



EXPLORING STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARD THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Isumarni¹, Sam Hermansyah², Nurul Faradillah³, Nur Hikmah⁴, Sabrina Banowati P⁵, Fatmawati⁶, Ninda Amalia⁷, Putri Chaerunnisa⁸

^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8}Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidrap, Sidenreng Rappang, Indonesia

Author's correspondence. E-mail : Isumarni89@gmail.com, Phone: +625399163933

Submission Track:

||Submitted: 11th December, 2024 ||Reviewed: 17th December, 2024 ||Published :31st December, 2024

Copyright © 2024 Isumarni, Sam Hermansyah, Nurul Faradillah, Nur Hikmah, Sabrina Banowati P, Fatmawati, Ninda Amalia, Putri Chaerunnisa



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

Abstract

This research aims to analyze the role and contributions of students' English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidrap in the Teaching Assistance Program at SMAN 2 Sidrap as part of the Program Kompetensi Kampus Merdeka (PKKM). The Teaching Assistance Program plays a crucial role in supporting students' academic development. This study aims to explore students' perceptions of the effectiveness of Teaching Assistance Program in enhancing their learning experience, academic performance, and engagement. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, utilizing surveys and in-depth interviews with students of SMAN 2 Sidrap. The Data from the survey analyzed by using descriptive statistics analyses to see the students' perception toward the effectiveness of teaching assistance program. The data from interview analyzed used interactive model analysis, there are three concurrent verification flow of activity in the mode data reduction, data display, and data conclusion drawing and verification. The findings reveal that students perceive Teaching Assistance Program as an essential support system that improves their understanding of course material, facilitates personalized learning, and promotes collaborative learning environments. The data also show that student involvement in various aspects of education, including teaching and guiding extracurricular activities where facilitating student character development. Teaching Assistance students not only supported classroom learning but also participated in various activities that improved student discipline and engagement. However, challenges related to the ability and competence of Teaching Assistance students were identified. The study concludes with recommendations to optimize the teaching ability of Teaching Assistance students to better address the students in school needs.

Keywords: Teaching Assistance Program; Independent Campus Program; Student Perception; Educational Effectiveness

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran dan kontribusi mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidrap dalam Program Asistensi Mengajar di SMAN 2 Sidrap sebagai bagian dari Program Kompetensi Kampus Merdeka (PKKM). Program Asistensi Mengajar memainkan peran penting dalam mendukung pengembangan akademik siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi persepsi siswa terhadap efektivitas Program Asistensi Mengajar dalam meningkatkan pengalaman belajar, kinerja akademik, dan keterlibatan mereka. Pendekatan metode campuran digunakan dalam penelitian ini, dengan memanfaatkan survei dan wawancara mendalam dengan siswa SMAN 2 Sidrap. Data dari survey dianalisa menggunakan teknik analisa data



deskriptif statistik untuk melihat persepsi siswa terhadap keefektifan program Asistensi Mengajar. Data dari wawancara dianalisa menggunakan analisis model interaktif yang terdiri dari tiga alur aktivitas verifikasi yang berlangsung secara bersamaan, yaitu reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan serta verifikasi. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa siswa memandang Program Asistensi Mengajar sebagai sistem dukungan penting yang meningkatkan pemahaman mereka terhadap materi pelajaran, memfasilitasi pembelajaran yang dipersonalisasi, dan mempromosikan lingkungan pembelajaran kolaboratif. Data juga menunjukkan bahwa keterlibatan mahasiswa dalam berbagai aspek pendidikan, termasuk pengajaran dan pembimbingan kegiatan ekstrakurikuler, berperan dalam pengembangan karakter siswa. Mahasiswa program Asistensi Mengajar tidak hanya mendukung pembelajaran di kelas, tetapi juga berpartisipasi dalam berbagai kegiatan yang meningkatkan disiplin dan keterlibatan siswa. Namun, ditemukan tantangan terkait kemampuan dan kompetensi mahasiswa asisten pengajar. Penelitian ini diakhiri dengan rekomendasi untuk mengoptimalkan kemampuan mengajar mahasiswa asisten pengajar agar lebih mampu memenuhi kebutuhan siswa di sekolah.

Kata kunci: Program Asistensi Mengajar; Program Kompetisi Kampus Merdeka; Persepsi Siswa; efektivitas pendidikan.

1. Introduction

According to Durrotun (2023) Education is a critical foundation for developing high-quality human resources capable of meeting global challenges. To achieve this goal, education in Indonesia continues to undergo various reforms and innovations to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. One such initiative launched by the government is the Merdeka Campus Program, designed to provide students with the freedom to choose learning activities that align with their interests and talents. In this context, the Teaching Assistance Program was introduced as a form of implementation of the Merdeka Campus policy, aimed at expanding students' learning experiences and improving the quality of education in schools. This program involves students from various fields to act as teaching assistants in schools, allowing them to contribute directly to the education sector while enhancing their knowledge and practical skills.

