

Implementation of 'Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus': How prepared is the English Department in higher education?

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the readiness of the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) program at IAIN Takengon to implement the Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) program. The research employs a descriptive survey method, with the study subjects consisting of 24 students and 14 lecturers from the TBI program at the Faculty of Tarbiyah, IAIN Takengon, selected purposively. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews and then analyzed using quantitative techniques and qualitative thematic analysis for the interviews. The findings reveal that while the TBI program demonstrates substantial readiness, including implementing relevant activities, significant challenges remain, such as the need for adjustments in academic policies, funding, and curriculum alignment. The enthusiasm of both lecturers and students indicates promising potential for the successful implementation of FLIC. However, addressing the identified challenges will require holistic institutional support and the involvement of all stakeholders. This study contributes to the understanding of institutional readiness for innovative educational policies and offers concrete recommendations for optimizing the implementation of FLIC in similar programs.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci:

inovasi pendidikan;
kampus merdeka;
kurikulum;
merdeka belajar;
perguruan tinggi

Implementasi "Merdeka Belajar - Kampus Merdeka": Sejauh mana kesiapan Program Studi Bahasa Inggris di perguruan tinggi?

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kesiapan program Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) di IAIN Takengon dalam melaksanakan program Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode survei deskriptif, dengan partisipan terdiri dari 24 mahasiswa dan 14 dosen dari program TBI di Fakultas Tarbiyah, IAIN Takengon, yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan wawancara, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teknik kuantitatif untuk kuesioner dan analisis tematik kualitatif untuk wawancara. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa meskipun program TBI menunjukkan kesiapan yang substansial, termasuk pelaksanaan kegiatan yang relevan, tantangan signifikan tetap ada, seperti perlunya penyesuaian dalam kebijakan akademik, pendanaan, dan penyesuaian kurikulum. Antusiasme dosen dan mahasiswa menunjukkan potensi yang menjanjikan untuk keberhasilan pelaksanaan MBKM. Namun, untuk mengatasi tantangan yang teridentifikasi, akan diperlukan dukungan kelembagaan yang holistik dan keterlibatan semua pemangku kepentingan. Studi ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman tentang kesiapan kelembagaan untuk kebijakan pendidikan yang inovatif dan menawarkan rekomendasi konkret untuk mengoptimalkan implementasi MBKM dalam program serupa.

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1 Introduction

In recent years, the higher education system in Indonesia has undergone significant changes to align with global education standards. This transformation aims to equip students with the skills and knowledge relevant to an ever-evolving job market (Herda et al., 2023; Purnomo et al., 2021). One of the key initiatives in this change is the Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) program, introduced by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Christanti & Sukoco, 2022; Syahrudin & Tambaip, 2023). This program provides students with the freedom to learn according to their interests and abilities, with an emphasis on developing autonomous learning skills and instilling strong national values (Adda et al., 2022; Dian et al., 2023).

The FLIC program plays a crucial role in higher education by allowing students to continue their education for up to three semesters from various sources outside their primary field of study. This initiative is designed to create a holistic educational experience and support the development of creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills (N. Basri et al., 2024; Fuadi & Irdalisa, 2022; Hidayat, 2024; Mujiwati et al., 2023). The Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) program aligns with constructivist educational theory, which states that learning is an active process where learners build knowledge through direct experiences and interactions with their environment (Huang, 2021). According to this theory, students should be given the opportunity to explore various fields of knowledge and integrate that information into their understanding. By allowing students to take courses outside their primary field of study, FLIC supports the principles of constructivism, enabling them to construct knowledge relevant to the real world and enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This approach helps students become independent and adaptive learners, ready to face global challenges.

Additionally, the FLIC program can be associated with David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984). This theory emphasizes the importance of learning through direct experience as a key component in skill development. Kolb identifies four stages in the learning cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Matriano, 2020). FLIC provides opportunities for students to engage in various learning experiences, such as internships, research projects, and community involvement, which allow them to apply theoretical concepts to practical situations. Thus, FLIC not only strengthens students' conceptual understanding but also enriches them with practical skills essential for success in a dynamic work environment.

