Management of Research Collaboration in the Era *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM)

Jihan Abdullah[1*], Nurdin Nurdin[2], Sri Dewi Lisnawati[3], Andi Marakarma[4], Gasim Yamani[5]

[1,3,4]Islamic Education Department, Universitas Islam Negeri Datokarama Palu,
Central Sulawesi, Indonesia
[2]Information Systems Department, Universitas Islam Negeri Datokarama Palu,
Central Sulawesi, Indonesia
[5]Islamic Law Department, Universitas Islam Negeri Datokarama Palu,
Central Sulawesi, Indonesia
Email: jihan@uindatokarama.ac.id[1], nurdin@uindatokarama.ac.id[2],
sridewi@uindatokarama.ac.id[3], amarakarma@uindatokarama.ac.id[4],
gasimyamani@uindatokarama.ac.id[5]

Abstract:

This study examines the management of research collaboration between lecturers and students within the context of implementing the Independent Learning and Independent Campus (MBKM) framework. This research employs a qualitative case study approach, collecting data through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and analysis of institutional documents. The results show that the university has implemented an institutional policy that requires collaboration between lecturers and students in every university-funded research cluster. The number of students involved is adjusted according to the amount of research funding, with measurable publication targets ranging from the Sinta journal to reputable international journals indexed in Scopus. The university also provides 36 journals and two proceedings as a means of scientific dissemination, supporting a culture of publication from an early age. In addition, students are actively involved in community service-based research relevant to their scientific fields, creating a contextual learning experience that strengthens both academic skills and social contributions. The implications of this study suggest that a collaborative approach between lecturers and students in research can enhance the quality of academic publications and enhance students' research skills. Through university support in providing journals and proceedings, as well as student involvement in community service-based research, contextual and socially beneficial learning is created.

Keywords: *Institutional Policy, Collaboration, Scientific Publication, Academic Skills.*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini menganalisis tentang manajemen kolaborasi riset antara dosen dan mahasiswa dalam kerangka implementasi Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM). Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif jenis studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi langsung, wawancara mendalam, dan analisis dokumen institusional. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa universitas telah menerapkan kebijakan kelembagaan yang mewajibkan kolaborasi dosen dan mahasiswa dalam setiap klaster riset yang didanai universitas. Jumlah mahasiswa yang dilibatkan disesuaikan dengan besaran dana penelitian, dengan target publikasi terukur mulai dari jurnal Sinta hingga

jurnal internasional bereputasi Scopus. Universitas juga menyediakan 36 jurnal dan dua prosiding sebagai sarana diseminasi ilmiah, mendukung budaya publikasi sejak dini. Selain itu, mahasiswa juga terlibat aktif dalam penelitian berbasis pengabdian masyarakat yang relevan dengan bidang keilmuannya, menciptakan pembelajaran kontekstual yang memperkuat keterampilan akademik dan kontribusi sosial. Implikasi penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kebijakan kolaborasi antara dosen dan mahasiswa dalam riset dapat meningkatkan kualitas publikasi akademik dan memperkuat keterampilan penelitian mahasiswa. Melalui dukungan universitas dalam penyediaan jurnal dan prosiding, serta keterlibatan mahasiswa dalam penelitian berbasis pengabdian masyarakat, tercipta pembelajaran yang kontekstual dan bermanfaat secara sosial.

Kata Kunci: *Kebijakan Kelembagaan, Kolaborasi, Publikasi Ilmiah, Keterampilan Akademik.*

INTRODUCTION

Research collaboration has become one of the main pillars in the development of modern higher education, both on a national and international scale (Fu et al., 2022; Kwiek, 2021; Tejedor et al., 2024). In addition, the direction of higher education policy in Indonesia increasingly emphasizes the importance of collaboration between lecturers and students as a strategic instrument in realizing a strong and competitive academic culture (Fathana et al., 2024; Rachman et al., 2024; Rosser, 2023). The implementation of the "Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka / Independent Learning Independent Campus" (MBKM) policy emphasizes the urgency of student involvement in research, service, and scientific publications, not only as a complement to learning but also as a form of contextual learning that supports the achievement of graduate learning outcomes (Prasetia et al., 2025; Wawak et al., 2024; Winoto, 2022). Thus, research collaboration between lecturers and students is no longer an optional activity, but rather an integral part of an institutional strategy to enhance academic quality (Brito et al., 2025; Hoai et al., 2023; Rachman et al., 2024). In the context of State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN), this practice also serves as an important indicator for increasing the accreditation of study programs, expanding academic networks, and strengthening the institution's reputation at the national and international levels.