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2023), the Teaching Assistance Program not only focuses on the development of teaching skills but also hones students' interpersonal, managerial, and leadership abilities. In this program, students are placed in schools as teacher assistants, where they assist in the learning process, provide academic guidance to students, and engage in extracurricular and organizational development activities. This provides students with the opportunity to experience firsthand the challenges and dynamics of formal education, which cannot be obtained from classroom theory alone. By being part of the school environment, students are expected to identify students' needs, understand effective teaching processes, and introduce new innovations in teaching methods.

Research by Hasanah and Suwandi (2021) shows that student involvement as teaching assistants can improve the quality of teaching in schools. The presence of students brings variety in teaching methods and more personalized approaches to students, which in turn enhances student motivation. Furthermore, they argue that students can bring new perspectives to the education sector that may not have been applied by teachers. Through more creative and interactive approaches, students can help encourage greater student participation in the learning process. This program also provides students with real-world experience in classroom management, interacting with students, and developing effective communication skills, all of which are essential competencies for educators.

In addition, the Teaching Assistance Program contributes to improving the quality of the school environment. Students are not only involved in classroom teaching but also actively participate in activities that develop students' talents and interests outside of class hours. For example, students can



assist in managing school organizations, guide extracurricular activities, and run literacy programs. According to Hartati (2019), activities like this can help students develop soft skills such as leadership, teamwork, and good communication. Students' presence as mentors and facilitators in extracurricular activities can build closer relationships with students, which ultimately helps them gain more confidence in developing their potential.

For instance, At SMAN 2 Sidrap the Teaching Assistance Program students provide academic support, facilitate discussions, and address students' questions, thereby enhancing the learning process. Students acting as teaching assistants not only support classroom teaching but also participate in activities that promote literacy, nationalism, and student discipline. They assist in activities such as creating a wall magazine for commemorating national holidays, supporting healthy exercise activities, and managing the school library to encourage students' reading interest. Through these activities, students can directly see how their contributions impact the development of positive values among students, while enriching their own experiences in the educational field.

Despite their pivotal role, limited studies have examined students' perceptions of the effectiveness of teaching assistance programs. Understanding students' perspectives is essential for improving the quality of Teaching Assistance students' and aligning it with students' academic needs. This study aims to explore students' perceptions of Teaching Assistance Program and to identify factors that influence its effectiveness, as well as serve as a reference for higher education institutions in designing similar programs in the future. The research focuses on three key dimensions: (1) students' academic performance, (2) engagement and motivation, and (3) the role of Teaching Assistance Program in promoting student-centered learning.

2. Method

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to obtain comprehensive insights into students' perceptions of Teaching Assistance Program. The quantitative component involves the collection of survey data from a large sample of students, while the qualitative component includes in-depth interviews with selected participants. The participants of the study were 20 students from four different class at SMAN 2 Sidrap. Students were randomly selected to participate in an offline survey, and 8 students were invited for semi-structured interviews. The data from Teaching Assistance students documentation activities during the program also analyzed.

2.1 Data Collection

The survey consists of 20 Likert-scale questions that measure students' perceptions of the effectiveness of Teaching Assistance Program. After that, 8 students choose randomly as a participants in the semi-structured interviews to explore students' in-depth experiences with Teaching Assistance Program, focusing on its impact on their learning outcomes and motivation.

2.2 Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed used interactive model analysis, there are three concurrent verification flow of activity in the mode data reduction, data display, and data conclusion drawing and verification to identify common themes and patterns related to students' perceptions. The analysis was conducted by identifying common patterns in the activities carried out, strategies used to address challenges in the field, and the effects of actions on the school environment, including improvements in student discipline, participation in extracurricular activities, and strengthening the literacy culture. This approach also allows the researcher to understand the role of students as facilitators in developing students' character and skills outside of the classroom, providing a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the Teaching Assistance Program in supporting educational goals in schools.



3. Result and Discussion

The survey results revealed that 85% of students agreed that Teaching Assistance Program had a positive impact on their academic performance. Furthermore, 78% of respondents indicated that Teaching Assistance Program increased their engagement with course material. The regression analysis showed that the availability and competence of Teaching Assistance students were significant predictors of students' perceived effectiveness of Teaching Assistance Program ($p < 0.05$).

The thematic analysis of interview data revealed three key themes academic support, personalized learning, Challenges and areas for improvement. In terms of academic support students emphasized that Teaching Assistance students provided clarification on difficult concepts and helped them prepare for exams.

