

EXPLORING THE TEACHING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND VALUE CONVERSION OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: April 2024 Revised: May 2024 Published: July 2024	<i>The teaching assistance activities in teacher education colleges are intended to train students early on to understand the real learning process in schools. They are guided by teachers in schools to experience and observe all teacher activities in the school. Therefore, the research aims to describe the conditions of the implementation of teaching assistance for students majoring in Language Education and Social Science Education at educational units in the city of Ternate. The research issues are focused on problems in the implementation of teaching assistance activities and the compatibility of program application with credit hours conversion and the grades programmed by students. The method used is a case study with data collection techniques including observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation conducted at the educational units where teaching assistance is implemented in Ternate, as well as the Coordinator of the Indonesian Language, English Language Education, and IPS Education programs for the 2022-2023 academic year. In addition to the faculty team, students majoring in Indonesian Language Education are involved in this research. The research results show that: first, teaching assistance is very important to be carried out so that students can directly master various teaching skills and the programmed courses, as there is thorough preparation by students, mentor teachers, and supervising faculty. Second, the conversion of grades from student programs shows a similarity in the assessment process according to the guidelines and detailed assessment rubrics in line with the learning outcomes of the courses programmed by students. Third, due to strict control, every implementation of the teaching assistance program is carried out well, and program participants are enthusiastic about participating in teaching assistance for the completion of their studies with maximum quality.</i>
Keywords Teaching assistance program; Value conversion; Teaching practicum; Merdeka Curriculum:	
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INTRODUCTION

The "Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka" (MBKM) program is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemedikbud Ristek), which has been implemented for approximately three years. This policy is also enacted by Universitas Khairun, encompassing all academic programs within the Faculty of Education. Implementation guidelines for this program have been formulated and have been in effect at Universitas Khairun since the year 2022. Among the eight existing MBKM programs, this research specifically concentrates on the issues related to the teaching assistance scheme.

Teaching assistance constitutes a program aimed at enhancing students' competencies directly within educational units, enabling them to acquire intellectual richness and proficient skills. This, in turn, allows students to apply the information technology they have gained on campus as a foundation for their future professional service. The program embodies the

principles of link and match in the realm of education, establishing alignment between the development of science and technology on campus and the requirements of the professional world. The anticipation is that this program will adhere to the aforementioned educational principles, thereby mitigating the potential for a substantial gap between the academic realm and the professional workforce. As outlined in the Rector's Decision of Universitas Khairun No.: 4412/UN44/KR.01/2021, regarding the Determination of Guidelines for the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka at Universitas Khairun in 2021, the purpose of teaching assistance is delineated. This includes providing sufficient experiential learning opportunities for students directly in the workplace (point 1) with the aim of fostering greater confidence and readiness for entering the workforce and pursuing a career (point 4). These guidelines have been in effect since the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program in the year 2022.

In connection with the implementation of the Teaching Assistance program for the academic year 2022-2023, discrepancies have arisen during its execution in the field. In several schools, it is evident that the program, including one where the author serves as a Field Supervisor (DPL), is not being maximally implemented. As the program unfolds, there is a notable lack of clarity regarding the roles that must be undertaken by students, DPLs, and school stakeholders (Homeroom Teachers, Principals, or Curriculum Coordinators), hereinafter referred to as the parties involved. The roles and responsibilities are not clearly and comprehensively outlined for each party. This situation has resulted in the program being executed with insufficient innovation, an evaluation process lacking clear guidance, low levels of student participation in school activities, consequently hindering the anticipated guidance of students' abilities based on the learning outcomes of each program. Additionally, there is a deficiency in innovations related to literacy and numeracy carried out by students in schools.

This situation impacts the suboptimal nature of the conversion process for the activities carried out by students into credit hours (SKS) or grades for each programmed course. However, in essence, each converted grade should be clearly aligned with the learning outcomes of each course as outlined in the curriculum of each program. According to the Teaching Assistance Guidelines of Universitas Khairun (2021: 9), the implementation of teaching assistance is conducted over one semester, equivalent to 20 credit hours.

