

# Factors Influencing Students Decisions to Join the Independent Student Exchange Program at Warmadewa University, Denpasar

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**Abstract:** The Merdeka Campus is a policy that aims to encourage students to master various knowledge that is useful for entering the world of work. Merdeka Campus provides opportunities for students to choose the courses they will take. The existence of the concept of independent learning certainly aims to provide flexibility to students to study outside the campus. This program is expected to be able to increase the competence of graduates, both soft skills and hard skills, so that they are more prepared and relevant to the needs of the world of work. One of the implementations of Independent Campus Learning is the Independent Student Exchange Program (PPMM). Warmadewa University in the odd semester of 2022/2023 has implemented the PPMM Program and has accepted 141 PPMM students from various PTNs and PTS throughout Indonesia. This research was conducted to determine the factors that influence student decisions to take PPMM at Warmadewa University. The research sample was determined based on random sampling where the number of samples was determined by the slovin method, as many as 104 people. Data collection using a questionnaire with google forms. Data analysis techniques using factor analysis. The main factors that influence students' decisions to take part in PPMM at Warmadewa University are the curriculum, courses offered, lecturer competence and promotion through social media and the university's website.

**Keywords:** Accreditation, Cost, Curriculum, Lecturer competence, Location, Physical evidence, References, Reputation, Promotion, Student decision.

## 1. Introduction

Facing the competitive development of science and technology, tertiary institutions need to develop an appropriate and relevant curriculum so that students' competitiveness increases rapidly [1]. This idea was the basis for the Merdeka-Learning Campus Merdeka policy initiated by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Nadiem Makarim in early 2020.

The Merdeka Campus is a policy that aims to encourage students to master various knowledge that is useful for entering the world of work. Merdeka Campus provides opportunities for students to choose the courses they will take. The existence of the concept of independent learning certainly aims to provide flexibility to students to study outside the campus. This program is expected to be able to increase the competence of

graduates, both soft skills and hard skills, so that they are more prepared and relevant to the needs of the times, as well as to prepare graduates as future leaders of the nation who are superior, moral and ethical [2].

Implementation of the Independent Campus Learning System (MBKM), students can do learning through student exchanges, internships or practical work in various agencies, teaching assistance in educational units, carrying out research, humanitarian projects, entrepreneurial activities, independent studies/projects, and building villages/ KKNT. This learning system is implemented in an effort to improve the quality of education to produce graduates who have high creativity, are innovative, have competitive advantages so they are able to face global challenges [3].

To support the Merdeka Campus program, specifically fulfilling students' rights to be able to study outside the study program and/or the higher education institution where they are studying, the Directorate General of Higher Education is organizing the Independent Student Exchange Program (PPMM) starting in 2021. The Independent Student Exchange Program opens opportunities for students to participate in the learning process on campuses of any tertiary institution in Indonesia as part of an effort to strengthen and or expand their competence. Besides that, through the Independent Student Exchange program, students are expected to be able to increase national insight, love for the motherland, and have an understanding of diversity and tolerance. Students will have a broad understanding of the diversity of cultures, customs, ethnic groups, languages and various potential wealth of resources and other potentials owned by the nation and state [4].

Warmadewa University as one of the private universities in Bali also implements the Freedom to Learn on the Independent Campus (MBKM) policy, one of which is by implementing the Independent Student Exchange Program (PPMM). In the second year of the 2022/2023 Odd Semester PPMM was held for the first time and the number of students who registered was 335 students from state universities and private universities throughout Indonesia and who successfully passed and were accepted at Warmadewa University were 141 people. The courses offered are 70 courses from 13 study programs [5].

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Purchasing decisions are a series of processes that start with the consumer knowing the problem, seeking information about a particular product or brand and evaluating the product or brand how well each of these alternatives can solve the problem, which then leads to a purchase decision [6]. From this definition there are five things that are closely related to decision making, namely (1) in the decision-making process nothing is done by chance, (2) decision making must be based on certain systematics, (3) before a problem can be solved properly, the nature of the problem must be clearly known. (4) problem solving must be based on facts that are collected systematically, properly processed and stored regularly so that the data facts can be trusted and are up to date. The decision of students to take part in the PPMM program at Warmadewa University has certainly gone through various careful considerations by analyzing various factors, so it is necessary to conduct research to find out the factors that influence students' decisions to take part in the PMM Program at Warmadewa University, as material for consideration in making subsequent policies concerning Merdeka Study at Merdeka Campus at Warmadewa University.

