

Article

Student Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Field Experience Practicum in the Department of Islamic Community Development

Abdullah¹, Muaz Tanjung²

^{1,2} Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

Abstract: Field experience practicum in the Department of Islamic Community Development often faces challenges that result in gaps between theory and practice, as well as suboptimal impact on students and communities. This study aims to explore students' perceptions of practicum effectiveness, focusing on influencing factors and challenges faced. The methods used included interviews with students and analysis of relevant documents to collect data on their experiences and recommendations. The results showed that students faced various challenges, such as time constraints, support from authorities at practicum sites, and gaps between theory and practice. The implications of this study indicate the need for a more holistic approach in practicum design in order to improve the quality of education and the relevance of the curriculum, as well as provide greater benefits for students and society. Thus, the results of this study are expected to guide educational institutions in improving practicum experiences in the future.

Keywords: Student Perceptions; Field Experience Practices; Islamic Community Development; Practicum.

1. Introduction

Higher education plays an important role in preparing students to face the challenges of the world of work, especially in fields that require direct interaction with the community. Field experience practicum program is one of the learning approaches that has been proven effective in developing students' practical skills. Field Experience Practicum is a course that gives students the opportunity to apply the theory learned in class to a real context (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000). This practicum is applied to majors related to social development and community development (Vanclay, 2003). The experience gained by students directly in the field can improve their theoretical understanding. In addition, practical skills needed in managing community empowerment programs can be obtained by students through this experience (Harris & Mwaanga, 2011).

The effectiveness of this field practice is often influenced by the way students perceive the program. Of course, student perceptions of this practicum course can be used as an important indicator in evaluating the success of experiential learning methods. Students' success in integrating theory and practice Perceptions usually show positive things, while less supportive perceptions can be a sign of obstacles in the learning process, both in terms of lecturer guidance, curriculum, or available facilities (Allen & Wright, 2014). Given the relevance of this program to the needs of students in building competence in the field of community development, the managers of the Islamic Community Development Department certainly need to understand how they assess the effectiveness of this practicum.

In-depth studies on student perceptions in the Department of Islamic Community Development, Faculty of Da'wah and Communication, State Islamic University of North Sumatra are still very limited, although many studies have discussed the effectiveness of field experience in higher education. The focus of the research that has been done before generally looks at learning outcomes quantitatively, without exploring in depth the views of students regarding the effectiveness of the learning process (Norris & Ortega, 2000).

Correspondence:

Abdullah
abdullah@uinsu.ac.id

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Given this void, this research is important to look at student perceptions in the practical learning process.

Understanding student perceptions of the effectiveness of field experience practicum courses in the Islamic Community Development Department has strategic value for improving the quality of education. Relevant recommendations for curriculum development that are more responsive to student needs are certainly highly expected from the results of this study, in addition to adjusting to the challenges in the field. In addition, academic contributions to the literature in the field of practicum education that have practical implications for the development of practicum programs in the future are also expected to be obtained from this research (Ruhanen, 2006).

In the Department of Islamic Community Development, Faculty of Da'wah and Communication, UIN North Sumatera, Field Experience Practicum has become an important component, however, there are a number of problems related to student perceptions of the effectiveness of its implementation. The main problem that will be in this study is that students' perceptions of the Field Experience Practicum course are very important to find out how they assess the benefits and effectiveness of this course. This perception includes students' understanding of the extent to which this practicum can develop the skills and competencies needed in the world of work, the relationship of the course to their study program, and the coherence of the material with the field situation.

The second problem is related to the realization of this program, which refers to the realization of practicum courses carried out by students in the field, including the activities they carry out during this program (Pedersen & Liu, 2003). This includes how students apply the knowledge and skills gained during lectures in the context of the community. This research will examine the extent to which students can carry out their duties in identifying and addressing problems in the community, as well as how they collaborate with the community in solving existing social problems.