The research issues/questions for this study are as follows: 1) How is the implementation of the Teaching Assistance Program in schools located in the city of Ternate? 2) What are the issues in the execution of teaching assistance concerning the roles of the involved parties? 3) What is the relevance of the activities conducted in educational units to the conversion of credit hours (SKS) and grades for the courses programmed for students?

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research is methodologically classified as a case study, a framework recognized for its aptness in investigating "how" or "why" research questions, particularly when there are constraints on the researcher's ability to manipulate the events under scrutiny, and the research is oriented towards contemporary phenomena requiring in-depth exploration. As asserted by Nur'ain (2020), the case study method involves a systematic progression of steps, encompassing the selection of cases, data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, and the organization of findings. In aligning with this methodology, the researcher's focus is primarily directed towards the methodical design and execution of the investigation. The rationale behind adopting the case study method in this research is rooted in its suitability for unraveling the intricacies surrounding the implementation of teaching assistance concerning the conversion of credit hours (SKS) and course assessments. While Nur'ain (2020) contends that the case study method is particularly advantageous in situations where researchers have limited control over the events being studied, the chosen approach aligns seamlessly with the research's emphasis

on comprehending the "what" and "how" processes integral to the interplay between teaching assistance, credit hour conversion, and course assessments. Thus, this study undertakes a meticulous exploration of these facets, employing the case study approach as the methodological lens through which to scrutinize and interpret the intricacies of the research problem.

Research Participants

The research employed a systematic approach to participant selection, employing random sampling to ensure a representative cohort. The participants were drawn from schools within three districts in the city of Ternate, where teaching assistance programs were implemented. To maintain diversity and comprehensiveness, one school was purposively selected from each district, resulting in a total of four schools comprising the research sample: SMP Banau Ternate, SMP Islam Kota Ternate, SMAN 4 Kota Ternate, and SMAN 5 Kota Ternate. Within this framework, the study focused on students enrolled in the Indonesian Language Education, English Language Education, and Civic Education study programs at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP) Unkhair. These participants engaged in teaching assistance during the initial semester of the academic year 2022-2023. Moreover, the research extended its purview to encompass the perspectives of three key coordinators within FKIP Unkhair. Specifically, the study included the Coordinators of the Indonesian Language Education, English Language Education, and Civic Education study programs, enriching the investigation by incorporating insights from these academic leaders. This multifaceted approach aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and outcomes of teaching assistance initiatives, integrating both student and coordinator perspectives within the educational framework of FKIP Unkhair.

Technique of Data Collection

In the context of this research, a multifaceted approach to data collection has been employed, involving the systematic use of observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The initiation of this study was preceded by meticulous preliminary observations conducted by the researcher. Subsequent to this preparatory phase, observation activities were systematically integrated into the examination process of both individual and group reports carried out by the Indonesian Language Education study program. The primary objective of these observations was to gather pertinent data concerning the intricate process of converting academic credits into the structured courses designated for enrolled students. In an effort to attain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics involved in the implementation of the teaching assistance program within school settings, the research strategy incorporated in-depth interviews with key stakeholders.

The interview activities were tailored to elicit valuable insights into the planning, execution, and evaluation of the teaching assistance program, as well as to discern the various factors—both supportive and inhibiting—that impact teaching assistance activities. Notably, the focal participants in this investigative process were the Coordinators of the Indonesian Language Education, English Language Education, and Civic Education study programs. Moreover, the survey component of the data collection methodology was strategically designed to gauge perspectives on teaching assistance and the perceived benefits of the program. This questionnaire was administered to representatives of the six students actively participating in teaching assistance, with three students representing each of the three study programs under examination. This comprehensive data collection framework ensures a nuanced exploration of the diverse facets associated with the teaching assistance program, offering valuable insights into its dynamics and impact across various academic disciplines.