Despite its clear benefits, the implementation of this program in State Islamic Religious Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) faces various challenges, including institutional readiness, student independence, and the preparedness of lecturers and educational staff. There are still gaps in research related to how ready PTKIN is to adopt and implement FLIC, particularly in supporting and assessing student autonomy and faculty's ability to understand and implement the FLIC framework (Hidayat, 2024; Sukmariningsih et al., 2022). Additionally, there are differences in the availability and quality of opportunities provided to students at various universities. These differences are influenced by factors such as resources, industry networks, and infrastructure, which ultimately impact students' learning experiences and prospects (Aryanti et al., 2023; Hartadi et al., 2023; Ingsih et al., 2022; Nofrizal et al., 2022; Prabawati et al., 2023; Rizki et al., 2022; Wulandari et al., 2023). The lack of standardization in the implementation of this program also confuses credit recognition and learning outcome transfer, thus hindering the full potential of the FLIC initiative (Permana et al., 2023; Suyatno et al., 2023)

Previous research has shown various approaches to FLIC implementation and highlighted the structural challenges faced. This study shares various aspects with previous research. Like Yudhawasthi's (2023) research, which discusses the potential for collaboration within The Freedom

to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) framework, this study also explores the readiness of study programs to implement FLIC, including how study programs can support and engage in various educational initiatives. Lubis et al.'s (2024) research shares a focus on implementing FLIC policy in higher education, especially in terms of the execution, management, and administration of programs that align with FLIC's goals to enhance students' skills. Hastangka and Hidayah's (2023) research examines the problems and challenges in FLIC policy and management, which are also addressed in this study when analyzing the readiness of educational institutions to implement this program. Basri et al.'s (2021) research discusses the importance of accurate data collection to support FLIC implementation, similar to this study, which also relies on surveys and data collection to assess the readiness of study programs. Finally, Qorin's (2022) research investigates student perceptions of the benefits and challenges of FLIC curriculum implementation, which aligns with this study involving both student and lecturer perspectives regarding study program readiness in implementing FLIC.

While there are similarities, this research also has significant differences from previous studies. Yudhawasthi's (2023) study focuses more on collaboration between campuses and museums in the FLIC context, while this study highlights the readiness of the English study program in a specific institution to implement the FLIC program. Lubis et al.'s (2024) research analyzes the implementation of FLIC policy in two different universities using a multisite approach, whereas this study focuses on a single institution and analyzes internal readiness. Hastangka and Hidayah's (2023) research places more emphasis on the conceptual study of FLIC policy and management in general without focusing on the specific readiness of a study program like this research. Basri et al.'s (2021) study conducts school mapping to support FLIC implementation, which focuses more on primary and secondary education levels, unlike this study, which focuses on higher education. Qorin's (2022) research examines student perceptions of the implementation of the FLIC curriculum in the Arabic language program, while this study examines the readiness of the English language program from the perspectives of both students and lecturers.

The novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on analyzing the readiness of the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) Study Program at IAIN Takengon in implementing the Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC). Unlike previous studies that have a broader scope or emphasize external collaboration and policy, this research provides an in-depth and comprehensive view of the internal readiness of a study program in the FLIC context. This study offers a new contribution by combining student and lecturer perspectives, which are rarely found in previous FLIC research, and providing an analysis centred on the readiness of higher education institutions to adapt and implement this program effectively. Therefore, this research focuses on analyzing the readiness of the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (English Education) Study Program at IAIN Takengon to implement the FLIC program. Combining direct observations from stakeholders in this research and comparing the experiences of students and lecturers provides insights into the factors influencing the program's success at the departmental level. Thus, this study makes a significant contribution to the higher education literature through an in-depth analysis of the internal and external dynamics influencing faculty readiness and student learning experiences. Moreover, this research offers practical recommendations for other higher education institutions in optimizing FLIC implementation to support national education goals and address global challenges.

2 Methods

This research was a descriptive survey aimed at gathering information on knowledge, attitudes, and actions related to autonomous learning among students and lecturers of the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) study program at the Faculty of Tarbiyah, IAIN Takengon. Descriptive research involves collecting information about prevailing conditions or situations for description and interpretation (Ariastuti & Wahyudin, 2022). The combination of descriptive and survey methods was implemented

by direct fieldwork, which enabled the collection of data during the research to describe, understand, and study the variables in-depth (Kuswati, 2020). The sample for this study consisted of 24 students and 14 lecturers from the TBI study program. Sampling was conducted using purposive sampling, a technique for selecting samples based on specific criteria (Rachmadtullah et al., 2020). The sample included respondents from students in semesters 2, 4, and 6, as well as lecturers who taught in the same program. The instruments used in this research were a student self-learning questionnaire, a lecturer perception questionnaire about FLIC, and interviews conducted during Focus Group Discussions to identify problems. The development of indicators in this study was adapted from previous research by Chen and Pan (2015) and Yıldırım, (2008), which were used to develop the student questionnaire related to their level of learning autonomy in measuring student readiness. Additionally, the questionnaire for lecturers was adapted from Rozali et al. (2021) to assess lecturer readiness. Thus, this research evaluated student readiness for autonomous learning and the perception of learning responsibility between students and instructors. Data analysis techniques included both quantitative and qualitative methods. For quantitative data, the questionnaire responses were analyzed using a calculation system to determine the percentage of responses for each question using the following formula:

$$\text{Persentase (\%)} = \frac{f}{N} \times 100\%$$

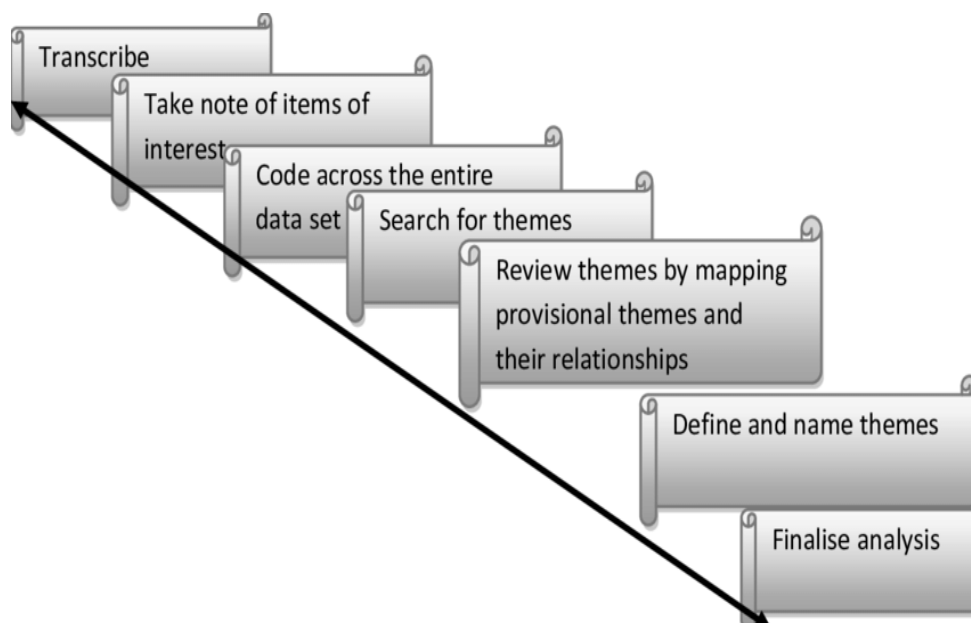
Explanation:

f: Frequency (Number of students who chose a particular answer)

N: Total number of students

For qualitative data, thematic analysis was conducted based on the method proposed by Braun and Clarke, which involved coding the data, identifying themes, and interpreting findings from the focus group discussions (Byrne 2022; Kiger dan Varpio 2020).

Figure 1. Clarke dan Braun (2013)



First, interview data from students and lecturers of the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) study program at IAIN Takengon were transcribed verbatim. This transcription served as the basis for analysis, allowing the researcher to capture important details in the conversations. During the transcription process, the researcher noted items that were interesting and relevant to the research objectives, including statements that reflected understanding or attitudes related to the Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) program. Next, coding was conducted on the entire data set to identify emerging features or patterns. These codes were used to categorize the data into specific categories related to the TBI program's readiness to implement FLIC. After the coding process, the researcher looked for themes that emerged from the collection of codes, which were then used as a framework to interpret the data and understand the readiness of the TBI program and its stakeholders. These themes were then reviewed and mapped to understand the relationships between them, including how these themes interacted with each other and provided insights into the institution's readiness and challenges in implementing FLIC. Subsequently, these themes were defined and named to provide a clear description of the meaning of the data. The final stage was the finalization of the analysis, where interpretation and explanation of the findings were conducted in-depth to provide a comprehensive overview of the readiness and challenges faced by the Tadris Bahasa Inggris study program in implementing FLIC. Recommendations were also provided to optimize the implementation of this program.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The survey results on autonomous learning indicate that among 24 students of the English Education Study Program, 86.96% are aware of the Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) policy, while 13.04% are not. Most students received this information through social media, showing particular interest in exchange programs. They also expressed willingness to participate in the program. This indicates that the majority of students are on the side of being aware of the program. In terms of learning responsibility, lecturers are perceived as more responsible for determining course objectives (21.74%) and evaluating learning (36.36%). In comparison, students are considered responsible for ensuring their learning progress (45.45% of lecturers and 43.48% of students agree). Interest in learning English is more frequently initiated by the students themselves (52.18%).