The third problem studied related to actualization refers to the extent to which this course is successful in improving student competence in the field of Islamic community development (Niyozov & Memon, 2011). Field experience practicum is designed to develop practical skills that are indispensable in the world of work, such as the ability to communicate with the community, solve social problems, and analyze various social phenomena in the community. This study will examine the extent to which this practicum activity supports the development of student competencies in various aspects, such as social skills, understanding of community dynamics, and the ability to design appropriate development programs.

Another problem studied is the obstacles faced by students in carrying out practicum activities in the field. This is important to identify so that the learning process and implementation of this course can be improved (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). These obstacles can be in the form of internal factors, such as inadequate understanding or skills before going to the field, or external factors such as problems in establishing cooperation with the community or other related parties, limited resources, and challenges related to cultural or social differences that exist in the field. By knowing the obstacles faced by students, the faculty and university can design more effective learning programs and provide solutions to overcome these obstacles.

Based on these problems, it is considered important to conduct in-depth research on student perceptions of the effectiveness of field experience practicum, especially in the context of education in the Islamic Community Development Department of UIN North Sumatra. Educational institutions will find it difficult to conduct proper evaluation to improve the quality of the program, if they do not know clearly how students assess their experience. The purpose of this study is to answer these problems by further exploring student perceptions, program realization, program actualization which refers to the extent to which this course is successful in improving student competence in the field of Islamic community development and the obstacles faced by students during the practicum in the field.

Several studies conducted mainly in departments related to social development and community development have highlighted the importance of field experience practicum as an integral part of higher education (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). These studies show that practical field experience can broaden students' understanding of concepts taught in the classroom and enhance relevant skills to be applied in the world of work. The pedagogical benefits of this experiential learning method have also been revealed in several studies, especially in terms of developing students' communication, leadership and social skills. However, in-depth exploration of students' subjective experiences and perceptions during practicum is lacking. The focus of previous research was mostly on quantitative learning outcomes, such as improved academic grades or formal assessments from lecturers.

Thus this study not only offers practical implications that can be applied to improve the effectiveness of higher education in the field of community development, but also makes a significant academic contribution through a new understanding of student perceptions. Therefore, this research has important novelty and relevant justification, both from an academic point of view and from a practical perspective.

2. Materials and Methods

The approach used in this research is descriptive qualitative to examine student perceptions of the effectiveness of field experience practicum in the Islamic Community Development Department of UIN North Sumatra. This approach allows researchers to explore students' understanding, views, and subjective experiences in depth related to the implementation of practicum in the field (Vuoskoski, 2014). The focus of this research is on students' understanding of the effectiveness of the program in building practical skills relevant to Islamic values-based community development (Mufidah, 2019).

Data collection was conducted using two main methods, namely in-depth interviews and document studies. Exploring students' perceptions of the effectiveness of field experience practicum was conducted using in-depth interview techniques. The interviews were directed to relevant aspects while still providing flexibility to informants to share their views, therefore the interviews were semi-structured (De Fina, 2019). The informants in this study are students who have participated in the field practicum at the Department of Islamic Community Development, Faculty of Da'wah and Communication, UIN North Sumatra, focusing on their experiences related to the quality of lecturer guidance, as well as the conditions and facilities provided during the practicum program, and the relevance between the theory learned in class and practice in the field.

Another method used in this research is through the study of relevant written documents (Scott, 2014). These documents include the official curriculum of the Islamic Community Development Department of UIN North Sumatra, and official reports produced by students during the field practicum. Other secondary data is obtained from books or articles that discuss the effectiveness of experiential learning, as well as literature related to Islamic community development (Pohl, 2006). These documents serve to enrich the interview data and provide a broader context to the research findings.