Studies on research collaboration have shown several significant strategic benefits, ranging from enhancing students' methodological skills to increasing the productivity of joint publications between lecturers and students. Afandi et al. (2023) emphasized that the success of collaboration is greatly influenced by visionary leadership, clarity of common goals, and the existence of a consistent participatory evaluation mechanism. In line with that, Mansour (2024) emphasizes the importance of institutional support and the role of active facilitators in strengthening the student experience in collaborative research. Furthermore, the findings of Heitzmann et al. (2021) and Sasnal et al. (2023) show that open communication and a clear division of roles are key prerequisites for successful cross-disciplinary cooperation. However, to date, there have been limited studies that comprehensively review how formal policies, funding mechanisms, and institutional governance can form a sustainable research collaboration system, especially in the context of PTKIN, which continues to face accreditation

challenges and the demands of reputable publications.

Although various studies have addressed the benefits of research collaboration between lecturers and students, most have focused on pedagogical aspects, interpersonal relationships, or individual learning experiences. Very few highlight how institutional collaboration is managed as a managerial strategy to support institutional achievements, especially in the context of the Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) policy at State Islamic Religious Universities (PTKIN). No studies have been found that have in-depth analyzed how formal policies, organizational structures, and funding mechanisms shape systemic and sustainable patterns of research collaboration. In fact, effective collaborative management has direct implications for publication productivity, fostering academic culture, and enhancing institutional accreditation. Thus, there is a significant gap in the literature related to institutional management of research collaboration within PTKIN. This research aims to fill this gap by comprehensively examining the managerial practices of research collaboration at UIN Datokarama Palu during the implementation of MBKM.

This research offers novelty by integrating an institutional management approach in analyzing the practice of research collaboration between lecturers and students within PTKIN, particularly in the context of implementing the Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) initiative. Unlike previous studies that have placed more emphasis on individual experiences or interpersonal relationships in collaboration, this study explores the structural and institutional policy dimensions that underlie the success of such collaborations. This research also builds a conceptual framework based on policy managerial dimensions, implementing capacity, collaborative mechanisms, and academic outputs that have not been widely described in the previous literature. Using a case study at UIN Datokarama Palu, this research not only provides an empirical understanding of regulation-based collaborative practices but also offers a managerial model that can be replicated in other PTKINs. This novelty lies in a systemic approach to research collaboration that supports institutional accreditation through MBKM-based policies.

This research aims to examine in depth the managerial strategy in the management of research collaboration between lecturers and students at the State Islamic University (UIN) Datokarama Palu during the implementation of the Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) policy. The approach employed is a qualitative case study, focusing on how institutional policies, implementing capacity, collaborative mechanisms, and academic outcomes interact to form an effective collaborative system. This research aims to identify best practices in the management of research collaborations, from planning to implementation and joint publication. By examining internal dynamics and institutional support, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the strategic role of collaborative management in enhancing academic quality, particularly in supporting program accreditation. The results of this research are expected to serve as a reference for policymakers in other PTKIN in designing a sustainable and output-oriented research collaboration system.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore in-depth the management strategy of research collaboration between lecturers and students at UIN Datokarama Palu during the implementation of the Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) policy. This design was chosen because the case study enables a contextual understanding of the dynamics of institutional policies and practices within the Islamic higher education environment. This type of research is grounded in a constructivist paradigm that emphasizes subjective meaning, experiential interpretation, and the active involvement of the research subject in constructing social reality (Priya, 2021; Prosek & Gibson, 2021; Renjith et al., 2021). The selection of UIN Datokarama Palu as the research location is based on the implementation of a systematic collaborative policy, including joint research proposals, indexed publications, and student involvement in research-based service. This approach is relevant to examining the relationship between institutional structures, collaborative practices, and institutional accreditation achievements.

Data was collected through three primary methods: direct observation, in-depth interviews, and analysis of written documents. The interviews involved eight informants, comprising three research center staff members, one vice chancellor for academic affairs, and four undergraduate and postgraduate students. The documents analyzed include university research roadmaps, research policies, as well as publications from journals and internal proceedings. The researcher acts as a participatory observer, maintaining reflectivity and neutrality in interpreting the data (Ruslan & Irham, 2022; Seim, 2024; Shen & Chou, 2022). The research was conducted from January to April 2025 in the UIN Datokarama Palu environment. To maintain the credibility of the data, the researcher used systematic source triangulation, member checking, and trail audit techniques (Azman et al., 2025; Enworo, 2023; Eryilmaz, 2021).