Figure 2. Student Knowledge of the FLIC Program

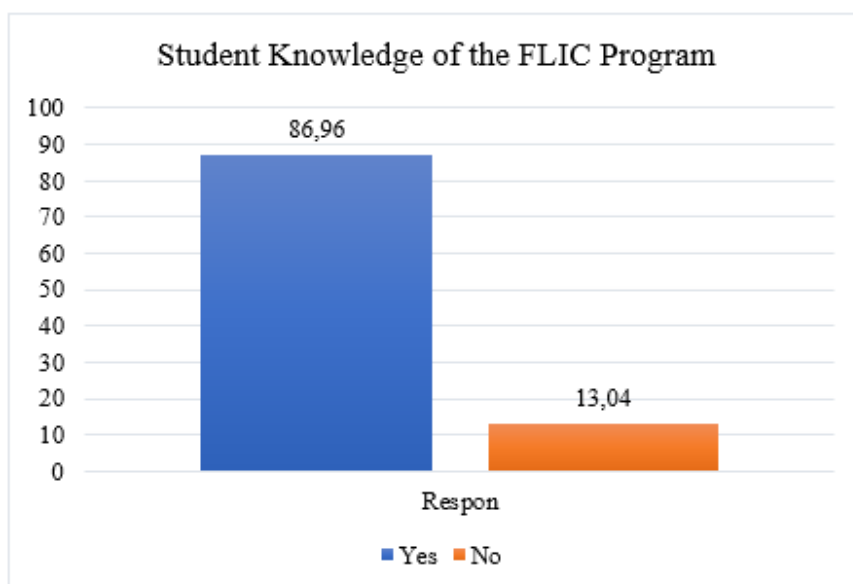


Table 1. The Distribution of Responsibilities between Lecturers and Students

Responsibility	Completely		Mostly		Some		A little		Not at all	
	L	S	L	S	L	S	L	S	L	S
Making progress during lessons	9.09	8.7	27.27	26.09	45.45	43.48	18.18	21.74	0.00	0.00
Making progress outside the classroom	9.09	13.04	27.27	26.09	36.36	30.43	27.27	30.43	0.00	0.00
Stimulating interest in learning	17.39	9.09	18.18	26.09	27.27	52.18	45.45	12.64	0.00	0.00
Identifying weaknesses	9.09	4.35	27.27	21.74	54.55	26.09	9.09	47.83	0.00	0.00
Determining course objectives	21.74	9.09	13.04	27.27	60.87	45.45	4.35	18.18	0.00	0.00
Deciding what to learn next	9.09	8.70	45.45	30.43	27.27	39.13	18.18	13.04	0.00	8.70
Choosing activities during lessons	21.74	0.00	17.39	27.27	60.87	45.45	0.00	18.18	0.00	9.09
Deciding the time for each activity	9.09	4.35	27.27	8.7	18.18	56.52	45.45	26.09	0.00	4.35
Choosing learning materials	18.18	21.74	27.27	17.39	36.36	39.13	18.18	21.74	0.00	0.00
Evaluating learning	36.36	21.74	9.09	30.43	27.27	34.78	27.27	13.04	0.00	0.00

Note: Lecturer (L); Students (S)

There is a disparity in perception, with lecturers rating students' abilities lower, especially in choosing learning activities outside the classroom, with 18.18% to 36.36% rating them as "very poor" to "poor." Conversely, 60.87% of students rate themselves as "good" to "very good."

Table 2. The Distribution of Students' and Lecturers' Perceptions Regarding Ability

Ability	Very Poor		Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good	
	L	S	L	S	L	S	L	S	L	S
Choosing learning activities in class	0.00	0.00	18.18	8.70	36.36	30.40	45.45	43.50	0.00	17.40
Choosing learning activities outside class	18.18	0.00	18.18	21.70	27.27	34.80	27.27	39.10	9.09	4.30
Choosing learning objectives in class	9.09	4.30	18.18	4.30	27.27	30.40	45.45	56.50	0.00	4.30
Choosing learning objectives outside class	18.18	4.30	9.09	4.30	36.36	30.40	36.36	52.20	0.00	8.70
Choosing learning materials in class	0.00	0.00	27.27	17.4	27.27	30.40	36.36	43.50	9.09	8.70

Ability	Very Poor		Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good	
	L	S	L	S	L	S	L	S	L	S
Choosing learning materials outside class	9.09	0.00	27.27	21.7	18.18	34.80	36.36	43.50	9.09	0.00
Determining what to learn next	0.00	0.00	36.36	8.70	27.27	26.10	36.36	60.90	0.00	4.30
Allocating time for each activity	0.00	0.00	18.18	21.7	45.45	17.40	36.36	56.50	0.00	4.30
Identifying weaknesses in English	0.00	4.30	18.18	4.30	45.45	34.80	36.36	47.80	0.00	8.70
Evaluating learning	0.00	0.00	27.27	4.30	54.55	34.80	18.18	56.50	0.00	4.30

Note: Lecturer (L); Students (S)

In learning activities, lecturers are more active in recording new vocabulary (45.45%) compared to students (21.74%). In comparison, 63.64% of lecturers rarely listen to English songs, in contrast to 43.48% of students who do so regularly.