## 2. Literature Review

### A. Independent Student Exchange Program (PMM)

The Merdeka Student Exchange Program is a student exchange program for one semester from one regional cluster to another which provides a diversity experience and a maximum credit transfer system of +/- 20 credits. The Independent Student Exchange is based on the courses offered by tertiary institutions according to the advantages and characteristics of the main scientific pattern (academic excellence), and supports the MBKM program [7].

The objectives of implementing the Independent Student Exchange (PMM), namely (1) Increasing national insight, integrity, solidarity, and a container for national adhesives among students throughout Indonesia, through intercultural learning; (2) Develop leadership abilities and soft skills of students who are able to get along with various backgrounds to increase the value of unity and nationalism; (3) Providing opportunities for students to gain learning experience at other tertiary institutions through credit transfer/transfer and credit acquisition, by attending lectures, both courses inside and outside their study program as part of the independent learning program; (4) Providing experience on diversity, inspiration, reflection, and national social contributions through the Nusantara Module; (5) Improving the quality of higher education through strengthening the comparative advantage (academic excellent) of each tertiary institution; (6) Improving access to and quality of information technology-based learning by implementing a distance education system (PJJ) for students in tertiary institutions throughout the country; and (7) Supporting the MBKM program, in order to strengthen and increase the competency of university graduates.

### B. Purchase Decision

Consumers buy a product not solely because they are

pursuing functional benefits, but more than that they are also looking for certain meanings (such as self-image, prestige, and even personality. This means that a consumer's buying decision is influenced by many factors that differentiate one from another. Decisions Purchasing is a consumer decision that is influenced by the financial economy, technology, politics, culture, product, price, location, promotion, physical, evidence, people and process, thus forming an attitude for consumers to process all information and draw conclusions in the form of responses that arise, what product to buy [8].

According to Kotler & Keller [9], the factors that influence why someone buys a product to meet their needs and desires, namely: (1) Cultural factors, which consist of: Culture, that is, a person creates a set of values, perceptions, and behaviors from family and its important institutions, and Sub-Culture, namely those consisting of nationality, religion, taste, geographical area; (2) Social factors, namely factors in relatively permanent divisions of society such as family, reference groups, roles and status; (3) Personal factors, namely purchasing decisions based on personal or self, such as age, occupation, economic scope, lifestyle and personality, self-concept; (4) Psychological factors, in the selection of purchases these factors affect the buyer's decisions such as motivation, perception, learning, beliefs and attitudes.

Decision making is a process of selecting the best alternative from several alternatives systematically to be used as a way to solve a problem and achieve the desired goal. Ruhayat [10] in his research stated that there were 21 variables grouped into 7 factors that influenced the decision of students to choose to study at a tertiary institution, namely, product factors, study program image factors, physical evidence factors, people factors, reference group factors, motivational factors, and personal factors. Of the seven factors, physical evidence and product factors are the most important or dominant factors that can influence student decisions. Students study at tertiary institutions.

Akhiri [11] states that the factors that influence students' decisions to choose a tertiary institution are the cost of education, the image of the study program and educational facilities. Suryani and Ginting [12] state that a student's decision to choose a tertiary institution is determined by factors: process, physical evidence, references, motivation, accreditation, student activity, cost, social background, reputation, location and promotion.

In this study, the variables that are thought to influence students' decisions to take part in the PMM program at Warmadewa University can be identified, consisting of: (1) Physical Evidence, the condition or physical form of the College, namely the condition of the building, computer center, laboratory, teaching facilities; (2) References, sources of reference for students in seeking initial information before deciding to choose a tertiary institution, namely information from friends, information from family; (3) Accreditation, activities carried out to determine the eligibility of educational programs and units for formal and non-formal education at every level and type of education based on open criteria, namely the rating given by BAN-PT; (4) Costs, all financial sacrifices



From Table 2 it can be seen that all values in the Anti-image Correlation have a code letter (a) which means the sign for Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA). It is known that the MSA value of each variable studied is > 0.50, meaning that the second requirement in factor analysis is fulfilled, so that the analysis can be continued.

*Output Communalities Table*

This Communalities table shows the value of the variable under study whether it is able to explain the factor or not. Variables are considered capable of explaining factors if the Extraction value is greater than 0.50. Based on Table 3, it can be seen that the Extraction value of all research variables is > 0.50. This means that all research variables are able to explain the factors that are formed.