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques, which consisted of three stages: open coding, axial coding, and theoretical coding (Liu et al., 2021; Mello et al., 2021; Wilczewska & Nazarko, 2024). Data from interview transcripts and documents are manually coded, then categorized into key themes that represent the research collaboration management process. This procedure refers to the Miles and Huberman model, with data presented in the form of a thematic matrix (Foody, 2021; Scharp, 2021; Yu et al., 2022). The process ends when no new theme is found (data saturation). Figure 1 shows how participant excerpts from the interview were analyzed through three levels of coding. At the first level (Open Coding), collected narratives of student experiences and institutional policies. The second level (Selective Coding) groups the narrative into themes such as collaboration in conferences, community service, and research policy. The third stage (theoretical coding) concludes that the entire phenomenon can be reduced to a central theme: collaboration-based research management in the university environment. This process demonstrates the logical validity of the theme construct and supports an in-depth interpretation of empirical data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Result
Policies in Managing Research Collaborations

Institutional policy refers to a set of formal rules, regulations, and decisions set by higher education institutions to regulate internal practices and mechanisms, including in the implementation of the Tridharma of Higher Education. In the context of this research, institutional policy is interpreted as a strategic step taken by UIN Datokarama Palu in managing collaboration between lecturers and students during the implementation of the Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) program. The policy serves as a normative foundation that binds the entire academic community to be actively involved in research collaboration, from proposal planning and implementation of research activities to scientific publications. This theme is important because it shows the institution's commitment to fostering a collaborative academic culture and improving the quality of research outputs. This approach aims not only to enhance student competence through active involvement in research but also to meet the institution's performance indicators, including those related to program accreditation and the improvement of the university's academic reputation.

The institutional steps of UIN Datokarama Palu in regulating research collaboration have been formalized through the rector's decree. This was emphasized by one of the informants, "We have a policy that requires all lecturers to collaborate with students in all research clusters that we provide every year, except for self-help research projects. As long as the university funds the research, lecturers are obliged to involve students." In line with that, the students involved felt that there was a system that encouraged them to be active in research, "I have participated twice in the KIESS national conference on campus. At first, I was nervous during the presentation, but it was an amazing experience because I was able to learn to write an article and present it in front of academics."

Based on the results of the interview conducted above, the university's policy has been successful in creating a system that encourages active student involvement in the research process. Information from SR informants emphasized that regulations that require lecturer-student collaboration are applied comprehensively to all research clusters facilitated by universities. Meanwhile, statements from US informants indicate that the implementation of the policy has fostered the development of a progressive academic culture, where students are not only recipients of learning but also active participants in the scientific process. This policy is a crucial instrument in implementing MBKM, as it enables the integration of student learning experiences outside the classroom in a structured manner. Thus, this institutional policy not only increases the number of research and publications but also strengthens the academic capacity of students and fosters a sustainable research ecosystem. Departing from this, the form of management of research collaboration based on the amount of funds is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Students' involvement in Research Collaboration and Research Outcome

Yes	Amount of Research Funding	Number of Students Involved	Outcome expected
1	15 – 25 million	One student from a study program	A publication in a journal indexed by Sinta level 5 or higher
2	25 – 40 million	Two students from a study program	A publication in a journal indexed by Sinta level 3 or higher
3	41 – 60 million	Two students from different study programs	A publication in a journal indexed by Sinta level 2 or higher
4	61 – 80 million	Three students from different study programs	A publication in a journal indexed by Sinta level two or higher, and a national proceeding
5	81 – 100 million	Four students from different study programs	A publication in an international journal indexed by Scopus with a minimum quartile of 3
6	Above 100 million	Three students from different study programs and one researcher from another university	A publication in an international journal indexed by Scopus with a minimum quartile of 2 and an international proceeding

Table 1 shows that the amount of research funding is directly proportional to the number of students involved and the quality of the targeted output. With limited funding, student involvement remains low, and publications are primarily aimed at lower-level Sinta journals. However, as the funds increase in size, the collaboration extends to cross-study programs and even involves researchers from other universities. In line with this, the target of research outputs has also increased, ranging from Sinta level 2 journals and national proceedings to reputable international publications with Scopus ratings of Q3 and Q2. This demonstrates that funding not only enhances research capacity but also fosters the quality of collaboration, expands academic networks, and enhances the competitiveness of research results at both national and international levels.