Data Analysis Technique

The data acquired in this study undergoes a rigorous analytical process employing qualitative analysis techniques as outlined by Miles & Huberman (2016). This analytical framework involves several critical stages, including data collection, data reduction, data verification, and the formulation of conclusions. Specifically, the qualitative analysis is applied to examine the intricacies of the implementation of the teaching assistance program, focusing on the challenges encountered during its application in classroom settings. Through this qualitative lens, the research seeks to unravel the nuanced aspects of the program's execution, shedding light on the practical hurdles faced by educators and students alike. Furthermore, a qualitative approach is adopted to scrutinize data pertaining to the relevance of activities conducted within educational units in relation to the conversion of credit hours (SKS) and the grading of courses programmed for students. This involves a detailed exploration of the qualitative dimensions associated with the alignment of teaching assistance activities with the academic structure, providing a nuanced understanding of how these activities contribute to the educational framework. The qualitative analysis, in this context, facilitates a comprehensive examination of the multifaceted aspects influencing the integration of teaching assistance programs into academic courses, encompassing both challenges and potential solutions.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of the Teaching-Assistance Program

Preparation Step

The implementation of the teaching assistance program at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education involves a meticulously structured process to ensure the selection of diligent and committed students. The initial stages include the program's announcement and registration, which require the submission of necessary documentation and adherence to specific criteria such as a minimum GPA and credit hours (Restiningtyas et al., 2022). This thorough verification and screening of documents are essential to maintaining the program's quality and standards (Goode et al., 2013). Following the selection process, the distribution of schools for teaching assistance is conducted based on established agreements between educational institutions and the faculty, ensuring a systematic approach to school placements (Rahmawati, 2024). Despite this organized method, challenges can arise, particularly due to turnover among school principals and mentor teachers. To address these challenges and ensure program continuity and effectiveness, it is recommended that these key figures be included in orientation sessions (Innocente & Baker, 2018).

Orientation sessions are critical in familiarizing teaching assistants with the program's processes and evaluation procedures (Wedayanthi, 2024). Typically led by academic leaders, these sessions provide comprehensive insights into the program's implementation in schools (Rummerfield et al., 2022). The involvement of school principals, mentor teachers, and field supervisors in these orientation sessions is essential for enhancing the program's overall impact and sustainability (Innocente & Baker, 2018). Additionally, the involvement of students in the Community Service Learning Program (MBKM) is governed by specific criteria, including credit hours and GPA, followed by a rigorous selection process to determine eligibility (Restiningtyas et al., 2022). Emphasizing these criteria and selection processes ensures that only qualified students participate in the program, aligning with its goals of providing opportunities for students to deepen their knowledge in education (Rahmawati, 2024). The success of the teaching assistance program hinges on its structured approach to student selection, thorough document verification, and systematic school placements. Orientation sessions that enhance participants' understanding of the program's objectives and processes are vital. Including key stakeholders, such as school principals and mentor teachers, in these

sessions is crucial for ensuring the program's continuity and effectiveness, ultimately contributing to its long-term success.

Implementation Step

Students participating in the teaching assistance program are given the opportunity to convert approximately 8-10 courses, equivalent to 20 credit hours, although in the process, some students may only convert 4 or 5 courses. During this process, students are escorted to the school by the accompanying faculty advisor (DPL), introduced to the school principal and mentor teacher, while the DPL provides a general overview of the program that the student will implement in the teaching assistance program. The details are not explained comprehensively since students have been equipped with the teaching assistance guide provided by the Head of the Study Program, which is then handed over to the mentor teacher and school principal. After being handed over to the mentor teacher by the school principal, students engage in the following activities at the school: (1) students, along with the mentor teacher, formulate a program and prepare teaching materials, (2) the mentor teacher takes the students to the classrooms they will be teaching, (3) the mentor teacher and students prepare teaching materials, (4) the mentor teacher guides students who will be teaching in the classroom, (5) students observe and participate in teaching with the mentor teacher, (6) students then design and implement learning activities, (7) students engage in discussions with the mentor teacher regarding teaching media and other related matters.

This is in line with Schlaack (2023) who mentioned that during teaching assistance involve firstly guiding the students to enter the classroom, introducing themselves to the students, and then giving full trust to the respective students to establish good collaboration. So, the implementation system of teaching assistance is carried out in the mentor teacher's guidance, and the implementation pattern is similar to PLP II. This is also explained by the students, stating that in the school process, some schools have communicative mentor teachers who, together with the students, develop programs to be implemented over 3 to 4 months. However, there are also students placed in other schools who say that upon arrival, no programs related to teaching assistance are designed, but teachers immediately provide teaching guidance, direct students to enter the classroom to observe the teacher, and then instruct students to teach. While teaching, some are monitored by the mentor teacher and undergo reflection (Murray, 2015; Schlaack, 2023), but there are also instances where students conduct lessons without any monitoring by the mentor teacher.

