching experience and opportunities for professional growth beyond the classroom. Employing a mixed-method approach, the study combined quantitative and qualitative data. Eight students from different study programs participated, representing those who had joined *Kampus Mengajar*. Data were collected through a questionnaire consisting of 25 close-ended items to measure satisfaction and an interview with seven open-ended questions to explore perceptions. The findings indicate that students generally perceive *Kampus Mengajar* as a valuable and meaningful program. They reported gaining teaching experience, improving communication and classroom management skills, developing self-confidence, and expanding professional networks. Despite these benefits, some students noted challenges such as delayed stipends, school placements that did not match their study fields, and limited credit conversions. Quantitative data revealed an average satisfaction rate of 76.3%, categorized as high satisfaction. Overall, *Kampus Mengajar* is considered an effective program that enhances students' academic and professional readiness, though improvements in administrative and placement systems are still needed.

Keywords: Perception; Satisfaction; Kampus Mengajar

INTRODUCTION

The *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) policy represents one of the most transformative education reforms in Indonesia's higher education system. Launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture under the leadership of Nadiem Anwar Makarim, MBKM seeks to provide students with more flexible learning opportunities that extend beyond the traditional classroom. The policy encourages students to gain real-world experience through programs such as internships,

research projects, community service, student exchanges, and the *Kampus Mengajar* program. These initiatives aim to produce graduates who are not only academically competent but also adaptable, creative, and ready to contribute to society (Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi, 2020).

Among the various MBKM initiatives, *Kampus Mengajar* has gained significant attention for its practical and social value. This program invites university students from different disciplines to assist teachers and schools especially in remote or disadvantaged areas by supporting literacy and numeracy instruction and promoting creative learning methods. It allows students to step outside their comfort zones, experience the realities of teaching, and engage with local communities. The Ministry of Education and Culture (2021) highlights that *Kampus Mengajar* aims not only to help schools recover from learning loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic but also to prepare future educators and professionals with essential 21st-century skills such as communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and empathy.

Through this program, students gain valuable insights into the complexities of teaching, school management, and educational inequality in Indonesia. They also learn to design innovative learning media, adapt to various classroom conditions, and support teachers in integrating technology into their lessons. Research by Adellia and Himawati (2021) found that participation in *Kampus Mengajar* helped students develop practical teaching skills and increased their confidence in classroom management. Similarly, Widiyono, Irfana, and Firdausia (2021) noted that the program strengthens collaboration between universities and schools and enhances students' understanding of community-based education.

Despite these benefits, several studies have also pointed out implementation challenges that affect student satisfaction and perceptions. Some students report difficulties related to school placements that do not match their academic background, limited supervision from field advisors, and inconsistent recognition of course credits (Suwanti et al., 2022). Others have expressed dissatisfaction with logistical issues such as delayed stipends or lack of clarity in administrative procedures. These factors can influence how students perceive the overall quality and impact of the *Kampus Mengajar* experience. According to Kotler (2009), satisfaction reflects a person's level of contentment when comparing expectations with actual outcomes. Therefore, measuring students' satisfaction and perceptions toward *Kampus Mengajar* can provide valuable feedback for program improvement.

In the context of Universitas Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sorong (UNIMUDA Sorong), the *Kampus Mengajar* program has been widely implemented since the early stages of MBKM. Many students from different faculties such as English Education, PGSD, Biology, Mathematics, and Civic Education have participated in the program. As a growing institution in Eastern Indonesia, UNIMUDA Sorong plays a key role in preparing students to serve educational needs in Papua and West

Papua, where disparities in educational access and quality remain a challenge. Given the regional context, examining how students from UNIMUDA Sorong perceive and evaluate their experiences in *Kampus Mengajar* is particularly relevant. Their feedback can reveal how effectively the program supports student learning, professional readiness, and community engagement in this unique educational environment.

Perception, as defined by Bimo Walgito (2010), is an individual's process of organizing and interpreting sensory information to understand their environment. In educational settings, students' perceptions often shape their attitudes, motivation, and participation in learning activities. Positive perceptions toward a program like *Kampus Mengajar* may indicate that students find it meaningful, relevant, and beneficial for their academic and professional development. On the other hand, negative perceptions may highlight areas that require policy adjustments or stronger institutional support.