The results of this study indicate that the institutional policy of UIN Datokarama Palu plays a strategic role in fostering a collaborative research culture among lecturers and students. Formal regulations outlined in the Rector's Decree provide a strong foundation for organizing a more targeted academic cooperation system. The policy is designed in a systemic and integrated manner, encompassing not only research activities but also community service and scientific publications. The management of collaboration based on research fund support also presents a fair and measurable mechanism for actively involving students. The implementation of this policy has proven to have a real impact, characterized by an improvement in the quality and quantity of scientific publications and a significant contribution to the fulfillment of study program accreditation indicators. Thus, the institutional policies implemented are not only in line with the spirit of MBKM but also succeed in strengthening the role of students in the academic ecosystem, making them an integral part of the university's development in quality and competitiveness.

Collaboration in the Research and Publication Process

The strategy of student involvement in the research and publication process reflects UIN Datokarama Palu's systematic approach to ensuring the active involvement of students in all stages of research. Through the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program, students are not only positioned as passive learners but also as collaborative researchers who write, disseminate, and publish scientific papers with lecturers. The university requires that all collaborative research results be published in both internal and external journals. To support this strategy, UIN Datokarama Palu develops an institutional policy that involves providing journals in each study program. In fact, some study programs have more than one journal, including community-based community service journals. Additionally, two university proceedings are provided to accommodate the initial research results, including theses and dissertations. With this strategy, a culture of publication is instilled from an early age, while strengthening students' academic capacity

.

The university leadership affirmed the mandatory publication policy, "We obligate all research results conducted by lecturers and students to be published in journals, whether internal or from other universities. Our policy to publish research results is mandatory. It must be followed by all lecturers and students to improve our university ranking and to support our teaching and learning during MBKM implementation. We also suggest that students publish their thesis in their study program journals." This statement shows that publication is not only an administrative demand, but also an integral part of MBKM's academic strategy.

In addition, UIN Datokarama Palu has prepared 33 scientific journals, corresponding to the scientific fields of the study programs, three community-based service journals, and two proceedings. This forum is dedicated to the publication of lecturers' and students' work. University policy requires students to publish their scientific work, either in the form of articles or theses, or collaborative research, in internal or reputable external journals. In addition, research results that are superior or supported by considerable funding are directed to be published in journals with higher indexation outside the campus. With this infrastructure, students are not only facilitated to write but also encouraged to familiarize themselves with the culture of publication. This fact demonstrates that the publication-based student engagement strategy is not just a concept, but a system that integrates with MBKM and supports the institution's improvement in ranking. Details of the journal and proceedings names can be found in Table 2.

Table 2. Journals and Proceedings of UIN Datokarama Palu Based on Scientific Fields

Scientific Field	Name of Journal/Proceedings	Accreditation Status
Education	Pedagogy: Journal of Education; Ibtidai'i Datokarama; Anna Bulava; Datokarama English Education Journal; Al-Tawjih; Al Bariq; Al-Tadbir; JIMPE	Sinta 3 – Non-accreditation
Islamic Studies & Philosophy	Snoopy; Rausyan Fikr; Al Munir; Al-Misbah; International Journal of Contemporary Islamic Education; International Journal of Islamic Law and Societies	Sinta 4 – Sinta 5
Law & Shariah	Bilncia; Familia; Comparative; Shawn; Qaumiyyah	Sinta 4 – Non-

		accreditation
Economics & Finance	Journal of Islamic Economics and Business; Journal of Sharia Banking and Finance Sciences; Jariyah; Journal of Sharia Economic and Banking Service; Journal of Contemporary Economics and Business Management	Sinta 4 – Non-accreditation
Social, Humanities & Gender	Musawa; Moderation; Nosipakabelo; Manaqib; Journal of Islamic Community and Development; Squirt	Sinta 5 – Non-accreditation
Multidisciplinary & Proceedings	Istiqra; Tower of Wisdom; Proceedings ICIIS; Proceedings KIIIES	Sinta 6 – Non-accreditation

Table 2 shows that scientific publications at UIN Datokarama Palu are spread across various scientific fields with diverse accreditation statuses. In the field of education, the number of journals is quite large, ranging from Sinta 3 to non-accredited, indicating the significant academic contribution of this field. Islamic studies and philosophy have journals with Sinta 4 to Sinta 5 accreditation achievements, indicating consistency in the development of Islamic scientific discourse. Meanwhile, the fields of law and sharia, as well as economics and finance, are generally at the Sinta 4 level or non-accredited, which indicates a need to improve the quality of management in order to rise to a higher level. The social, humanities, and gender fields are mostly still in Sinta 5 or have not been accredited, reflecting the challenges in strengthening manuscript quality and editorial governance. The multidisciplinary and procedural categories are still in Sinta 6 and non-accredited.