Table 3. The Distribution of Students' and Lecturers' Perceptions of Activities in English Language Learning

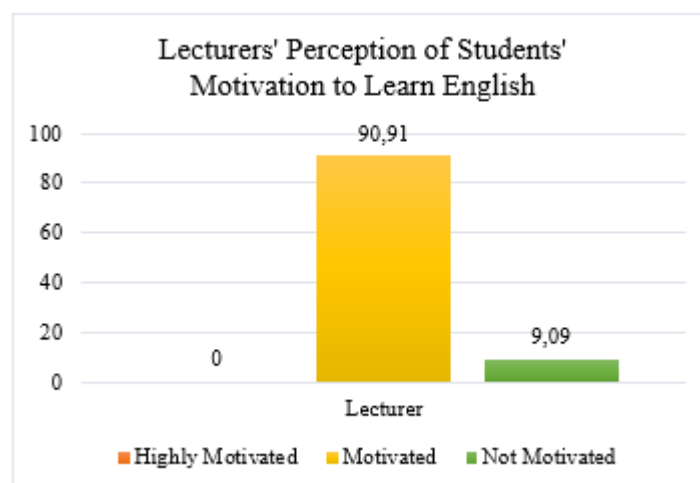
Activity	Always (%)		Often (%)		Sometimes (%)		Rarely (%)		Never (%)	
	L	S	L	S	L	S	L	S	L	S
Completing non-compulsory tasks	9.09	21.74	0.00	39.13	27.27	30.43	45.45	8.70	18.18	0.00
Noting down new words and their meanings	0.00	13.04	45.45	21.74	18.18	52.17	36.36	13.04	0.00	0.00
Reading the newspaper in English	18.18	4.35	27.27	30.43	36.36	39.13	18.18	21.74	0.00	4.35
Visiting the teacher regarding work	9.09	8.70	18.18	26.09	18.18	52.17	54.55	8.70	0.00	4.35
Reading books or magazines in English	0.00	8.70	45.45	26.10	36.36	52.18	18.18	8.71	0.00	4.36
Watching English-language TV shows	9.09	13.04	18.18	43.48	36.36	39.13	36.36	4.35	0.00	0.00
Listening to English songs	0.00	43.48	9.09	30.43	27.27	26.09	63.64	0.00	0.00	0.00
Speaking with foreigners in English	18.18	4.35	18.18	8.70	36.36	47.83	27.27	30.43	0.00	8.70
Practicing English with friends	0.00	8.70	18.18	26.09	45.45	47.83	36.36	17.39	0.00	0.00
Doing grammar exercises	0.00	17.39	18.18	8.70	72.73	52.17	9.09	21.74	0.00	0.00

Activity	Always (%)		Often (%)		Sometimes (%)		Rarely (%)		Never (%)	
	L	S	L	S	L	S	L	S	L	S
Conducting group study on English lessons	0.00	8.70	27.27	26.09	45.45	43.48	18.18	21.74	9.09	0.00
Attending a self-learning center	9.09	0.00	27.27	13.04	36.36	30.43	27.27	26.09	0.00	30.43
Asking the teacher questions when you don't understand	0.00	17.39	18.18	26.09	27.27	52.17	45.45	4.35	9.09	0.00
Giving feedback to the teacher	9.09	4.35	27.27	0.00	54.55	26.09	9.09	47.83	0.00	21.74
Planning lessons or study sessions	9.09	21.74	27.27	13.04	45.45	60.87	18.18	4.35	0.00	0.00
Activating prior knowledge while studying	9.09	8.70	18.18	30.43	27.27	39.13	45.45	13.04	0.00	8.70
Drawing conclusions from lessons	0.00	21.74	27.27	17.39	18.18	60.87	45.45	0.00	9.09	0.00
Classifying information while studying	9.09	4.35	27.27	8.70	18.18	56.52	45.45	26.09	0.00	4.35
Summarizing study material during lectures	0.00	21.74	18.18	17.39	36.36	39.13	27.27	21.74	18.18	0.00
Taking notes while studying	0.00	21.74	9.09	30.43	27.27	34.78	27.27	13.04	36.36	0.00
Using resources during study	9.09	13.04	9.09	30.43	27.27	52.17	27.27	4.35	27.27	0.00
Collaborating with friends	0.00	8.70	0.00	21.74	54.55	34.78	36.36	34.78	9.09	0.00

Note: Lecturer (L); Students (S)

Regarding lecturers' understanding of the FLIC program, 90.91% agree that students have a strong motivation to learn English, while 9.09% disagree.