Evaluation Step

The evaluation framework for the teaching assistance program is systematically structured, relying on the analysis of reports meticulously prepared by participating students. These reports undergo a thorough verification process, involving the endorsement of the mentor teacher, the accompanying faculty advisor (DPL), and the Head of the study program. The grading process is facilitated using assessment rubrics designed by the faculty to ensure a standardized and fair evaluation (Murray, 2015; Izadinia, 2017). Interestingly, variations exist among different study programs in terms of their inclusion of mentor teachers in the grading process. For instance, within the Civic Education study program, the mentor teacher holds the authority to assign grades independently. Subsequently, this individual assessment is amalgamated with the evaluation conducted by the conversion team, resulting in a final grade that represents the average of the two evaluations (Ben-Amram & Davidovitch, 2024). In contrast, alternative assessment methods are implemented in other study programs, reflecting a diverse and nuanced approach to the evaluation of teaching assistance initiatives.

Among the three study programs contributing to the dataset, there exist variations in the assessment methodologies applied to the teaching assistance program. In the first scenario, the

study program coordinator assembles an assessment team tasked with evaluating students according to rubrics established by the faculty. This method incorporates a dual assessment approach, allowing both mentor teachers and the conversion team to participate in evaluating students (Akuamoah-Boateng & Sam-Tagoe, 2018). The culmination of this process involves amalgamating the mentor teacher's evaluation with that of the conversion team, and the combined result is divided by two to ascertain the final grade assigned to the students. In the second approach, the study program coordinator constitutes an assessment team, commonly referred to as the conversion team, which is bestowed with the authority to evaluate students based on their final reports. Notably, in this scenario, the mentor teacher is not entrusted with the responsibility of conducting assessments (Phang, Sani, & Azmin, 2020; Szymańska-Tworek, 2022). The third technique involves the study program coordinator forming an assessment team; however, this team assumes a passive role during the evaluation process. Instead, the coordinator independently undertakes the assessments or converts student grades, thereby leading the evaluation without active team participation. These nuanced variations in assessment methodologies underscore the diversity in approaches employed by different study programs within the context of the teaching assistance program.

Problems in Implementing the Teaching Assistance Program

Lack of Field Supervisors' Control

In the teaching assistance program, the monitoring of the Field Supervisors (DPL) is crucial to track the progress of students in designing and implementing teaching assistance programs in schools, ensuring alignment with the planned courses and credit hours. Field Supervisors need to maintain regular communication with mentor teachers to inquire about the progress and to identify any challenges or issues experienced by students participating in the teaching assistance program. However, an issue observed in the field is that Field Supervisors often inadequately monitor the progress of students and have limited communication with mentor teachers at the school. Consequently, the supervising faculty members are unaware of the students' developments during their school assignments, and conversely, mentor teachers are unable to communicate challenges faced in the school to the supervising faculty (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020; LLDIKTI, 2020). On average, Field Supervisors only visit the schools for monitoring purposes about twice during the approximately 3 to 4 months duration of the program. These visits typically occur during the initial placement and at the conclusion of the program. Consequently, the monitoring efforts mainly involve evaluating the implemented program without fostering substantial communication with mentor teachers regarding challenges and potential solutions that need immediate attention.

Consistent with this, a mentor teacher at SMA Negeri 5 in the city of Ternate states that there is a lack of communication between the Field Supervisors (DPL) and mentor teachers when students are implementing the teaching assistance program in the school. As a result, mentor teachers are unable to convey the challenges experienced to the Field Supervisors (DPL). Therefore, it is essential to have regular monitoring by the Field Supervisors to the school, at least 4-5 times, to understand the progress and to identify any issues or challenges encountered by students participating in the teaching assistance program at the school.

Unclear Explanation of Matters Learned and Direct Learning Outcomes Converted

During the implementation of the teaching assistance program, most teachers are not aware of the courses and the Direct Learning Outcomes (CPL) for each course that will be achieved by the students. The programs created are not highly focused on the CPL of the courses being converted (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020; LLDIKTI, 2020). While students are aware of the courses and their CPL, this information is not clearly communicated or conveyed to mentor teachers or school principals. As a result, the guidance provided by

mentor teachers lacks direction towards the CPL for each converted course. When students go to the school, the supervising faculty only provides a general overview of the programs to be implemented by the students. However, there is no clarity regarding the detailed conversion of courses and the CPL for each student.