The results of the research on collaboration in the research and publication process at UIN Datokarama Palu indicate that a systematic student involvement strategy has been implemented through mandatory publication policies, the provision of journal infrastructure in each study program, and procedural support to facilitate the initial research results. This policy is not only administrative, but also an integral part of implementing MBKM to foster an academic culture from an early age. Table 2 shows that the university has 33 study program journals, three community service journals, and two proceedings, with various accreditation statuses ranging from Sinta 3 to non-accredited. The distribution highlights the dominance of the education sector, the sustainability of Islamic and philosophical studies, and the need to enhance quality in the fields of law, economics, social sciences, and multidisciplinary studies to achieve higher accreditation.

Collaboration in Community Service-Based Research

Community service-based research collaboration is a form of integration between research activities and community engagement carried out by lecturers and students. This theme highlights how the university not only fulfills the Tridharma in the fields of education and research but also enhances the service function through the involvement of students in real-world projects that align with their scientific fields. In the context of MBKM at UIN Datokarama Palu, community service-based research is a crucial strategy for connecting theory with practice. Students are involved in projects funded by either universities, ministries, or local governments. Through these activities, they not only gain field experience but also develop practical skills, expand their social insights, and enhance

academic competencies relevant to their study program. Thus, community service-based research collaboration serves as a means of contextual learning, as well as a tangible contribution of universities to regional development.

The involvement of students in community service-based research is reflected in the direct experience of the participants. "I participated in a community service program funded by the Sigi Regency Government, where I lectured to identify spiritual areas in Sigi Regency. I have extensive experience and skills in tracing the historical and cultural history of a specific region. Based on Islamic historical evidence and cultural artifacts, I was instructed on how to determine if an area is highly spiritual."

As a result of the interview, community service-based research collaboration provides students with an opportunity to apply the theories learned in the classroom in a real-world context. With direct involvement in projects funded by local governments, students have the opportunity to hone their methodological and practical skills according to their knowledge. This emphasizes that service is not only a social activity, but also a forum for student academic development. Student involvement in documenting evidence of Islamic history and cultural artifacts, for example, shows a significant contribution in strengthening the relevance of research to local needs. This strategy also fosters a reciprocal relationship between the university and society, enabling students to gain contextual learning experiences. At the same time, the community benefits from knowledge-based capacity building. Thus, community service at UIN Datokarama Palu is not only an administrative routine, but also an integral part of managing collaborative research based on MBKM.

UIN Datokarama Palu offers two types of services: general community service programs and research-based services. These two programs are supported by university research institutions and external partners, including the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, the provincial government of Central Sulawesi, and the district government. Students are actively involved through lecturers who undertake service projects, provided that the topic of the activity is relevant to the field of study. For example, students from the History of Islamic Civilization Study Program are involved in research on local history and culture, while students from the Education Study Program participate in curriculum-strengthening programs at madrasas. This fact demonstrates that a system of integrating service with research is capable of enhancing the academic capacity of students while having a tangible impact on society. With this pattern, community service at UIN Datokarama Palu runs according to the principles of MBKM, which prioritizes experiential learning.

Table 3. Collaborative Community Service Program

Yes	Title of Service Program	Partners / Institutions	Location
1	Filtering the Internet at State Islamic Senior High Schools	Düsseldorf	Wells Regency
2	Digital Skills Training for Boarding Schools' Students	Düsseldorf	Palu City
3	History of Datokarama	BRIDA Central Sulawesi	Central Sulawesi
4	Building the Spiritual Area	Sigi Regency Government	Sigi Regency
5	Curriculum Management at Madrasah Aliyah	Install the Government Timber	Install Wood
6	Study Program Community Service Projects	University Research Centre	UIN Datokarama

The collaboration of community service-based research at UIN Datokarama Palu demonstrates the university's success in integrating research, education, and service aspects simultaneously. Students are not only supporters, but are actively involved in designing, implementing, and making academic contributions according to their field of study. The presence of various service programs in partnership with ministries and local governments demonstrates that this activity not only improves student competence but also contributes significantly to the university's real impact on the community's needs. Table 3 illustrates that the service program encompasses a diverse range of themes, including digital literacy, local history, and spirituality. Thus, community service-based research at UIN Datokarama Palu is a strategic instrument in the implementation of MBKM because it supports contextual learning, expands students' academic experience, and strengthens the university's position in social and scientific development.