Table 3  
Communalities Table

	Initial	Extraction
Building	1.000	0.726
Facility	1.000	0.553
Friend reference	1.000	0.703
Family reference	1.000	0.826
Accreditation	1.000	0.656
Tuition fee	1.000	0.661
Cost of living	1.000	0.657
The people's view	1.000	0.582
Absorbed graduates	1.000	0.592
Location	1.000	0.746
Subject	1.000	0.795
Curriculum	1.000	0.795
Teacher competence	1.000	0.672
Mouth promotion	1.000	0.690
Medsos promotion	1.000	0.715
Web promotion	1.000	0.678

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

*Output Total Variance Explained Table*

In this table, what needs to be considered is the Initial Eigenvalues and Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings. The Initial Eigenvalues variant shows the factors that are formed. Whereas in the Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings section it shows the number of variations or the number of factors that can be formed. Where the requirements are to become a factor, the Eigenvalue must be greater than 1. Table 4 can be seen from the 16 research variables that are able to form 4 factors, namely

Table 4  
Total variance explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.437	46.479	46.479	7.437	46.479	46.479
2	1.537	9.605	56.084	1.537	9.605	56.084
3	1.070	6.688	62.773	1.070	6.688	62.773
4	1.004	6.273	69.046	1.004	6.273	69.046
5	0.924	5.776	74.822			
6	0.804	5.025	79.847			
7	0.686	4.290	84.136			
8	0.566	3.537	87.674			
9	0.413	2.580	90.253			
10	0.363	2.270	92.523			
11	0.347	2.168	94.691			
12	0.248	1.551	96.242			
13	0.227	1.419	97.661			
14	0.188	1.175	98.836			
15	0.139	0.866	99.702			
16	0.048	0.298	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

factors 1, 2, 3, 4 because they have initial eigenvalues > 1.

*Output Component Matrix Table*

This Component Matrix shows the correlation value or relationship between each variable and the factors that will be formed. Because usually there are variables that enter into 2 or more factors with a correlation value of > 0.5, it is necessary to do a rotated Component Matrix analysis. From Table 5 it can be seen that there are still variables included in 2 factors, namely the building is included in factors 1 and 3. Family references are included in factors 1 and 2. The course variables offered are included in factors 1 and 2, so an analysis is needed rotated Component Matrix.

Table 5  
Component matrix

	Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>			
	1	2	3	4
Building	0.583	-0.092	-0.609	0.087
Facility	0.736	-0.039	-0.096	-0.003
Friend reference	0.432	0.442	0.528	-0.205
Family reference	0.647	0.588	-0.073	-0.237
Accreditation	0.748	-0.099	-0.296	0.000
Tuition fee	0.777	0.229	-0.025	0.065
Cost of living	0.617	0.075	0.308	0.419
The people's view	0.665	0.101	-0.145	0.331
Absorbed graduates	0.722	0.119	0.217	0.097
Location	0.617	-0.375	0.180	0.439
Subject	0.606	-0.588	0.286	0.033
Curriculum	0.758	-0.360	0.077	-0.292
Teacher competence	0.609	-0.350	-0.065	-0.418
Mouth promotion	0.682	0.391	-0.171	0.206
Medsos promotion	0.805	-0.030	0.045	-0.253
Web promotion	0.798	0.047	0.015	-0.196

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 4 components extracted.

*Output Rotated Component Matrix Table*

This table is used to ensure that a variable is included in which factor group, it can be determined by looking at the largest correlation value between the variable and the formed factor (Component).

The recapitulation of variables as component factors that are formed in accordance with Table 6 can be seen in 7. Based on Table 7 it can be explained that Factor 1 is formed from the variables of Curriculum, courses, teaching competencies, promotions through social media and through university

websites. Factor 2 is formed from the building, word of mouth, accreditation, community views, tuition fees and learning facilities. Factor 3 is formed from the variables of friend references, family references, graduates are quickly absorbed in the labor market. Factor 4 is formed from strategic location variables and cost of living.