Satisfaction, meanwhile, represents an emotional response to experiences, influenced by whether expectations are met or exceeded (Kotler, 2009). In the case of *Kampus Mengajar*, students' satisfaction can be measured through multiple aspects, such as the quality of supervision, fairness of placement, adequacy of financial support, and the overall learning experience. Garbarino and Johnson (1999) note that satisfaction also encourages positive word-of-mouth, loyalty, and long-term engagement, all of which are crucial for sustaining voluntary education programs like *Kampus Mengajar*.

Previous research on MBKM has primarily focused on its policy framework and institutional implementation (Susilawati, 2021; Rosita & Damayanti, 2021). However, studies that specifically analyze students' perceptions and satisfaction especially in the context of smaller or developing universities are still limited. Understanding these factors from the students' perspective is essential to evaluate how well the program fulfills its objectives of independence, creativity, and practical learning. It also helps identify challenges that may hinder the success of MBKM, such as unequal access to resources or lack of coordination between universities and schools.

Given this background, this study aims to explore the perceptions and satisfaction of seventh-semester students from Universitas Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sorong who have participated in the *Kampus Mengajar* program. Specifically, it seeks to answer two main questions: (1) What are the students' perceptions toward the *Kampus Mengajar* program? and (2) How satisfied are students with their experience in the program? By addressing these questions, the study intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of how students evaluate the program's implementation and outcomes.

The findings are expected to contribute to both theoretical and practical discussions on experiential learning within the MBKM framework. For universities, the results

can serve as a basis for improving program preparation, supervision, and evaluation processes. For policymakers, understanding students' feedback can guide the refinement of MBKM initiatives to better align with student needs and regional contexts. Finally, for future researchers, this study provides reference data for further investigation into the effectiveness and sustainability of *Kampus Mengajar* in enhancing student learning and teacher education in Indonesia.

Examining students' perception and satisfaction is essential to understanding the true impact of *Kampus Mengajar*. While the program offers valuable learning experiences and community benefits, its success ultimately depends on how students experience and evaluate its implementation. By focusing on the voices of participants from UNIMUDA Sorong, this study aims to provide constructive insights that support continuous improvement of MBKM-based teaching initiatives, ensuring that they remain inclusive, impactful, and responsive to the educational needs of diverse regions across Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kampus Mengajar and Experiential Learning in Higher Education

The *Kampus Mengajar* program is one of the eight flagship initiatives under Indonesia's *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) policy, designed to bridge academic theory and professional practice. The program places university students in schools, particularly those in rural or under-resourced areas, to assist teachers in improving literacy and numeracy while gaining hands-on teaching experience. Susilawati (2021) described MBKM as an educational movement that encourages independence and contextual learning, allowing students to engage in real-world challenges beyond campus. Similarly, Rosita and Damayanti (2021) found that *Kampus Mengajar* fosters mutual benefit: schools receive much-needed teaching assistance, and students develop communication, creativity, and adaptability through classroom experience.

From a pedagogical standpoint, *Kampus Mengajar* aligns with experiential learning theory, which emphasizes learning through direct experience and reflection. According to Kolb's framework, such engagement helps learners integrate abstract concepts with concrete practice. Adellia and Himawati (2021) confirmed that participants in *Kampus Mengajar* developed stronger teaching competencies, including classroom management, lesson planning, and digital media use. These findings suggest that *Kampus Mengajar* not only supports community-based education but also prepares students for professional readiness after graduation.

Students' Perception of the *Kampus Mengajar* Program

Perception plays a key role in determining how students interpret and respond to educational experiences. Walgito (2010) defined perception as an individual's process of organizing and interpreting information to give meaning to their

environment. In the context of Kampus Mengajar, perception reflects how students evaluate the program's usefulness, relevance, and implementation.

Research generally reports positive perceptions among participants. Widiyono, Irfana, and Firdausia (2021) observed that students viewed Kampus Mengajar as an opportunity to apply their academic knowledge and develop social awareness. Participants valued the program's contribution to personal growth, leadership, and community service. In another study, Suwanti et al. (2022) noted that students perceived Kampus Mengajar as a gateway to the professional world, enhancing their confidence and employability. These findings align with Anwar's (2021) argument that the program offers authentic exposure to educational realities often absent in lecture-based instruction.