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis (Terry et al., 2017). The aim was to identify the main themes that emerged from the interviews and documents analyzed. The steps of this data analysis included:

- Data reduction is by selecting information that is most relevant to the focus of research, while data that is not directly related to student perceptions of practicum effectiveness will be ignored to maintain the focus of analysis (Åkerlind, 2005).
- Data Presentation is the process of presenting a set of information that has been arranged, making it possible to draw conclusions (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). This data presentation process seeks to reveal the entirety of the data obtained so that it is easy to read. By presenting the data, researchers can understand what is happening during the research period and what will be done next.

- Drawing Conclusions by analyzing further data to draw conclusions about student perception patterns (Weaver, 2006). Researchers identified similarities and differences in students' views, and linked these findings with relevant literature.

Furthermore, data triangulation was carried out to increase the validity of the research results. This was done by comparing the results of student interviews with data obtained from written documents. The purpose of this triangulation is to ensure that the research findings are supported by various consistent data sources.

3. Results

One of the important components in experiential learning, this course is designed to provide students with the opportunity to apply the theory learned in the classroom in a real field context. Based on the results of data collection through interviews, data processing and analysis, this section will discuss student perceptions of the Field Experience Practicum (PPL) course. The discussion includes two things, namely the perception of the course before the start of the lecture and after the lecture runs.

3.1 Pre-Course Perception

Field Experience Practicum (PPL) is a compulsory course. Every student majoring in Islamic Community Development (PMI) is required to take the course which is offered in semester VII with a weight of 4 Semester Credit Units (SKS). PPL courses are divided into two activities, namely face-to-face in class and field practice. Activities in the classroom by providing supplies related to field practicum, while the practicum itself is the implementation of the knowledge possessed during their time as students (Gurvitch & Metzler, 2009).

Based on the results of interviews, students after reading the Academic Handbook and filling out the Study Plan Card (KRS) have the same perception that PPL courses are compulsory courses (Together, n.d.). Their perception is based on the results of reading the Academic Guidebook regarding the status of the course. Students also said that PPL courses besides being compulsory courses are also important courses, because they are compulsory courses in the PMI department.

Before starting the course they had different perceptions of what exactly the scope of the course was (Picciano, 2002). Students perceive that PPL courses are to work with the community and at the same time promote their majors to the wider community. Some argue that when taking the Field Experience Practicum course students will join the community to work and to promote or introduce to the community about our major, namely PMI.

If you look at the Semester Learning Plan, the main purpose of the PPL course is actually to provide students with provisions so that they can carry out field practicum properly. This course also teaches the steps or procedures that must be carried out by students in practicum activities. About the things that must be done by students are practicing all the theories related to community development that they have mastered.

Promoting the department as perceived by some students is actually not their job. However, when they practice, the name of the Islamic Community Development department is indirectly introduced, especially when they conduct hearings and socialize their existence to related parties. Actually, not only the department, even the name of the faculty and university will also be introduced to the community.

While other students perceive that PPL is a very important course based on certain reasons. This is because as students they not only know the theory, but we also implement it in the field. With this course, students can gain field experience. What is obtained from the campus can be implemented to the community. Students can also assess the knowledge they have about community development.

The students' expressions contain several positive perceptions. First, that the PPL course is an important course. Second, they mentioned the benefits of PPL activities, namely gaining field experience and for the implementation of knowledge. Third, PPL is also an indicator and measurement of the abilities that students have so far. This is in accordance with what is mentioned that when there are empty hours, they go directly to

the PPL location. They do this because they get a good reception from the community and they feel that two hours a day is too little.

While other students understand that the lecture is practicing the knowledge they have in the midst of society. Through PPL activities, students can directly experience the difference between the campus environment and the community. They give an assessment of the difference and have a positive impression of the Field Experience Practicum course to hone their ability to apply knowledge in the midst of society.

Based on the positive impressions obtained, the students became enthusiastic to carry out practice in the field. They felt that they found a different atmosphere and environment from what they were used to in class. One of the most interesting things according to students is being able to mingle and adapt directly with the community and promote and introduce the PMI department.