In personalized learning, students valued the one-on-one assistance offered by Teaching Assistance students, as it allowed them to address specific academic challenges.

In terms of challenges and areas for improvement, students noted that some Teaching Assistance students lacked sufficient subject knowledge and pedagogical skills. Additionally, the limited availability of Teaching Assistance during peak academic periods was a significant concern.

The data from Teaching Assistance students' activities during the four month of Teaching Assistance program were teaching and classroom observation, organization development and extracurricular activities, organization development and extracurricular activities, instilling school values, healthy activities and also library management and literacy program.

Teaching and classroom observation where Teaching Assistance students acting as teaching assistants were responsible for teaching and observing classroom activities. Students taught materials such as "Descriptive Text" and "Narrative Text" to 10th and 11th grade students using interactive methods like group discussions and educational games. This method enabled students to learn more enjoyably, which positively impacted their understanding of the material.

Organization development and extracurricular activities is Teaching Assistance student participation in reactivating the Smada English Student Community (SESC) organizations, it is important in encouraging students' interest in English. Hartati (2019) states that forming and nurturing student organizations can enhance soft skills like leadership and communication abilities. Under students' guidance, activities in SESC, such as storytelling, speech, and English discussions, provide space for students to develop their language skills and confidence.

Instilling School Values is one important role of Teaching Assistance students at SMAN 2 Sidrap is instilling discipline. At the school, students used a persuasive strategy by reducing discipline points to encourage students to follow rules.

Healthy activities in addition to academics where Teaching Assistance students were also involved in healthy exercise activities that aimed to strengthen relationships between students and teachers.

Library management and literacy program where Teaching Assistance Students played a key role in supporting literacy programs by managing the school library and enhancing students' interest in reading.

Creating wall magazines one of the literacy activities carried out by Teaching Assistance students was creating wall magazines on historical themes, such as the commemoration of G30S/PKI and other activities.

Assisting School Activities where Teaching Assistance students also assisted in various school activities, such as Independence Day celebrations and SISPALA basic training.

The findings suggest that Teaching Assistance Program is perceived as an effective mechanism for academic support and engagement. Students value the personalized attention provided by Teaching Assistance students, which enhances their learning experience. However, the effectiveness of Teaching Assistance Program depends on the competence and availability of Teaching Assistance students.



Institutions should address these challenges by providing comprehensive training for Teaching Assistance students and ensuring adequate scheduling to meet students' needs. This aligns with the findings of previous research, Hasanah and Suwandi (2021) shows that student involvement as teaching assistants can improve the quality of teaching in schools. The same study found that students rated the teaching effectiveness of trained teaching assistants higher, particularly in composition courses, indicating that comprehensive training can improve teaching performance. The significance findings of this research is provided emphasize specific aspects of the Teaching Assistance Program and its effectiveness from students from the students' perspective, in which emphasize the student experience of the Teaching Assistance Program. This reasearch also focus on other benefits, such as improved overall classroom management and administrative efficiency.

4. Conclusion

The research results indicate that students play a significant role in supporting educational activities at SMAN 2 Sidrap through the Teaching Assistance Program. In the classroom, students act not only as teachers but also as companions who create interactive and enjoyable learning environments. The students' involvement in extracurricular activities and the development of student organizations contributes to the formation of student character. Moreover, their participation in activities like healthy exercise helps foster a sense of togetherness and promotes a healthy lifestyle. Therefore, the Teaching Assistance Program has brought positive impacts for students, teachers, and the school environment as a whole. It is recommended that this program continue and be developed further, as it provides valuable practical experience for students and supports the development of student character.

This study highlights the crucial role of Teaching Assistance Program in supporting students' academic success. Students perceive Teaching Assistance Program as an effective initiative that promotes academic engagement, facilitates personalized learning, and enhances their overall learning experience. However, certain challenges must be addressed to better program in the future and institutions should provide training programs focused on both subject knowledge and teaching pedagogy, also the regular feedback from students need to improve the quality and relevance of Teaching Assistance Program.

Future research could explore the role of Teaching Assistance Program in online learning environments, especially considering the shift to digital education. Additionally, further studies could examine the long-term impact of Teaching Assistance Program on students' academic performance.

References

- Anggawirya, A. M., Prihandoko, L. A., & Rahman, F. (2021). Teacher's role on teaching English during the pandemic in a blended classroom. *International Joined Conference on Social Science*, 458-463. Atlantis Press.
- Bahri, S., & Arafah, N. (2020). Analisis manajemen SDM dalam mengembangkan strategi pembelajaran di era new normal. *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education*, 1(1), 20-40.
- Daryanto, & Karim, S. (2017). *Pembelajaran Abad 21*. Gava Media.
- Dewi, N., Kartika, M., & Suryani, R. (2020). The influence of teacher interaction styles on students' interest in learning English. *Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 15(3), 123-134.