In general, what typically occurs is that teachers guide students to be able to teach, without linking it to the learning outcomes of other courses that are not fulfilled through teaching practice. In fact, some courses are not implemented at the school. This is reinforced by a statement from the mentor teacher, who mentions that there is no clear information regarding the learning outcomes of the courses that are converted into the courses programmed by teaching assistant students (Wahyu, 2020; Wiranto, 2020). Therefore, there is a need for clarity from the university regarding the learning outcomes of the courses that are converted. According to the Vice Principal of SMA Negeri 4 in the city of Ternate, "I am not yet clearly informed about the learning outcomes that students achieve in the teaching assistance program at the school due to changes in the vice principal."

In facing situations like this, study programs can take two approaches. The first is to assign additional tasks to students at the school. The second is for the Head of the Study Program to delegate authority to the subject instructors to provide reinforcements and assignments to students related to the courses that have not been covered, ensuring that they can achieve grades that align with the programmed courses. Therefore, it is essential for detailed clarification by the supervising faculty to mentor teachers regarding the courses that are converted for each student participating in the teaching assistance program. This way, when students go to the school, mentor teachers are already aware of the learning outcomes that are converted. It is crucial to follow up on this information in the future to improve the implementation of the teaching assistance program, especially concerning the courses to be converted.

Unclear Assessment Indicators and Less detail of Assessment Rubrics

Unclear indicators and assessment rubrics result in a subjective assessment process, such as assigning grades like A, B, C, and so forth. No assessment rubric is provided by the university, making it challenging for mentor teachers to assign grades to students participating in the teaching assistance program. This is supported by the statement of Mrs. Sulastri, a mentor teacher at SMA 5 in the city of Ternate, who mentioned, "There is no assessment rubric filled out by mentor teachers. Then, what basis should the mentor teacher use for evaluation? If students are evaluated with clear rubrics, they are more diligent in coming to school to carry out the program according to the assessment rubric (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020; LLDIKTI, 2020). Currently, they are even reluctant to come to school. If it's objective, they cannot be passed. Because in this period, they have not reached the teaching stage and have not been supervised by teachers, so we also don't know how their teaching skills are because the withdrawal has already been carried out by the university."

Nevertheless, there are other schools that have been provided with indicators or assessment rubrics from the university for assigning grades to students participating in the teaching assistance program. For instance, in the SMP Islam Kota Ternate school, they mentioned having an assessment rubric from the university, which is filled out by the school. Upon confirming with the Head of the Civic Education Study Program, it was conveyed that the rubric provided by the faculty and handed over to the school is not detailed, resulting in a tendency for subjective assessment. For example, if the CPL is 5 and the achieved CPL is 3, what should the corresponding grade be? In practice, if CPL 5 and the achieved CPL is 3, it should score 60, but what actually happens is that a grade of 70 is given and converted to a grade of B. This represents a subjective assessment, especially given verbal recommendations from the faculty to provide maximum grades. Furthermore, the study program is directed to

give maximum grades, despite the actual conditions. Consequently, it gives the impression that students tend to exploit this program to expedite the completion of their studies, although they are actually significantly disadvantaged in terms of mastering the theory and practice of the programmed courses.

Less Involvement of Mentor Teachers in Asessment

In providing assessments for teaching assistant students, mentor teachers have the authority to assign grades due to their direct involvement with the activities programmed by students at the school. This can be observed in how mentor teachers guide students in effectively implementing teaching assistance activities. Consistent with the explanation above, a mentor teacher at SMP Islam Kota Ternate mentioned that they are granted full authority in assessing students based on their skills, creativity, classroom management, and the effective collaboration between mentor teachers and teaching assistant students. On the other hand, according to the Chair of the English Language Education and Indonesian Language Education study programs, during the assessment, mentor teachers are not directly involved in assigning grades. Instead, the assessment is carried out by a team of evaluators. Even though, in the process, there are study programs that are directly evaluated by the Head of the Study Program, and there are study programs whose grades are assessed or converted by an evaluation team (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020; LLDIKTI, 2020). This means there are differences in assessment methods between different study programs, some involving mentor teachers and some not involving them.