Perceived positive perceptions can affect the actions that are visible or real by students towards field experience practice, although in the process they get difficulties due to time clashes with other course hours, but the positive actions they take are trying to come to the place where they carry out practice in the field before the lecture starts or during empty class hours.

Students believe that the Field Experience Practicum is one of the programs in establishing relationships with the community to convey information and communicate directly with the community. They can see, feel and assess the daily activities of the community.

3.2 Perception of the Teaching and Learning Process

Learning is a process of student interaction with lecturers and learning resources in a learning environment. The learning process in the classroom involves at least three main elements, namely lecturers, students and learning resources. Lecturers are professional educators and scientists with the main task of transforming, developing, and disseminating science and technology. Meanwhile, students are learners. As for one of the principles in the implementation of higher education as mandated by Law Number 12 of 2012 that learning must be student-centered with attention to the environment in harmony and balance.

Learning should be able to provide positive perceptions to students. In reality, the results of the stimulus do not always provide positive perceptions, but negative perceptions can also arise (Harmer et al., 2004). One of them is the existence of obstacles from the stimulus process. The obstacle related to the practice of field experience is the delivery of lecturers about course material. According to some students, the material obtained in class has not been able to significantly explain what field experience practice actually is. What they have to do, how is the process, how to deal with community responses and responses and how to respond to them, how also when in the PPL process they get obstacles and problems both from the community, and from themselves.

While other students perceived the course at the beginning of the lecture activities negatively. They felt confused and burdened by taking the PPL course. This happened when they had not attended lectures in class. After the learning was carried out, they received provisions on techniques for introducing themselves and how to get to know the community and the potential that could be developed at the practice site, finally they felt that the course was important and very useful for students majoring in PMI.

There are also students who feel worried and lack confidence in their ability to carry out field practice. He always thinks about how it will be when he goes to the community. However, after participating in the class, the worry diminished and a sense of confidence and enthusiasm for carrying out PPL emerged.

Good and positive perceptions of students towards Field Experience Practicum courses give birth to enormous interest and appreciation, so that when students find out that field experience practice courses are eliminated, they are very disappointed and regret it (Howells & Cumming, 2012). Conversely, negative perceptions will give birth to a sense of lack of confidence and an attitude of not being wholehearted in carrying out the practice.

From the description above, it can be concluded that students' perceptions of the Field Experience Practicum course were initially negative, then gradually turned positive. Students ultimately have a high interest in the learning process and then mingle directly with the community. However, they hope for improvements in both the learning process and the implementation of field experience practicum. Students want a review of the PPL course syllabus, so that there is a balanced proportion between classroom material and field practice.

PPL activities are divided into six groups. Each group consists of 5-6 students. The six groups practiced at the Bandar Selamat Village Office, Medan Estate Village Office, National Narcotics Agency, Lau Dendang Village Office, Polonia Village Office, and Amplas Village Office.

As mentioned above, the field experience practicum is carried out in the seventh semester with a weight of 4 credits and a maximum of 32 meetings. Because it has a weight of 4 credits, this course is carried out 2 times a week. This course for the seventh semester is a mandatory course, and if students do not pass this semester, they must repeat it in the following year. In the lecture, the lecturer explained the lecture contract. In the 7th and 8th meetings, the lecture continued with preparations for field experience practicum and mechanisms in the field. Then continued with the division of groups and each group consists of 5-6 people (Backstrom et al., 2006).

The next meeting is the activity of compiling the interview guide. This contains the preparation of interview guidelines that will be carried out by students in the field. The contents of the interview guide have 20 questions that they will ask about the place, activities, authorized figures and programs that will be implemented in the near future where they carry out PPL. The function of the interview guide is an overview of questions and interviews with figures where they carry out practice that will help in compiling the final report. In addition to compiling the interview guide, the lecture material also contains procedures for making reports guided by the supervising lecturer.