Figure 3. Lecturers' Perception of Students' Motivation to Learn English



In terms of lecturers' knowledge and understanding of the FLIC program, as reflected in questions 1 through 6, the survey shows that most English lecturers at IAIN Takengon have limited knowledge of the FLIC policy, with 54.55% having little knowledge and 45.45% having a good understanding (Q1). About 36.36% of lecturers know that students can participate in FLIC activities outside the university for up to 2 semesters, while 36.36% answered 'Don't know' (Q2). Regarding the number of credits for FLIC activities, 54.54% of respondents chose 40 credits, while 27.27% answered 'Don't know' (Q3). In terms of information sources, 27.27% of lecturers obtained information about FLIC from social media and 18.18% from the internet, Kemenristek websites, and seminars (Q4). A total of 63.64% of lecturers stated that their study program had previous programs in line with FLIC activities, such as research or internships (Q5). In terms of activities undertaken, 36.36% chose Community Service/Thematic KKN, and 18.18% chose Internships, Research, Entrepreneurship, and Community Service/Thematic KKN (Q6).

Regarding lecturers' contributions to the FLIC program, as reflected in Questions 7 to 11, the majority of lecturers (72.73%) had not previously been mentors for KKN, entrepreneurship activities, internships, or student exchanges before FLIC. In comparison, 27.27% had participated (Q7). Additionally, 72.73% of lecturers had not assisted their Study Program in developing Course Learning Outcomes (CLO) or aligning credits, with 27.27% having done so (Q8). However, the majority of lecturers (81.82%) are willing to become supervisors for FLIC activities, while 18.18% are not (Q9). When asked about encouraging students to participate in FLIC, 63.64% of lecturers are willing to provide information and encouragement, while 36.36% are not actively encouraging (Q10). To ensure optimal FLIC implementation, 72.73% of lecturers chose preparing courses to be taken, 18.18% chose designing activities with partners, and 9.09% chose preparing the mentoring process (Q11).

Lecturers' assessments of the FLIC program based on Q12-Q18 show varied views. In Q12, 45.46% of lecturers are unaware of FLIC's impact on student learning processes, while 27.27% acknowledge a good or significant improvement. In Q13, 45.46% of lecturers are still determining whether FLIC enhances students' hard and soft skills, while 36.36% see a significant improvement. For Q14, most lecturers (63.64%) are unsure if FLIC contributes to enhancing lecturers' capacity, but 27.27% consider there to be a significant increase. In Q15, 45.45% of lecturers assessed FLIC as beneficial for achieving Postgraduate Learning Outcomes, though 36.36% remain doubtful. In Q16, 63.64% of lecturers highly recommend FLIC, while 36.36% are neutral. Regarding Q17, the main obstacle in FLIC implementation is "Lack of information" (27.27%). In Q18, lecturers' suggestions vary, but 27.27% did not provide specific input.

Concerning the readiness of the English Education Study Program (TBI) at the Faculty of Tarbiyah, IAIN Takengon for FLIC, TBI shows readiness and enthusiasm in implementing the Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) program. Initial steps have been taken, including signing an MoU with partner institutions. However, there are some challenges such as the absence of academic policies for independent student activities, learning outcome guidelines, as well as technical and funding constraints. During the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), students showed great interest in the FLIC program, especially in student exchanges, thematic community service, and entrepreneurship. The TBI curriculum has been adjusted in accordance with Decree No. 1591 of 2022 to support this program. Despite some remaining challenges, the institution's readiness and students' enthusiasm show great potential for the successful implementation of FLIC.

3.2 Discussion

The Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) Study Program at IAIN Takengon demonstrates a relatively high level of readiness in implementing the Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) program.