Discussion

The results of this study confirm that institutional policies play a strategic role in fostering a culture of collaborative research between lecturers and students at UIN Datokarama Palu during the implementation of the Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) program. These findings align with the research objectives, which aim to identify effective managerial practices that support the implementation of the Tridharma of Higher Education in an integrative manner. Formal, regulation-based policies, such as the Rector's Decree on the obligation of research and publication collaboration, as well as support for journal infrastructure, demonstrate the institution's commitment to creating a participatory research system. The relevance of these findings is evident in the context of the need for Islamic universities to improve the quality of accreditation and academic recognition through a collaboration-based strategy. Furthermore, the discussion will be analyzed through three main themes: research policies and fund-based outputs, collaborative scientific publication strategies, and the integration of research-based community service.

UIN Datokarama Palu's policy, which links the amount of research funds to the number of students and the quality of outputs, is a form of incentive-based research management innovation. This approach aligns with the view of Or et al. (2024), which confirms that collaboration with a proportionate allocation of funds enhances the quality and visibility of scientific publications. Rossoni (2024) also notes that the intensity of systemically managed collaboration affects the quantity and quality of research output. The findings of this study also confirm the results of Wahid et al. (2022), which indicate that publication productivity significantly impacts the attainment of superior accreditation. However, unlike the general collaboration model in other universities, which is only optional, UIN Datokarama implements a mandatory collaboration policy through formal regulations. This illustrates the benefits of systemic and structural approaches in enhancing the success of the MBKM program.

The mandatory strategy of publishing lecturer-student research results in internal and external journals is a concrete form of implementing academic culture

from an early age. These findings are reinforced by studies, such as Renjith et al. (2021), which highlight the close relationship between co-authorship and increased scholarly citations. The study also affirms that, as noted by Kwiek (2021), the collaboration-based publication policy expands academic networks and supports the accreditation of study programs. The existence of 36 journals and two proceedings at UIN Datokarama shows that the publication strategy has been institutionalized. Interestingly, the flexible authorship structure based on the author's contributions reflects the value of academic justice. This policy not only increases the number of publications but also establishes a collaborative and inclusive scientific ecosystem in the campus environment.

The integration of research in community service reflects the full implementation of the Tridharma, tailored to the local context. Student participation in real-life community projects, such as those funded by local governments, enhances contextual learning. These findings align with those of Wong et al. (2022), who found that student engagement with the community supports the development of graduate attributes. Furthermore, Priya (2021) emphasized that research-based managed service programs have a transformative impact on student learning. The active participation of students in documenting local history and culture also demonstrates their academic contributions to the region's development. UIN Datokarama has successfully institutionalized this approach through cross-sector partnerships, thereby establishing an integrative model for MBKM management.

This research makes a meaningful contribution to the development of Islamic education management, particularly in facilitating collaborative research within a religious university environment. From a practical perspective, the policy-based management model developed by UIN Datokarama Palu demonstrates how strategic management principles can be operationalized to enhance the implementation of the Tridharma, particularly in the areas of research and service. This approach can serve as a reference for other PTKIN in designing strategies to enhance academic quality, achieve accreditation, and strengthen institutional competitiveness. From the theoretical side, this research enriches the discourse on Islamic education management by offering an integrative perspective that connects institutional policies, funding allocation, and publication systems as the foundation for the formation of a collaborative academic ecosystem. Findings related to the relationship between institutional policy, student participation, and academic output provide a strong empirical basis for the development of institutional management theory in Islamic universities. Thus, this study expands the horizon of thinking about research governance in the framework of MBKM based on Islamic education management.

The institutional policies of UIN Datokarama Palu have significantly contributed to building a collaborative research ecosystem that aligns with the principles of MBKM. Formal regulations, funding support, and publication infrastructure can encourage the improvement of academic output quality while strengthening the social relevance of research through integration with community service. This policy not only provides space for more active student participation but also strengthens the achievement of accreditation indicators and

institutional positions at the national level. This success shows that Islamic education management can be implemented strategically to strengthen the competitiveness of religious universities. However, further studies are still needed to assess the sustainability of this policy in terms of the quality of graduates and international recognition. Comparative studies across PTKIN and PTN can be a crucial step in identifying best practices for managing research collaboration in the MBKM era, enabling this model to be replicated and adapted in a broader context.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the management of research collaboration at UIN Datokarama Palu, during the implementation of the MBKM program, has successfully established a participatory and quality-oriented academic ecosystem. Institutional policies that require the collaboration of lecturers and students in research, publications, and community service have been proven to increase the active involvement of students in scientific activities. An incentive-based approach through research funding schemes successfully integrates contextual learning objectives with measurable academic outputs. The university's publication infrastructure also strengthens the writing culture from an early age and supports the achievement of study program accreditation. On the other hand, student involvement in research-based service encourages learning transformations that are relevant to the community's needs. These findings confirm that structured and consistent institutional policies can optimize the implementation of MBKM and strengthen institutional competitiveness. In the future, cross-institutional studies are needed to identify best practices in managing research collaborations in religious higher education environments.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