After compiling the interview guide, the next student activity is to conduct a location exploration. The location that will be explored by the students is a location that has been approved by the supervisor. In this case, students only conduct a location survey, both in the community and at the sub-district/village office. From this location exploration, students can get an idea of whether the location they are exploring is feasible and accepts the presence of students to carry out field experience practicums. The results of this survey and field observation will be reported to the supervisor in class. The next step taken is correspondence. Students will come to the location that has been surveyed by bringing a letter issued by the faculty. The letter contains a request for permission for field experience practicums.

Next, students wait for a reply to the letter. If the reply to the letter is indeed permitted, then the next meeting they will immediately carry out PPL. On the other hand, if their letter does not get a reply, then students will look for another location that is willing to accept them to carry out field experience practicums.

In the next meeting, students will conduct a location presentation. Students will describe the response and enthusiasm of the community or offices they surveyed to carry out field experience practices (Kaye, 2004). Students will also convey the obstacles they faced during the location survey and the letters they sent. The supervisor will provide input and solutions to overcome the obstacles found at the location.

The meeting in the following week carried out the presentation of the interview guide. At the beginning, students had made an interview guide, but students did not know the location to carry out PPL. On that occasion, students re-checked the interview guide they had made and matched it with the location they had surveyed.

Next, in the 9th-16th meeting, students carry out field experience practices in the office or in the community. Students carry out PPL twice a week with a duration of 2-3 hours according to the PPL course schedule. In addition to implementing the program and field experience practices, they are required to collect data, observe and collect documentation

for the final report. After 16 meetings, the field experience practice is complete, so the next task is to compile the PPL report.

At the 19th meeting, students returned to class with the agenda of presenting the results of the practicum. This meeting was held 8 times with presentation activities from 6 groups. From the presentation, the supervisor will correct the results of the report, and if the final report still has many shortcomings, the supervisor asks students to return to the field to complete the shortcomings of the report. The final results of the revised report will be submitted at the final semester exam.

When in the field, the procedure for accepting and assigning students to carry out PPL cannot be separated from the role of the village head office or the village head office. Although the PPL implementation permit letter is submitted to the village and village offices, the village head office or the village head office is responsible for distributing students to where they will be directed. It could be that students are directed to carry out practices related to the Posyandu, PKK, mutual cooperation, RASKIN, Bansos, Bumdes (Village-Owned Enterprises), PKH or work at the village or village office and stay in that office while carrying out PPL.

One of the objectives of the PPL course is to gain as much experience as possible and their knowledge develops according to the experience they gain, which they do not get in class. Whatever experience they gain during the PPL, that is the knowledge from the PPL course. Each student will be different in gaining this knowledge, depending on where they carry out the field experience practice. Technically, whatever experience they gain during the field experience practice is what they must put into the final report.

According to the lecturer, the field experience practice course aims for PMI students to gain direct experience in the community about community empowerment and development. In practice, students are required to know and understand government programs that are running in the community. Students are also required to understand the mechanism of the implementation procedure. For example, in the integrated health post, students have only seen and heard the word integrated health post, but students do not know directly how the mechanism works. Through the PPL course, students can participate in the implementation process of integrated health posts with related officers. In the process, students admit that they are given the opportunity to directly participate in the implementation of integrated health posts, such as weighing babies, recording baby data, and distributing vitamins to babies.

In addition to the integrated health post, students who carry out PPL at the village office or village office. In this place they are given the opportunity to directly learn how to fill in population data, handle office administration, correspondence and record residents who are eligible to receive government assistance. The government programs that are the students' choices are mutual cooperation, PKH, Social Assistance (Bansos), PKK, Raskin and Bumdes.

Students are given the right to choose the activities they will focus on that they can adjust to the lecture schedule even though not all programs are implemented. Based on the student's confession, the main objective of the field experience practice was not achieved. Because students are only centered in the Village Office to help with office activities. To overcome this, the group leader can actually communicate with the village so that they can go directly into the community to carry out activities that are directly beneficial to the community.