However, some challenges need to be addressed for optimal implementation. One of the challenges that needs to be addressed based on this research is the lack of academic policies regulating student autonomous activities, such as establishing guidelines for learning outcomes and technical implementation issues for the FLIC program. For example, the institution needs to set clear guidelines on how students can acquire and apply new skills through activities like student exchange, community service, or entrepreneurship included in the FLIC program. According to survey results, the majority of lecturers (63.64%) acknowledge that the study program has adopted activities aligned with the FLIC program, such as research and community service. This aligns with research by Yusuf (2021), Errida & Lotfi, (2021) and Wang et al. (2023), which emphasizes that the success of new programs depends on the institution's readiness to adapt existing programs with new initiatives. However, some lecturers (36.36%) note deficiencies in academic policies and learning outcome guidelines, indicating the need for improvements in these areas. These findings support previous research suggesting that educational program implementation is often hindered by policies not fully adapted to the needs of the new program (Eriksen et al. 2021; Hartadi et al. 2023; Mian et al. 2020; Weiss et al. 2021). Furthermore, research by Diggele et al. (2020) highlights the importance of strategic policy adjustments and comprehensive planning in facilitating the integration of new educational programs. Additionally, Kho et al.'s (2020) work on change management emphasizes the need to address institutional challenges to achieve effective program implementation systematically. In the context of educational innovation, studies by Sa'dullah (2023) and Nevenglosky et al. (2018) also show the role of clear academic guidelines and an adaptive curriculum framework in overcoming implementation barriers, reinforcing the importance of policy refinement in ensuring the success of programs like FLIC.

Student enthusiasm for the Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) program is quite high. Survey results indicate that 86.96% of students know FLIC policies, while 63.64% of lecturers express readiness to encourage active student participation. These findings signify a significant potential for the study program to leverage the FLIC program effectively. Previous research supports these findings, indicating that student enthusiasm and active participation are crucial indicators of the success of innovative learning programs (Lee et al., 2019; Sviridova et al., 2023; Troy Frenley et al., 2020). Furthermore, studies by Khulaifiyah et al. (2021) reveal that student participation in autonomous learning programs enhances critical thinking skills and learning independence. However, some challenges need to be addressed, including the lack of information and funding, as well as the need for curriculum and academic information system adjustments. These findings are consistent with previous research showing that educational program implementation often faces structural obstacles such as funding and infrastructure (Bonga et al., 2024; Luo et al., 2020; Penuel, 2019). Similarly, research by Rohmah et al. (2024) underscores the importance of financial and infrastructure support in the implementation of project-based learning programs. Additionally, a study by Haleem et al. (2022) states that the success of innovative educational programs requires flexibility in the curriculum and information systems to support dynamic learning processes. With appropriate strategies and the involvement of all stakeholders, the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) Study Program can overcome these challenges and achieve success in implementing the FLIC program, as expected by the faculty dean and study program coordinator. This study highlights the importance of institutional adaptation and support from various parties to ensure the success of innovative educational policy implementation. Research by Torres, (2021) and Ramasimu (2023) also emphasizes the need for full stakeholder involvement in the educational change process to achieve desired outcomes.

This study has several advantages over previous studies. It adopts a multisided and comprehensive approach to assess the readiness to implement the FLIC program in the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) Study Program at IAIN Takengon. It not only measures institutional readiness but also

identifies existing challenges and evaluates the enthusiasm and participation of lecturers and students. This study also adds a new perspective by linking the findings with previous research, providing a more in-depth analysis of how readiness factors, challenges, and participation contribute to the successful implementation of FLIC. The approach involves survey analysis and qualitative data, providing a holistic view of the readiness and implementation of this program. This study supports the research by Yudhawasthi (2023), which highlights the collaborative potential of various elements in higher education institutions, including campus museums, as partners in the FLIC program. Findings in this study show that most lecturers have adopted activities aligned with the FLIC program, such as research and community service, consistent with the cross-field collaboration potential identified in Yudhawasthi's (2023) research. Additionally, the enthusiasm of students and lecturers towards the program's implementation also supports the idea that FLIC's success depends on readiness and collaboration among various parties within educational institutions. This study also supports the research by Lubis et al. (2024), which emphasizes the importance of implementation readiness at the institutional level, particularly in aspects of planning, organizing, execution, and control. It was found that the TBI Study Program at IAIN Takengon has demonstrated a fairly high level of readiness in implementing the FLIC program. However, there are still areas, such as academic policy and learning outcome guidelines, that require improvement. This is in line with the research by Lubis et al. (2024), which mentions the importance of effective management and control structures in implementing FLIC at the faculty level.