Table 6  
Rotated component matrix

	Rotated Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>			
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Building	0.306	0.784	-0.116	0.065
Facility	0.433	0.471	0.252	0.283
Friend reference	0.126	-0.105	0.809	0.147
Family reference	0.159	0.497	0.737	-0.099
Accreditation	0.465	0.616	0.120	0.217
Tuition fee	0.262	0.521	0.479	0.302
Cost of living	0.065	0.229	0.360	0.686
The people's view	0.112	0.583	0.212	0.430
Absorbed graduates	0.286	0.287	0.480	0.444
Location	0.308	0.222	-0.029	0.775
Subject	0.670	-0.014	-0.032	0.587
Curriculum	0.808	0.204	0.187	0.256
Teacher competence	0.789	0.201	0.095	0.034
Mouth promotion	0.026	0.652	0.449	0.250
Medsos promotion	0.619	0.344	0.421	0.193
Web promotion	0.536	0.395	0.444	0.195

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

Table 7

Variable recapitulation as component factors formed

	Factor			
	1	2	3	4
Building		0.784		
Facility		0.471		
Friend reference			0.809	
Family reference			0.737	
Accreditation		0.616		
Tuition fee		0.521		
Cost of living				0.686
The people's view		0.583		
Absorbed graduates			0.480	
Location				0.775
Subject	0.670			
Curriculum	0.808			
Teacher competence	0.789			
Mouth promotion		0.652		
Medsos promotion	0.619			
Web promotion	0.536			

*Output Component Transformation Matrix Table*

The Component Transformation Matrix indicates whether the factors formed are feasible or not to summarize all the variables analyzed. If the correlation value of all components is > 0.5, then the factors have summarized all the variables studied.

Table 8  
Component transformation matrix

Component	1	2	3	4
1	<b>0.759</b>	0.555	0.441	0.431
2	-0.579	<b>0.540</b>	0.721	-0.295
3	0.035	-0.759	<b>0.567</b>	0.453
4	-0.592	0.243	-0.261	<b>0.723</b>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Based on Table 8 it can be explained that the correlation values of all components > 0.5 so that it can be concluded that all the factors formed have included all the variables studied.

*B. Discussion*

In accordance with the results of the data analysis described earlier, there are four factors that influence students' decisions to take part in the Independent Student Exchange Program at Warmadewa University. These factors will be explained as follows.

*The first factor consists of curriculum, courses, teaching competence, promotion through social media and through the university's website*

The curriculum holds a key position in an educational institution, because it relates to determining the direction, content and process of education, which ultimately determines the type and quality of graduates. The implementation of Independent Learning on an Independent Campus (MBKM) is carried out by preparing a curriculum as a forum for recognizing independent student learning/activities/activities. The implementation of Merdeka Learning Campus Merdeka (MBKM) itself is based on demands for the development of knowledge, competence and skills in the 21st century, to the importance of changes in lecture activities.

In order to meet the demands, dynamics and currents of change that are so disruptive as a result of advances in digital technology and the need for links and matches between the world of education and the world of business and industry, a study program curriculum is needed that emphasizes the principle of relevance in an effort to prepare students to enter the world of work. Therefore, study programs are required to be able to design and implement their curricula through creative and innovative learning processes so that students can achieve learning outcomes covering aspects of attitude, knowledge, and skills optimally. Study programs are challenged in developing curricula that are adaptive and able to adapt to the increasingly rapid developments of the times without departing from the goal of producing graduates according to predetermined learning outcomes. This curriculum is the basis for the first considerations for students participating in PPMM at Warmadewa University.

The formation of courses as an embodiment of operational steps in implementing the independent campus learning curriculum can be done by obtaining courses with credit weights that have been determined by the study program. Study materials and learning materials can be updated or developed according to developments in science and technology, social dynamics and the direction of scientific development of the study program. The courses offered by the study program are factors that influence students' decisions to take PPMM at Warmadewa University.

The competence of lecturers in charge of courses is also the main factor influencing students' decisions to take part in PPMM at Warmadewa University. UU no. 14 of 2005 article 45 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. states that Lecturers must have academic qualifications, competencies, educator certificates, physically and mentally healthy, and meet other

qualifications required by the higher education unit where they are assigned, and have the ability to realize national education goals. To carry out its main duties, in transforming, developing and disseminating science, technology and art through education, research and community service, lecturers are required to have at least the qualifications and competencies required as lecturers. One of the lecturer competencies can be seen from the lecturer certification. Lecturer certification tests are carried out through portfolio assessment on perceptual assessment, self-description, rank, English proficiency, and Academic Potential Tests, so that lecturers who have passed certification are expected to have competence as lecturers.