4. Discussion

4.1 Obstacles in the Field Experience Practicum Process

Field experience activities do not always run according to the plan that has been made, but experience obstacles both substantive and technical in nature (Clift & Brady, 2005). Throughout the field experience practice activities, students encounter problems or obstacles. Although they admit that the field experience practice course is a compulsory course and they must take it, the picture of the perception of the implementation of field experience practice must be improved. One of them is the material in class, because if examined from the program schedule that has been explained above, the eight (8)

meetings held in class, discussed more about how to make research report guidelines, not about planting material and procedures for implementing field experience practice.

Although the results of each individual's perception can be different depending on how each student's ability to receive stimuli through the receptor tool. For example, there are different views that the material in class should be added, but some students stated that adding material in class is not necessary, because the material they will get in class is not necessarily suitable and in accordance with the findings they get in the field.

Likewise, there is a process of making judgments or building impressions of the supervisor. Some students' perceptions assume that the supervisor of the Field Experience Practicum course must be more professional. Because students feel that the supervisor does not provide enough material in class. While other students consider that the lecturer is quite capable of providing explanations regarding field experience practices.

One of the obstacles that students encounter is that the material presented in class does not match their needs in carrying out field experience practice, so that when they go into the field, students feel uncertain. This is very understandable for the lecturer in charge of the course, because the implementation of field experience practice is carried out in the seventh semester, which means that theoretically in socializing and living in society, students already understand how to behave. In addition, they have studied a lot of supporting materials related to social courses in the previous semester.

Regarding the material taught in class by the lecturer, one of the obstacles faced by students is the ineffectiveness of time in implementing field experience practices which are carried out twice a week, namely at 09.00-12.00 WIB. Then students must return to campus to attend classes at 13.30 WIB. While the area where they carry out Field Experience Practices for some students is far from campus and requires a rather long travel time. For those whose location is far from campus, they are in a hurry and do not optimally carry out field assignments, which is around 3 hours. The short duration of time is not enough to complete the program in the field.

One of the expectations of students in the field experience practice for the next semester is that there will be direct control carried out by the lecturer in charge at the place where they carry out the field experience practice. The presence of the lecturer is considered to be able to be an introduction and a liaison between students and the community. In addition, the implementation of the field experience practice should be carried out during the lecture holidays so that they can carry out the field experience practice in one month. This is not disturbed by the obligations of other courses. In addition, the students also hope that the implementation of the field experience practice will be carried out in the fifth semester, so that the time gap between the field experience practice and the Real Work Lecture (KKN) is not too long. KKN activities are usually carried out in semester VI.

Another obstacle is in determining the location of the practice, that the lecturer leaves it entirely up to the students. Whereas the students do not yet know the conditions of the location that is more appropriate and suitable to be used as a place of practice. The determination of the location should be adjusted to the expertise of the students and the problems faced by the community.

Another obstacle that is also experienced is that there are agencies or offices that do not provide a reply letter as a form of permission to carry out field practice (Feldman et al., 2004). One of the reasons is that there is nothing suitable that can be done by students of the Islamic Community Development Department at the office. Even if accepted, as experienced by one of the groups accepted at the village head's office, they are not given much authority and trust to do the work.

In addition, there is a lack of enthusiasm and solidarity among students in carrying out field experience practices and students often arrive late at their practice locations. In the implementation process, the program that is running is a program owned by the Field Experience Practice location. Students are not empowered according to their abilities, and there are no clear activities that they must do in the field. However, it depends on the

momentary conditions, such as attending a gathering and halal bihalal event which happens to be attended by the regional head.

Often students find things that are not described at all in the delivery of field experience practice materials. For example, there is social pathology in the area where they carry out field experience practice and the social pathology varies in each area. In addition, lecturers who teach field experience practice courses must be more professional and experienced who have implemented field experience practice courses.