However, not all perceptions are uniformly positive. Some students expressed concerns about mismatched placements and limited supervision from field advisors (Rezania & Rohma, 2021). Others noted that the workload and administrative requirements were demanding and sometimes interfered with their regular academic schedule. Such findings highlight the complex nature of perception—students may appreciate the goals of the program while remaining critical of its execution.

Measuring Student Satisfaction in Educational Programs

Student satisfaction is a key indicator of program effectiveness and quality assurance in higher education. Kotler (2009) defined satisfaction as the emotional response that arises when performance meets or exceeds expectations. In the context of experiential learning programs like Kampus Mengajar, satisfaction is influenced by various factors, including program design, supervision, institutional support, and perceived personal benefits.

Tjiptono and Chandra (2011) identified three main dimensions of satisfaction: overall happiness, willingness to recommend the program to others, and absence of complaints. Applying this framework, Halimah and Munir (2013) found that students' satisfaction in community-based learning programs depended heavily on how well institutions managed coordination and communication. In Kampus Mengajar, satisfaction often stems from successful collaboration with teachers, supportive supervision, and recognition of academic credits (Ferdiani & Suastika, 2022).

Conversely, dissatisfaction tends to arise when students encounter logistical challenges. Rosita and Damayanti (2021) reported that participants placed in remote schools often struggled with limited infrastructure and delayed stipends. These administrative issues affected students' morale and reduced their overall satisfaction, even when the teaching experience itself was positive. Such findings underscore that satisfaction is not only emotional but also structural students' experiences are shaped by institutional systems and policy implementation.

The Interplay Between Perception and Satisfaction

While perception and satisfaction are distinct constructs, they are closely related. Positive perceptions of a program's purpose and benefits often translate into higher satisfaction, whereas negative perceptions may reduce engagement and motivation. Michael (1999) argued that perception is a cognitive filter that influences how individuals judge experiences, while satisfaction represents the emotional outcome of that judgment.

In the *Kampus Mengajar* context, Suwanti et al. (2022) found that students who perceived the program as valuable and well-organized were more likely to report high satisfaction levels. These students often cited improved teaching skills, stronger social connections, and increased confidence as key outcomes. In contrast, students who perceived program management as inconsistent particularly regarding placement fairness or financial delays tended to express lower satisfaction. The correlation between perception and satisfaction highlights the need for universities to maintain transparency, effective communication, and consistent administrative support.

Moreover, studies by Widiyono et al. (2021) and Anwar (2021) emphasized that students' emotional satisfaction often depends on the sense of contribution and recognition they receive. When participants feel that their efforts have a meaningful impact on schools and communities, their perception of *Kampus Mengajar* shifts from a mandatory assignment to a transformative experience. This interplay suggests that enhancing satisfaction requires not only logistical improvements but also psychological support and acknowledgment of students' contributions.

Research Gaps and Relevance to the Present Study

Although many studies have evaluated *Kampus Mengajar* at the national level, few have explored students' experiences in smaller or regional universities, particularly in Eastern Indonesia. Most existing research has been conducted in major institutions on Java, where infrastructure and administrative systems are more established. As a result, little is known about how students in developing regions such as West Papua perceive and evaluate the same program.

UNIMUDA Sorong provides a relevant context for filling this gap. As a university serving a diverse student population from across Papua and eastern Indonesia, it faces distinct logistical and cultural challenges in implementing MBKM initiatives. Examining students' perceptions and satisfaction in this setting can reveal how contextual factors such as distance, resource availability, and local school partnerships shape the overall experience of *Kampus Mengajar*.

This study therefore contributes to existing scholarship by focusing on students' voices from a region that has received limited academic attention. By analyzing

both qualitative and quantitative data, it aims to capture a nuanced picture of how students at UNIMUDA Sorong perceive the benefits and limitations of *Kampus Mengajar*, and how these perceptions influence their overall satisfaction. The findings are expected to offer insights for universities, policymakers, and future researchers interested in improving the quality and inclusivity of MBKM programs across Indonesia.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study used a mixed-method research design to explore students' perceptions and satisfaction with the *Kampus Mengajar* program. The combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches allowed the researcher to obtain both statistical data and deeper insights into students' experiences. The quantitative method was employed to measure satisfaction levels through a structured questionnaire, while the qualitative method was used to capture personal reflections and detailed opinions through interviews. This design was considered suitable because perceptions and satisfaction involve both measurable tendencies and individual interpretations.