Lecturer competencies include: pedagogic competence, personal competence, social competence, and professional competence obtained through professional education, training and professional experience. Pedagogic competence is the ability of lecturers to manage students (students), where lecturers as educators and teachers are able to design learning, how to convey information and knowledge to students, and are able to carry out evaluations and assessments. Personal competence is related to ethics in daily activities. How to speak, behave, and how to dress. As teachers and educators, lecturers must maintain behavior and actions to be role models for their students. Social competence is the ability to carry out social interactions with students, colleagues, employees and the community to support education. Professional competence is the ability to master material broadly and deeply. Where lecturers are not only skilled in designing research, but also able to develop and apply the results of their research in society. The competence of this lecturer is also the first factor that is considered by students to participate in PPMM at Warmadewa University.

The next variable which is the first factor that influences students' decisions to take part in PPMM at Warmadewa University is promotions carried out through social media and websites. Social media is internet-based media that allows users the opportunity to interact and present themselves, both directly and indirectly, with a wide audience. Promotion through social media Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and the Warmadewa University website plays a very important role in students' decisions to take part in PPMM at Unwar.

*The second factor that influences students' decisions to take part in PPMM at Warmadewa University consists of buildings, facilities, accreditation, tuition fees, public opinion and word of mouth*

One of the requirements for tertiary institutions to be able to organize PPMM is to provide adequate facilities, in terms of buildings, accommodation facilities, access to transportation and telecommunications so that they can properly organize learning both offline and online. Another requirement is the accreditation of a minimum study program B. Tuition fees are also a variable that is considered, so that it is in accordance with the fees received from the Higher Education. The good and positive view of the community towards tertiary institutions and the existence of word-of-mouth promotion are the second factors that are considered by students to take part in PPMM at Warmadewa University.

*The third factor that influences students' decisions to take PPMM at the University consists of friend references, family references and the absorption of graduates in the world of work*

Reference is information that is used as a reference or guide with the aim of reinforcing a statement. References from friends and positive outcomes strengthen students' decisions to take PPMM at Warmadewa University. A higher education institution is said to be relevant if all or at least most of its graduates can be quickly absorbed by the world of work according to their fields and strata rankings, both at the local, national and international levels. Of course, the level of absorption by the world of work is very dependent on the quality of graduates, which is built from the high integration of elements of skills, knowledge and abilities of the graduates themselves. Information about the number of Warmadewa University alumni who are absorbed in the world of work is the third factor that influences students' decisions to take part in PPMM at Warmadewa University.

*The fourth factor that influences students' decisions to take part in the Independent Student Exchange Program at Warmadewa University consists of location and cost of living*

Location is a strategic location of the university that can be reached by students and provides various conveniences for students in meeting their needs. The location of Warmadewa University in the center of Denpasar City, which is easy to reach and makes it easy for students to fulfill all their needs, is one of the variables that influence students' decision to take part in PPMM at Warmadewa University. In deciding to move to the city where the university is located, students need to take into account the cost of living. The cost of living is a measurement based on the amount of money needed to cover daily expenses such as rent, health and food. The cost of living is the final variable that influences students' decisions to take PPMM at Warmadewa University.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion of the factors that influence students' decisions to take part in the Independent Student Exchange Program at Warmadewa University, the conclusions of the research results are as follows: (1) The first factor influencing students' decisions to take part in PPMM at Warmadewa University consists of curriculum, courses offered, the competence of lecturers in charge of courses and promotions through social media and the University's website; (2) The second factor influencing students' decisions to take part in PPMM at Warmadewa University consists of buildings and teaching facilities, study program accreditation, tuition fees, public views of Unwar's existence and word of mouth; (3) The third factor influencing students' decisions to take PPMM at Warmadewa University consists of references students receive from friends and family, as well as information about Unwar graduates who are quickly absorbed in the world of work; and (4) The fourth factor influencing students' decisions to take part in PPMM at Warmadewa University consists of strategic location and cost of living.

In an effort to increase the number of students participating

in PPMM at Warmadewa University, suggestions can be made, namely (1) Study Programs at Warmadewa University should conduct periodic curriculum reviews, where the curriculum contains up-to-date learning material and is relevant to future economic and business needs. , has a global perspective that is aligned with the vision, mission, goals, strategies and learning outcomes; (2) Warmadewa University should be more active in promoting using social media and the University's website, providing complete and up-to-date information so that people are more familiar with the activities organized by Unwar; and (3) Teaching staff should improve their competence not only through formal education, but also by participating in competency training according to their fields.

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