Inactive Students, Less Attendance, and Lazy to Come in the Program

The students who are engaged in teaching assistantship programs are expected to be more proactive in implementing the program according to the procedures set by the university based on the designated courses (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020; LLDIKTI, 2020). Thus, students are required to attend school diligently and maintain discipline in carrying out activities at the school. In reality, students are less active in executing teaching assistantship programs at schools and tend to overlook attendance and discipline enforced by the school authorities. This is evident in statements from the mentor teachers indicating a lack of student discipline and motivation as obstacles in carrying out the teaching assistantship program. Similarly, in line with the statement from the mentor teacher at SMA Negeri 5 Kota Ternate, it is observed that students demonstrate insufficient discipline and attendance in carrying out teaching assistantship duties.

Therefore, it is crucial for the academic program to pay closer attention to the competencies and commitments of students participating in the teaching assistantship program, and for the program to adequately prepare students before they are assigned to schools (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020; LLDIKTI, 2020). Additionally, it is necessary to provide guidance to students who are less active, infrequently present, or reluctant to attend school, in order to foster greater activity, diligence, and discipline. If necessary, there should be consequences, such as failing grades, for students who consistently demonstrate laziness in carrying out teaching assistantship responsibilities. Without the implementation of failing grades as consequences, the habit of laziness and lack of discipline among students will undoubtedly persist.

The lack of theoretical instruction provided results in suboptimal practical performance by students

Students who engage in teaching assistantship programs at schools are typically not equipped with comprehensive theoretical knowledge, and in some cases, they may not receive any theoretical preparation related to the subjects they are tasked with teaching. This is because

students only program these courses and learn them while implementing the teaching assistantship program at schools. In other words, it can be said that students study at the school level. This leads to dissatisfaction among mentor teachers as they struggle to assist students until they truly master or can fully practice the learning activities with maximal subject mastery, resulting in the teaching assistantship process not functioning optimally as expected by mentor teachers or the school (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020; LLDIKTI, 2020). This aligns with the statement made by the mentor teacher at SMA Negeri 5 Kota Ternate, indicating that teaching assistantship students who are deployed to schools have not been able to apply theory effectively in their teaching practices in the classroom. Therefore, there needs to be clear communication from the university to mentor teachers regarding this matter, so that mentor teachers can understand the lack of maximal practical experience among students.

The field observations indicate that teachers lack sufficient understanding of all the subjects converted. There are 20 credit hours converted through teaching assistantship activities, equivalent to 8 to 10 courses. Teachers have limitations in both theoretical and practical aspects across all subjects. They primarily focus on developing teaching skills among students. Some subjects are not covered through teaching practice (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020; LLDIKTI, 2020). Only learning-related courses are covered. If there are other courses such as Discourse Analysis, Syntax, Listening Skills, it becomes challenging to teach them through teaching assistantship. This is further exacerbated by the lack of clarity on the converted courses, as well as the Course Program Learning (CPL) and assessment rubrics that are oriented towards the courses programmed through teaching assistantship.

Misconceptions regarding teaching assistantship being equated with the Practicum Teaching Program

There is a tendency for mentor teachers to have somewhat erroneous perceptions regarding teaching assistantship activities. Most teachers equate the teaching assistantship program with PPL II (Practicum Teaching Program II). They explain that students participating in teaching assistantship activities have significantly different capabilities compared to students participating in PPL II. They argue that students in PPL II are more prepared for teaching compared to students in the teaching assistantship program. However, it is important to understand that PPL is only one course. Students participating in PPL are those who have completed most of their courses, have undergone lectures related to teaching, and have been thoroughly trained in the PPL I course. On the other hand, teaching assistantship involves several courses or credit hours that students have not been taught at all in terms of competency at the university (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020). In essence, teaching assistantship requires students to learn subjects programmed at the school. This also means that students participating in teaching assistantship activities truly lack understanding or skills related to the subjects to be converted. Therefore, when they go to schools, the subjects to be converted are entirely unfamiliar to them, and they start learning from scratch.