The participants were eight seventh-semester students from Universitas Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sorong (UNIMUDA Sorong) who had completed at least one cycle of the *Kampus Mengajar* program. They came from various study programs, including English Education, Elementary School Teacher Education (PGSD), Civic Education (PPKn), and Science Education. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, which ensured that only students with direct experience in the program were included. Although the number of participants was small, it was sufficient for producing in-depth and meaningful insights into their experiences. The diversity of study programs also helped represent different academic perspectives within the university.

Instruments and Procedures

Two main instruments were used for data collection: a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire consisted of 25 close-ended statements rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Agree (5)* to *Strongly Disagree (1)*. The items were designed to measure satisfaction in five key areas: registration and selection, program implementation, supervision, financial support, and evaluation. The questionnaire was adapted from the model developed by Tjiptono and Chandra (2011), which measures student satisfaction in higher education settings. It was distributed online via Google Forms to make participation more convenient for students and to ensure accurate data recording.

The semi-structured interviews served as the qualitative instrument. They aimed to gain a deeper understanding of how students perceived the *Kampus*

Mengajar program in practice. The interview guide contained seven open-ended questions exploring students' motivations for joining the program, experiences during implementation, perceived benefits, challenges encountered, and overall impressions. Interviews were conducted in Indonesian to make participants more comfortable expressing their thoughts. Each session lasted between 25 and 30 minutes and was recorded with participants' consent. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim and, when necessary, translated into English. To maintain confidentiality, only participants' initials and study programs were used. Data collection took place over three weeks in 2023. The process began with distributing the questionnaire to gather quantitative responses, followed by the interviews to obtain qualitative insights that could explain and support the numerical findings. Participants were also given the opportunity to review their interview transcripts to ensure accuracy and fairness in representing their opinions.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data from the questionnaire were processed using descriptive statistics to calculate the percentage of satisfaction levels. The following formula was used: $P = (f/N) \times 100\%$, where P represents the percentage, f is the frequency of responses, and N is the total number of participants. The results were categorized into five satisfaction levels: very high, high, moderate, low, and very low. This categorization helped the researcher identify overall patterns in students' satisfaction toward the *Kampus Mengajar* program.

The qualitative data from interviews were analyzed through content analysis following the procedures outlined by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014). The process included three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. During data condensation, relevant responses were selected and summarized. The data display phase involved organizing information into categories such as perceived benefits, challenges, and reflections. Finally, in the conclusion drawing phase, recurring themes were identified and interpreted in relation to the study's objectives. This process allowed the researcher to link individual statements to broader patterns and theoretical concepts related to perception and satisfaction. To ensure the credibility of the findings, two validation techniques were applied. The first was peer debriefing, where another researcher reviewed the coding process and interpretation of data to ensure consistency. The second was member checking, in which participants reviewed the summarized findings to verify that their views were accurately represented. These techniques helped minimize bias and strengthen the trustworthiness of the analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions and satisfaction of seventh-semester students at Universitas Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sorong (UNIMUDA Sorong) who participated in the *Kampus Mengajar* program. Data were obtained

through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative findings provided an overview of students' satisfaction levels, while qualitative results offered deeper insights into their perceptions, experiences, and reflections during participation.

Overall, the findings showed that students had a positive perception and high level of satisfaction toward the *Kampus Mengajar* program. They viewed it as a valuable opportunity for professional development, personal growth, and contribution to education in rural areas. However, several challenges were also identified, including financial delays, mismatched school placements, and limited supervision from field mentors. These issues, although not dominant, affected how some students evaluated their overall satisfaction.

Students' Satisfaction toward the *Kampus Mengajar* Program

The quantitative data from the questionnaire revealed that most participants expressed satisfaction with the program's overall implementation. The total satisfaction percentage reached 76.3%, which falls under the category of high satisfaction. This indicates that most students felt positively about their experience, although there was still room for improvement in certain areas.