The study also supports research by Hastangka & Hidayah (2023) in identifying implementation and governance issues in FLIC. Although this study shows a high level of readiness in the TBI Study Program at IAIN Takengon, challenges were identified, such as the need for more information and funding, as well as the need for curriculum and academic information system adjustments. This aligns with the research by Hastangka & Hidayah (2023), which indicates that the fundamental problem in FLIC policy and management lies in the suboptimal implementation and governance aspects. The study does not directly discuss aspects of school mapping, as in the research by Basri et al. (2021). Still, the findings on the need for more information and funding in implementing the FLIC program are related to the need for accurate data on educational conditions. The results of this study indicate that addressing challenges in implementing the FLIC program requires a systematic approach to information provision and infrastructure support, aligning with the school mapping objectives in the research by Basri et al. (2021). The study also supports research by Qorin (2022) in recognizing the benefits and technical and administrative challenges of implementing the FLIC curriculum. It finds that despite high enthusiasm and potential, there are challenges in curriculum adjustment and funding. This is consistent with the findings of Qorin's (2022) study, which identifies technical and administrative issues as obstacles in program implementation. Thus, this study reinforces the idea that active participation and institutional readiness are key to overcoming challenges in implementing FLIC. Therefore, this study shows that institutional readiness, collaboration among various parties, and addressing implementation and governance challenges are key to the successful implementation of the FLIC program in the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) Study Program at IAIN Takengon.

Despite effectively demonstrating the substantial readiness of the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) Study Program at IAIN Takengon in implementing the FLIC program, this study has some notable limitations. Firstly, it is confined to a single institution within the PTKIN (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri) context, meaning the findings cannot be generalized to a broader range of higher education institutions or study programs. Therefore, future research should involve multiple institutions and study programs within and beyond the PTKIN framework to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of the readiness to implement FLIC across different educational contexts. Additionally, this study does not thoroughly explore external factors such as government

policies or economic conditions, which could significantly influence the successful implementation of FLIC within higher education. By including an examination of these external influences, future research could provide more holistic and applicable recommendations that consider the broader environment in which the FLIC program operates. Thus, future studies are encouraged to investigate how these external factors impact FLIC implementation specifically within the PTKIN context, to enhance the overall understanding and applicability of the findings.

Additionally, this study has significant implications for the implementation of the FLIC program for the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) Study Program at IAIN Takengon. To ensure optimal implementation, more adaptive academic policies and learning outcome guidelines need to be adjusted to effectively integrate activities such as research, community service, and internships. Furthermore, improving infrastructure and adequate resource allocation is crucial to addressing challenges related to information and funding. Support and collaboration among stakeholders, including the government, industry, and community, also need to be strengthened to obtain the necessary support in the form of funding, internship opportunities, and collaborative research activities. Capacity building for lecturers and students should also be prioritized by providing training for lecturers on innovative teaching methods and encouraging students to actively participate in activities that enhance critical thinking skills and independence. To ensure the successful implementation of the Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) program, institutions must establish continuous evaluation and feedback mechanisms. These mechanisms will facilitate the monitoring of the program's progress, enabling the identification of areas requiring improvement and ensuring that the program is executed as intended. Feedback from lecturers, students, and external stakeholders is crucial in this process, as it allows for necessary adjustments and improvements to be made. Additionally, this study highlights the significance of considering external factors, such as government policies and economic conditions, that may impact the FLIC program's implementation. By conducting a thorough analysis of the external environment, institutions can formulate more adaptive and responsive strategies, ensuring that the program remains relevant and effective. The implications of this study underscore the importance of a holistic approach involving full engagement from all stakeholders. When equipped with the appropriate strategies, the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) Study Program at IAIN Takengon can fully realise the potential of the FLIC program, thereby offering substantial benefits to the entire academic community and society at large. Through strategic planning and inclusive participation, the program can be tailored to meet the evolving needs of students and the broader educational landscape.

4 Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBI) Study Program at IAIN Takengon possesses substantial readiness to implement the Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus (FLIC) program, with significant support from lecturers and high enthusiasm from students. However, specific challenges need to be addressed, such as adjustments to academic policies, guidelines for learning outcomes, and the provision of adequate information and funding. This research offers insight into the study program's readiness for implementing innovative educational policies and outlines steps for optimal success. Therefore, this study not only contributes to the understanding of institutional readiness in the implementation of FLIC but also offers relevant recommendations to support effective and sustainable educational policies.

The limitations of this research include several aspects that warrant further exploration. Firstly, the study is a case study focused exclusively on the English Education Study Program (Tadris Bahasa Inggris - TBI) at IAIN Takengon, a PTKIN (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri). This focus limits the ability to generalize the findings to other study programs or universities within the PTKIN framework. Therefore, additional research involving a broader range of institutions and study

programs within PTKIN is needed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the readiness for implementing the FLIC program. Secondly, this study does not delve deeply into external factors such as government policies and economic conditions, which play a crucial role in the successful implementation of FLIC in higher education institutions. These external elements significantly influence educational policies and practices. A more in-depth analysis of these external factors would provide more complete and applicable insights, potentially enhancing the implementation strategies for the FLIC program in diverse PTKIN contexts.

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