This is supported by the opinion of mentor teachers at SMP Islam Kota Ternate, stating that students in PPL are still better than students in teaching assistantship programs. Therefore, there is a need for re-socialization regarding the implementation of teaching assistantship at schools. This would enable mentor teachers and school principals to differentiate between the essence of teaching assistantship and PPL (LLDIKTI, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020). Because most mentor teachers always claim that students in PPL are better than those in teaching assistantship programs. However, teaching assistantship involves students going to schools from the beginning of their courses.

Conversion Process of Scores

The conversion process of teaching assistantship student grades is based on the student activity reports collected or inputted into the academic program. However, in the assessment, it is based on the assessment rubrics provided by the faculty, which cover all student activities at the school, including student attendance and progress. This can be seen in the statement from the program coordinator stating that Teaching Assistantship is an integral part carried out by the academic program, so the process of grading given to students comes directly from the school (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020). The aspects evaluated by the school include the activities performed by students, student attendance, and student progress at the school. Because it is within the authority of the school, the university only recognizes the grades.

In the process of grading, it is important to have rules that should be adhered to by the academic program to avoid appearing subjective, especially if the assessment rubric is not operational. Consequently, sometimes the evaluation team or the program coordinator who assesses may assign grades arbitrarily. To avoid this, the academic program should involve mentor teachers and Teaching Practice Supervisors (DPL) in the assessment process. This aligns with the opinion of the head of the Civics Education program, who stated that the committee members are responsible for assigning grades as part of the verification process of the program carried out by students (Wahyu, 2020; Wiranto, 2020). For example, if a particular course is a requirement from the beginning, it should be documented in the form of a report or video, such as teaching a learning course, so that the grading conversion process can be carried out effectively.

With several issues raised earlier, it is imperative that assessments are objective, thereby serving as a learning experience for future teaching assistantship participants to ensure they do not take it lightly and do not perceive participation in teaching assistantship as a guaranteed pass even if they fail to meet the target. This is evident from the explanations provided by students when asked whether they have received sufficient mentoring from mentor teachers. Some students say it is not sufficient, some mention only a slight match, some say it is not enough, while others say it is sufficient (Wahyu, 2020; Wiranto, 2020). When asked whether the conversion of teaching assistantship activities aligns with the grades converted into courses, all students who were interviewed answered affirmatively, with some expressing high satisfaction. Some involve teachers in the assessment and grade conversion, while others are directly evaluated by the team without teacher assessment. Furthermore, there are program coordinators who directly convert grades without involving the faculty team (DPL). However, there are also cases where mentor teachers are involved in the assessment and grade conversion, while in some instances, mentor teachers are not involved, and assessments are made directly by the team without teacher input. Furthermore, there are program coordinators who directly convert grades without involving the faculty team (DPL), such as the Indonesian Language Education and English Language Education programs. Subsequently, the assessment process is adjusted according to the Course Program Learning Outcomes (CPMK) of each course, based on assessment rubrics created by the faculty (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020).

However, if there are courses that are not covered in the logbook or the teaching assistantship program, students are usually assigned additional tasks by the faculty to obtain grades. Upon further examination, these tasks may not actually align with the Course Program Learning Outcomes (CPMK) of the course (Bakhtiar, 2020; Sudaryanto et al., 2020; Tohir, 2022). Faculty members are asked to simply assign tasks according to the course, and the grades may be given with maximum scores. This becomes a problem that needs to be addressed to prevent similar mistakes in the future, as it creates a tendency for students to participate solely to expedite their studies, albeit with minimal mastery of the course competencies.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the above research, it can be concluded that teaching assistantship is crucial for students to directly acquire various teaching skills and master the programmed courses, provided that thorough preparation is undertaken by students, mentor teachers, and DPL. To ensure the relevance of grade conversion from student programs, there needs to be uniformity in the assessment process according to guidelines, and more detailed assessment rubrics aligned with the Course Program Learning Outcomes (CPMK) of the student-programmed courses. Strict control is necessary for each implementation of the teaching assistantship program to prevent students from appearing haphazard or indifferent, and merely participating in teaching assistantship with the perception of expedited completion of studies but with minimal quality.

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