- Durrotun, M. (2023). Strategies in managing human resource development in the 21st-century education era: A case study of Platinum Qur'an Kindergarten. *Golden Age*, 8(1), 13–23.
- English, D. W., Brokaw, A. J., Goulet, L. L., & Perreault, H. R. (2019). The value of undergraduate teaching assistants: A study of student satisfaction and learning. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 9(2), 123–137.
- Farah, I., & Wicaksono, A. (2024). The effectiveness of teaching assistant programs in meeting partner schools' needs: Feedback from teachers and school coordinators. *Educational Practices Journal*, 11(2), 45–58.
- Filz, T., & Gurung, R. A. R. (2013). The role of undergraduate teaching assistants in enhancing student learning: What undergraduates teach us about teaching undergraduates. *Teaching of Psychology*, 40(2), 143–147.
- Garcia, L., Smith, J., & Thomas, R. (2022). The role of teaching assistants in promoting student engagement: A case study of higher education institutions. *Journal of Educational Support*, 15(2), 45–63.
- Hande, S., Mohammed, C. A., & Komattil, R. (2014). Teaching skills: The art of teaching medical students. *Medical Teacher*, 36(7), 599–602.
- Hasanah, N., Imsar, I., & Suwandi, S. (2021). The effectiveness of the zakat, infaq, and alms (ZIS) fund distribution program in the form of business capital assistance on mustahik income levels. *Al-Kharaj: Journal of Islamic Economic and Business*, 3(1), 1–15.
- Hartati, S. (2019). The role of Hadang traditional sports as experiential learning media in improving soft skills of STKIP Muhammadiyah Kuningan students. *Journal of Physical Education and Sports*, 8(2), 152–160.
- Huberman, M., & Miles, M. B. (2002). *The qualitative researcher's companion*. Sage.
- Jones, P. (2021). Student support systems: The impact of teaching assistance programs on student success. *Higher Learning Review*, 19(3), 78–99.
- Junaidi, J., Hamuddin, B., Wendy, S., Fathu, R., & Tatum, D. (2020). ICT usage in teaching English in Pekanbaru: Exploring junior high school teachers' problems. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29(03), 5052–5063.
- Kamran, M., Ahmed, S., & Noreen, F. (2022). Qualitative research methods: A focus on subjective experiences and participant perceptions. *Journal of Social Science Research*, 15(3), 45–58.
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. (2023). *Nomenclature of the Ministry, Organizational Units, and Work Units in English*.
- Nasrah, S., & Elihami, R. (2021). The role of education in human development: A perspective from tertiary students. *Educational Research International*, 7(1), 45–50.



- Nitami, R., & Ardi, F. (2023). Preparing English teachers for the future: A study of the English education program at Sulawesi Barat University. *Journal of Teacher Education and Training*, 14(3), 56–72.
- Rahman, F. (2016). The strategy of teaching literature through language-based methods: A communicative approach. *Annual Seminar on English Language Studies*, 1, 156–170.
- Rasyid, M. R., Halim, H., & Nasir, A. (2023). Exploring students' perceptions through guided interviews: A qualitative approach in educational research. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 28(1), 67–79.
- Restiningtyas, P., Kusumawardani, R., & Dwi, S. (2022). Teaching assistant programs: Impact on student learning and teacher behavior. *Journal of Educational Studies*, 19(4), 234–250.
- Smith, A., & Brown, K. (2020). Bridging the gap: The role of teaching assistants in higher education. *Academic Insights*, 12(1), 23–41.
- Sewagegn, A. A., & Dessie, Y. D. (2021). Preparing students for the global workforce: The role of higher education institutions. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 43(4), 345–362.
- Sipahutar, E., Nasution, S., & Harahap, S. (2023). Developing professional teachers: Bridging theory and practice in teacher education programs. *Educational Practices Quarterly*, 29(2), 89–105.
- Sipahutar, H., Manurung, T., Sidabutar, R., & Wulan, A. (2023). The effectiveness of teaching skills in classroom settings: An evaluation of teaching assistants in the English Department. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 28(1), 77–89.
- Sudewi, P. W., Isma, A., & Reski, R. (2024). 12th grader's perception regarding tertiary students' teaching practices. *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 7(3).
- Sugiyono. (2012). *Metode penelitian kuantitatif, kualitatif dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- You, A., Be, M., & In, I. (2022). Developing 21st-century skills in chemistry classrooms: Opportunities and challenges of STEAM integration. *Proceedings of the 30th Annual Meeting*, April 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1063/1.4995107>.
- Yusuf, M. (2014). *Metode penelitian: Kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan penelitian gabungan*. Kencana.