Registration and Selection Process

Students generally reported satisfaction with the registration and selection stages. They found the process transparent, systematic, and accessible through the official *Kampus Mengajar* platform. Several participants appreciated the fairness of the online selection system and the clear communication from program organizers. However, a few students suggested that technical issues during online submission should be improved to prevent delays. This aligns with the findings of Widiyono, Irfana, and Firdausia (2021), who observed that clear communication and well-organized recruitment processes contribute significantly to students' positive impressions of national education programs. Transparency in the selection stage helps build trust and confidence in institutional management, which in turn enhances satisfaction.

Implementation and Supervision

The implementation phase received the highest satisfaction scores, as students considered their field experiences meaningful and rewarding. They reported that the *Kampus Mengajar* program gave them opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in real classroom settings, interact with teachers, and assist in designing creative learning activities. Many participants mentioned that teaching in rural schools improved their communication, problem-solving, and classroom management skills. However, several students noted challenges related to supervision. Some mentors or field supervisors were not consistently available for guidance, which left students to manage classroom situations independently. While

this fostered autonomy, it also caused uncertainty for those who preferred structured support. This finding echoes Adellia and Himawati's (2021) study, which highlighted that effective supervision enhances students' confidence and ensures quality implementation of MBKM programs.

Financial and Logistical Support

The aspect of financial support received mixed responses. Although most students acknowledged that the monthly allowance was helpful, they also expressed frustration about payment delays. A few participants stated that delayed stipends made it difficult to manage transportation and daily expenses during their teaching placement. One respondent noted, "We were very motivated to help the school, but sometimes the late payment made us worry about our costs." This concern reflects challenges also found in other MBKM studies. Rosita and Damayanti (2021) and Suwanti et al. (2022) both reported that financial and administrative inconsistencies can negatively influence satisfaction, even when students view the learning experience positively. In this study, the delays did not reduce overall satisfaction drastically, but they did affect perceptions of program management quality.

Reporting and Evaluation

Students generally felt that the reporting and evaluation stages were clear but time-consuming. They appreciated the structured format provided through the online system but found the technical reporting requirements demanding, especially when combined with teaching duties. Despite this, they recognized that the reporting process encouraged reflection and accountability. Most students rated this component as satisfactory, emphasizing that it helped them evaluate their own progress and document their contributions. The findings here align with Halimah and Munir (2013), who emphasized that structured evaluation processes improve students' self-awareness and academic accountability. Although administratively challenging, the process contributes to long-term professional discipline.

Students' Perceptions of the *Kampus Mengajar* Program

The qualitative data from the interviews provided richer descriptions of how students perceived their experiences. Three main themes emerged from the analysis: (1) professional and personal growth, (2) community engagement and empathy, and (3) challenges in implementation.

Professional and Personal Growth

Almost all participants described the *Kampus Mengajar* program as a transformative learning experience. They reported gaining practical teaching skills that complemented their academic training. Many expressed that their participation improved their ability to manage classrooms, communicate effectively, and design engaging lesson plans. One participant said, "Before joining the program, I only

understood teaching from theory, but now I know how to face students directly.” This finding supports Kolb’s experiential learning theory, which suggests that knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. It also aligns with Anwar (2021), who argued that *Kampus Mengajar* helps bridge the gap between theoretical learning and real-world teaching. In this sense, the program acts as a form of pre-service teacher training that strengthens students’ readiness to enter the profession.

Community Engagement and Empathy

Students also viewed the program as an opportunity to contribute to society, especially to schools with limited resources. They felt proud to help teachers and students in remote areas, describing the experience as emotionally fulfilling. Several participants mentioned that teaching in underdeveloped regions made them more aware of educational inequality in Indonesia and inspired them to continue serving in the education sector. One student reflected, “I learned that being a teacher is not only about teaching subjects but also understanding students’ needs and helping the community.” This sense of empathy and social awareness mirrors findings by Widiyono et al. (2021), who reported that *Kampus Mengajar* fosters civic responsibility and cultural sensitivity among university students. It also aligns with Susilawati (2021), who emphasized that MBKM initiatives encourage students to develop both intellectual and emotional intelligence through real-world engagement.