The group of students who carried out the internship experience at the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) office felt very awkward being in the office. When the letter was sent to the BNN Office, there was no immediate reply, because of their strong desire to be able to carry out the field internship there, they repeatedly confirmed whether they were accepted to carry out the field internship experience. Finally, their efforts paid off and they were allowed to carry out the field internship experience there. The BNN welcomed them very well and friendly. One of the routine activities they do is to do mutual cooperation, besides that they also hold seminars on the dangers of drugs.

Considering the obstacles faced in the field, students hope that in the future, field experience practices will be better implemented in the community rather than in government agencies because they are very formal and there are no fields related to the Islamic Community Development major. Students who carry out practices by going directly to the community, they can do many things according to the knowledge they have mastered. Along with that, the community also welcomed them enthusiastically. This was conveyed by one of the students that they were welcomed by the community because it was rare for students from the UIN-SU Medan campus to do field practices in their place. Usually those who carry out field practices come from the USU or UNIMED campuses.

Once when they were going to carry out field experience practice, together with USU students from the Faculty of Medicine who were also carrying out field practice at the Posyandu. So there was a collaboration between PMI students from the Faculty of Da'wah UINSU Medan and USU Faculty of Medicine students. The Medical students were tasked with giving injections to the babies, while the PMI students recorded data and gave medicine. The public's acceptance of the students majoring in Islamic Community Development was very good, as evidenced by the fact that they did not differentiate between UINSU students and USU students.

4.2 Actualization of Field Experience Practice Courses

The Islamic Community Development Department has several courses that have a field practice dimension. Starting in the third semester with the Community Practice program. The implementation time is very short, which is one week, but it is not binding and not mandatory. One of the objectives of the practice is to adapt and introduce students to the community environment. The next program is PPL (Field Experience Practice). PPL is implemented in the seventh semester and is mandatory because it is tied to courses and credit weights.

In addition to honing potential and maturing theory, one of the objectives of field experience practice is the initial learning process before they carry out KKN. Because the implementation of KKN is fully implemented in the community. Students live in a village for one month mingling with the community. This is the difference between field experience practice and KKN. Field experience practice is carried out for one month with a duration of two hours and twice a week (Pence & Macgillivray, 2008). This means that the intensity of meetings between students and the community is limited by time. While in the process of implementing KKN students live in community settlements, students are required to adapt directly to the community without any time limits.

One of the objectives of the field experience practice course is the pre-KKN program, so the importance of this course is a priority. If there is no field experience practice carried out before KKN, then it is certain that students will be hesitant in adapting to society. Therefore, students are very enthusiastic about this course, not only as an initial learning medium for pre-KKN, but also implementing field experience practice in the community is very interesting and enjoyable for them. Learning directly by mingling with the

community provides students with their own knowledge that they will not get if they only study theory in class. The public's enthusiasm for students in this field experience practice is also very high.

The Field Experience Practicum course is a very interesting case to study, because in reality, although students are very enthusiastic about this course. It's just that the implementation of this PPL course was last carried out in the 2014 intake, and was no longer included in the curriculum for the next batch of students. Of course, this is very unfortunate for important officials at the Faculty of Da'wah. Just like the lecturer in charge of this course, he hopes that even if it turns out that the field experience practicum course has been eliminated, then other courses must also carry out field experience practicums in addition to the implementation of KKN, especially compulsory courses related to empowerment that are directly related to government programs implemented by the community such as Posyandu, PKH, Bansos, Bumdes, and mutual cooperation so that students can gain knowledge directly in the community, not just theory in class.

The Dean of the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication UIN North Sumatra said that vocational practicums should actually be implemented. The curriculum review procedure is usually carried out by the head of the relevant department together with the Vice Dean 1. During Mr. Soiman's tenure as Dean of the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication, a curriculum review has never been carried out, which means that the curriculum currently implemented is still using the 2015 curriculum.