REFERENCES

Afandi, M. N., Tri Anomsari, E., Novira, A., & Sudartini, S. (2023). Collaborative Governance in a Mandated Setting: Shifting Collaboration in Stunting Interventions at Local Level. *Development Studies Research*, *10*(1), 2212868. https://doi.org/10.1080/21665095.2023.2212868

Azman, N. A., Hamzah, M. I., & Abd Razak, K. (2025). Digital Integration in Primary School Islamic Education: Teachers' Perspectives on Its Impact on Students' Learning. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction, 22*(2), 21–41.

Brito, E., Neves, M. P., Gomes, N., & Lopes, N. (2025). Inclusion and Internationalization: Perception of Higher Education Students. *Interchange,* 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10780-025-09544-3

Enworo, O. C. (2023). Application of Guba and Lincoln's Parallel Criteria to Assess Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research on Indigenous Social Protection Systems. *Qualitative Research Journal, 23*(4), 372–384. https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-08-2022-0116

Eryilmaz, Ö. (2021). Are Dissertations Trustworthy Enough? The Case of Turkish Ph.D. Dissertations on Social Studies Education. *Participatory Educational Research, 9*(3), 344–361. https://doi.org/10.17275/per.22.70.9.3

Fathana, H., Herdianto, E. F., & Dewi, K. U. (2024). Academic Capitalism in Southeast Asia: Lessons From Islamic Universities in Indonesia. *Journal of ASEAN Studies, 12*(2), 263–282. https://doi.org/10.21512/jas.v12i2.11501

Foody, G. M. (2021). Impacts of Ignorance on the Accuracy of Image Classification and Thematic Mapping. *Remote Sensing of Environment, 259,* 112367. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rse.2021.112367

Fu, Y. C., Marques, M., Tseng, Y. H., Powell, J. J. W., & Baker, D. P. (2022). An Evolving International Research Collaboration Network: Spatial and Thematic Developments in Co-Authored Higher Education Research, 1998–2018. *Scientometrics, 127*(3), 1403–1429. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-021-04200-w

Heitzmann, N., Opitz, A., Stadler, M., Sommerhoff, D., Fink, M. C., Obersteiner, A., Schmidmaier, R., Neuhaus, B. J., Ufer, S., Seidel, T., Fischer, M. R., & Fischer, F. (2021). Cross-Disciplinary Research on Learning and Instruction – Coming to Terms. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11,* 562658. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.562658

Hoai, N. T., Duy, L. V. Q., & Cassells, D. (2023). Internationalization as a Strategy to Enhance Higher Education Quality in Vietnam – Reflections From University Leaders. *Learning Organization, 30*(5), 554–570. https://doi.org/10.1108/TLO-12-2021-0151

Kwiek, M. (2021). What Large-Scale Publication and Citation Data Tell Us About International Research Collaboration in Europe: Changing National Patterns in Global Contexts. *Studies in Higher Education, 46*(12), 2629–2649. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2020.1749254

Liu, H., Kulturel-Konak, S., & Konak, A. (2021). Key Elements and Their Roles in Entrepreneurship Education Ecosystem: Comparative Review and Suggestions for Sustainability. *Sustainability (Switzerland), 13*(19), 10648. https://doi.org/10.3390/su131910648

Mansour, N. (2024). Students' and Facilitators' Experiences With Synchronous and Asynchronous Online Dialogic Discussions and E-Facilitation in Understanding the Nature of Science. *Education and Information Technologies, 29*(12), 15965–15997. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-024-12473-w

Mello, J. E., Manuj, I., & Flint, D. J. (2021). Leveraging Grounded Theory in Supply Chain Research: A Researcher and Reviewer Guide. *International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management, 51*(10), 1108–1129. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPDLM-12-2020-0439

Ou, G., Zhao, K., Zuo, R., & Wu, J. (2024). Effects of Research Funding on the Academic Impact and Societal Visibility of Scientific Research. *Journal of Informetrics, 18*(4), 101592. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2024.101592