Challenges in Implementation

Despite the overall positive perception, participants acknowledged several challenges. Some were placed in schools that did not match their academic backgrounds, which made it difficult to teach certain subjects. Others experienced limited guidance from supervising lecturers or field coordinators. Logistical difficulties, such as long distances between living areas and schools, also added to their challenges. These concerns highlight the need for better coordination between universities, local education offices, and the Ministry of Education. As Suwanti et al. (2022) noted, implementation quality directly affects how students perceive and evaluate their experiences. Addressing these logistical and supervisory issues could improve satisfaction and program outcomes in future cycles of *Kampus Mengajar*.

The Relationship between Perception and Satisfaction

The findings suggest a strong relationship between students’ positive perceptions and their overall satisfaction. Participants who viewed the *Kampus Mengajar* program as beneficial and meaningful reported higher satisfaction scores, while those who encountered more logistical challenges expressed slightly lower satisfaction. This relationship confirms Michael’s (1999) argument that perception acts as a cognitive filter that shapes emotional responses such as satisfaction. Students who appreciated the program’s goals such as helping schools and gaining

teaching experience tended to overlook administrative difficulties and remain satisfied. Conversely, those who focused more on structural shortcomings, such as supervision or stipend delays, expressed mixed satisfaction. These variations indicate that perception and satisfaction are interdependent and influenced by both emotional and practical factors.

The findings of this study show that seventh-semester students at Universitas Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sorong (UNIMUDA Sorong) generally have positive perceptions and a high level of satisfaction toward the *Kampus Mengajar* program. The students viewed the program as a valuable learning opportunity that helped them develop professional, personal, and social skills. At the same time, several challenges were identified, including delayed stipends, limited supervision, and school placements that did not always match students' academic backgrounds. These results confirm that while *Kampus Mengajar* is effective in providing experiential learning and community engagement, some aspects of its management still require improvement.

The students' positive perception of *Kampus Mengajar* reflects the essence of experiential learning. Through the program, they were able to apply their theoretical knowledge in real teaching contexts and engage directly with teachers and pupils in rural schools. This aligns with Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning, which emphasizes that meaningful learning occurs when students are actively involved in concrete experiences, reflection, and application. The findings support those of Adellia and Himawati (2021), who found that *Kampus Mengajar* participants gained practical teaching skills and confidence that traditional classroom instruction alone could not provide. Likewise, Widiyono, Irfana, and Firdausia (2021) reported that the program helped students connect theory to practice and strengthened their communication and classroom management abilities. The participants in this study described the program as transformative because it enhanced not only their teaching competence but also their empathy, patience, and sense of responsibility qualities essential for future educators.

The study also found that students' overall satisfaction was high, with an average score of 76.3 percent. Most participants expressed satisfaction with the program's implementation, particularly the opportunities it provided to teach, collaborate with teachers, and contribute to local education. However, their satisfaction was not uniform across all components. While the teaching experience itself was highly valued, issues such as delayed financial support and limited supervision slightly reduced their level of satisfaction. These findings are consistent with previous research by Rosita and Damayanti (2021) and Suwanti et al. (2022), who found that while students appreciated the objectives of *Kampus Mengajar*, administrative challenges often influenced their overall evaluation of the program.

According to Kotler (2009), satisfaction is achieved when expectations are met or exceeded, and dissatisfaction occurs when they are not. In this study, students' expectations of gaining teaching experience and community involvement were

largely fulfilled, but administrative issues such as stipend delays partially hindered their full satisfaction. The mixed responses indicate that satisfaction is multidimensional; it encompasses emotional, cognitive, and practical aspects. Students might be satisfied with the purpose and outcomes of the program but still critical of its management. This complexity highlights the importance of balancing educational objectives with logistical efficiency to maintain participants' motivation and trust.

Beyond academic learning, *Kampus Mengajar* also encouraged social awareness and emotional engagement. Many students described the experience as meaningful because it allowed them to serve under-resourced schools and support teachers in improving literacy and numeracy. They expressed pride in contributing to education in rural communities, despite the challenges they faced. This sense of purpose strengthened their motivation and deepened their emotional connection to teaching. Similar observations were made by Susilawati (2021), who noted that *Kampus Mengajar* develops civic responsibility and empathy among students. The present study reinforces this view, showing that the emotional satisfaction students derived from helping others often compensated for the difficulties they encountered. As Garbarino and Johnson (1999) explained, emotional satisfaction can significantly shape individuals' overall assessment of an experience, sometimes even more strongly than functional satisfaction.