The last curriculum review was conducted in 2015, which was a necessity in connection with the conversion of IAIN to UIN North Sumatra Medan. According to Mr. Soiman, the courses that were replaced were institute component courses or basic courses. Meanwhile, field experience practice is a compulsory course for the department. At that time, the department was given the authority to determine the curriculum for each department and it turned out that each department agreed to eliminate the Field Experience Practice course. The next curriculum review is planned to be held in 2019 and the Field Experience Practice course will be proposed again to be held again.

The curriculum review procedure aims to answer the needs of the development of the times. All departments are assigned to evaluate existing courses, the results of the curriculum evaluation will have an impact on reducing or adding courses in the department and technically there must be a clear reason for adding or reducing courses and will be discussed in a meeting. One of the goals of field experience practice has a credit weight so that in practice students are serious and not playing around in its implementation. If necessary, it is made like an internship for four or five months where they carry out practice.

The reason for the elimination of the Field Experience Practicum course according to the former Head of the PMI Department is because of the existence of practicums outside the credits. With the existence of practicums outside the credits, there is an overload, because between practicums and field experience practicum courses, the procedures are the same. The function of practicums is to carry out the munaqosyah exam, students who have carried out practicums and their scores have been reported to the lecturer, then the Head of the Laboratory will issue a certificate as proof of having carried out practicums. The certificates given will be collected with certificates from other practicums and will be submitted so that they can register for the munaqosyah exam.

So far, what is taught in the practicum outside of the credits has similarities with the Field Experience Practice course. The difference between practicum and field experience practice is that practicum is taught by a tutor, and its implementation is outside of the credits and under the authority of the head of the laboratory. While the Field Experience Practice course is taught by a lecturer under the authority of the department and has a credit weight. Between Field Experience Practicum and practicum outside of the credits, there is one similarity, namely that both are mandatory for students to carry out. If students do not carry out practicum or do not pass, then students cannot get a certificate as a requirement to take the thesis defense. For students who do not pass, there is no opportunity to repeat it again, unlike courses, if you do not pass, you can repeat it next year.

After the curriculum review and Field Experience Practice courses, elective courses were held instead. One of them is teaching methodology. This teaching methodology course is a companion to student competencies, so that in addition to having the skills that have been instilled in the department, students have other skills that can be applied to teaching in schools. In addition, there is also an elective course, namely journalism.

The curriculum review plan will be implemented in 2019. According to one of the PMI department lecturers, the Field Experience Practicum course must be held or revived and given a credit unit weight. Meanwhile, non-credit unit practicums will be eliminated, this is because there is no longer an allocation of funds to pay for non-credit unit practicum tutors. All lecturer activities are calculated in remuneration. If non-credit unit practicums are still held while the lecturers are not paid, it is feared that the non-credit unit practicums will not run well, because the lecturers will be half-hearted in implementing them.

5. Conclusions

This study confirms that the effectiveness of field experience practicum in the Department of Islamic Community Development, Faculty of Da'wah and Communication, UIN North Sumatra is influenced by various complex factors. The findings show that students' perceptions of the Field Experience Practicum course, before the lecture, were not entirely correct or positive. Some students understood that the purpose of the course was to promote their department in the community, but after the lecture their perceptions became correct and positive. The findings also show that the relevance of the location, the quality of lecturer guidance, interaction with the community, and institutional support have a significant impact on student perceptions. In addition, students face various challenges, including the gap between theory and practice, time constraints, and inadequate logistical support. Recommendations proposed by students include increasing the relevance of the location, extending the duration of the practicum, and increasing lecturer support. This reflects their desire to get a more optimal experience. Overall, the results of this study highlight the importance of a holistic approach in designing and implementing practicums, in order to improve the quality of education and the relevance of the curriculum in the field of Islamic community development, as well as providing greater benefits for students and the community.

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