Prasetia, I., Pasaribu, F., Nurmadiah, Arifin, M., Nasution, D. K., & Suprayetno, E. (2025). The Power of the Mobilizer Lecturer in the Independent Campus Program: An Exploration of Roles, Strategies, and Impact. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 24*(6), 609–631. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.24.6.28

Priya, A. (2021). Case Study Methodology of Qualitative Research: Key Attributes and Navigating the Conundrums in Its Application. *Sociological Bulletin, 70*(1), 94–110. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038022920970318

Prosek, E. A., & Gibson, D. M. (2021). Promoting Rigorous Research by Examining Lived Experiences: A Review of Four Qualitative Traditions. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 99*(2), 167–177. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12364

Rachman, A. A., Heryadi, R. D., Rachman, J. B., & Yani, Y. M. (2024). Challenges and Opportunities in Higher Education Diplomacy of World Class Universities in Indonesia: Analysing the Network Environment of Public Diplomacy. *Cogent Social Sciences, 10*(1), 2384537. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2384537

Renjith, V., Yesodharan, R., Noronha, J., Ladd, E., & George, A. (2021). Qualitative Methods in Health Care Research. *International Journal of Preventive Medicine, 12*(1), 20. https://doi.org/10.4103/ijpvm.IJPVM_321_19

Rosser, A. (2023). Higher Education in Indonesia: The Political Economy of Institution-Level Governance. *Journal of Contemporary Asia, 53*(1), 53–78. https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2021.2010120

Rossoni, A. L., de Vasconcellos, E. P. G., & de Castilho Rossoni, R. L. (2024). Barriers and Facilitators of University-Industry Collaboration for Research, Development and Innovation: A Systematic Review. *Management Review Quarterly, 74*(3), 1841–1877. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11301-023-00349-1

Ruslan, I., & Irham, M. A. (2022). The Role of Cultural Literacy and Peace Education in Harmonization of Religious Communities. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research, 13*(3), 174–204.

Sasnal, M., Lorenz, K. A., McCaa, M., Wu, A., Morris, A. M., Schenker, Y., Shreve, S. T., & Giannitrapani, K. F. (2023). "It's Not Us Versus Them": Building Cross-Disciplinary Relationships in the Perioperative Period. *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management, 65*(4), 263–272. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpainsymman.2022.12.140

Scharp, K. M. (2021). Thematic Co-Occurrence Analysis: Advancing a Theory and Qualitative Method to Illuminate Ambivalent Experiences. *Journal of Communication, 71*(4), 545–571. https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqab015

Seim, J. (2024). Participant Observation, Observant Participation, and Hybrid Ethnography. *Sociological Methods and Research, 53*(1), 121–152. https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124120986209

Shen, J., & Chou, R. J. (2022). Rural Revitalization of Xiamei: The Development Experiences of Integrating Tea Tourism With Ancient Village Preservation. *Journal of Rural Studies, 90*, 42–52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2022.01.006

Tejedor, G., Sánchez-Carracedo, F., & Segalàs, J. (2024). Education for Sustainable Development in Higher Education Institutions. *World Sustainability Series, Part F2517*(1), 45–60. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-49853-4_4

Wahid, N., Warraich, N. F., & Tahira, M. (2022). Factors Influencing Scholarly Publication Productivity: A Systematic Review. *Information Discovery and Delivery, 50*(1), 22–33. https://doi.org/10.1108/IDD-04-2020-0036

Wawak, S., Teixeira Domingues, J. P., & Sampaio, P. (2024). Quality 4.0 in Higher Education: Reinventing Academic-Industry-Government Collaboration During Disruptive Times. *TQM Journal, 36*(6), 1569–1590. https://doi.org/10.1108/TQM-07-2023-0219

Wilczewska, M., & Nazarko, J. (2024). Developing Grounded Theory Systematic Approach for Logistics and Supply Chain Management Research. *Journal of Business Logistics, 45*(4), e12396. https://doi.org/10.1111/jbl.12396

Winoto, S. (2022). Improving Curriculum and Lecturers: Challenges to Quality Based-Technology. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research, 13*(2), 221–242.

Wong, B., Chiu, Y. L. T., Copsey-Blake, M., & Nikolopoulou, M. (2022). A Mapping of Graduate Attributes: What Can We Expect From UK University Students? *Higher Education Research and Development, 41*(4), 1340–1355. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2021.1882405

Yu, Z., Zhu, X., & Liu, X. (2022). Characterizing Metro Stations via Urban Function: Thematic Evidence From Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) in Hong Kong. *Journal of Transport Geography, 99,* 103299. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2022.103299