Nevertheless, several implementation challenges emerged from the data. Some students were assigned to schools outside their field of study, which made it difficult for them to apply their subject knowledge effectively. Others reported inconsistent supervision from field mentors, leading to uncertainty about teaching approaches and reporting procedures. A few participants also mentioned that the distance between their residences and assigned schools made commuting difficult. These findings are similar to those of Rezania and Rohma (2021), who found that insufficient supervision and mismatched placements can hinder learning outcomes and lower student motivation. While autonomy and independence are valuable learning components, effective supervision remains essential to ensure that experiences are meaningful and educational. Strengthening coordination among universities, supervisors, and school partners would help provide clearer guidance and improve the overall quality of the program.

The issue of financial delay also deserves attention. Although the majority of students remained committed to their duties, delayed stipends created stress and uncertainty for some participants, particularly those posted in distant locations with higher transportation costs. This challenge has been repeatedly reported in MBKM-related studies (Rosita & Damayanti, 2021; Suwanti et al., 2022) and highlights the need for more consistent coordination between universities and the Ministry of Education. Ensuring timely payments and transparent communication would improve students' sense of security and trust in the program.

The relationship between perception and satisfaction observed in this study further supports the idea that the two constructs are interrelated. Students who perceived the program as meaningful, fair, and well-organized tended to express higher satisfaction levels, while those who focused more on administrative or logistical difficulties expressed lower satisfaction. Michael (1999) explained that perception acts as a cognitive filter that shapes emotional outcomes like satisfaction. When students view their experiences positively, they are more likely to remain motivated despite challenges. In this study, both intrinsic factors (such as motivation and willingness to learn) and extrinsic factors (such as supervision and logistics) influenced perception and, consequently, satisfaction. These findings suggest that improving the *Kampus Mengajar* experience requires attention not only to program structure but also to students' psychological and emotional engagement.

This study contributes to the growing body of research on *Kampus Mengajar* by offering insights from a regional university in Eastern Indonesia. Most prior studies have focused on institutions in Java or other well-resourced regions, where logistical challenges are less severe. Students at UNIMUDA Sorong faced different realities, including remote school locations and limited infrastructure, yet they still expressed strong appreciation for the program. Their experiences demonstrate resilience and a genuine commitment to educational service. These findings highlight the importance of considering regional contexts in the implementation of national programs like MBKM.

The discussion reveals that *Kampus Mengajar* has succeeded in promoting experiential learning and social engagement among university students. Participants at UNIMUDA Sorong perceived the program as beneficial for developing professional competence and civic responsibility. While the program's overall impact was positive, improvements in administrative coordination, supervision, and financial management remain necessary to enhance satisfaction. The success of *Kampus Mengajar* ultimately depends on the balance between meaningful educational experiences and effective institutional support. Strengthening these two aspects will help ensure that the program continues to empower students and contribute to educational equity across Indonesia.

CONCLUSIONS

This study explored the perceptions and satisfaction of seventh-semester students at Universitas Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sorong (UNIMUDA Sorong) who joined the *Kampus Mengajar* program. The results showed that students generally had positive perceptions and high satisfaction levels. They viewed the program as a meaningful opportunity to gain real teaching experience, develop confidence, and contribute to improving education in rural schools. The experience also strengthened their communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills, aligning with the goals of the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) policy. Students reported emotional satisfaction from helping under-resourced schools and described the program as transformative for their personal and professional growth.

However, several challenges were identified, including limited supervision, delayed financial support, and school placements that did not always match students' academic backgrounds. These issues slightly reduced satisfaction and highlight the need for stronger coordination among universities, supervisors, and program organizers. The findings confirm that *Kampus Mengajar* effectively combines academic learning with social engagement, helping students grow as competent and empathetic educators. To sustain this success, improvements in supervision, communication, and administrative management are recommended. With better institutional support, *Kampus Mengajar* can continue to serve as an impactful model of experiential education and community-based learning across Indonesia.

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