



Research Article

ASSESSING THE SKILLS NEEDED FOR LEADERS OF BILINGUAL SCHOOLS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract.

This study assessed the need to establish a new educational program called Masters of Bilingual Education Management (MBEM) at the Post Graduate School, State University of Malang (SUM). This study was conducted using a mixed method with surveys and focus group interviews as the data gathering methods. This study involved 89 active university students and 79 teachers/school principals completing the questionnaire about their aspirations for the MBEM graduate attributes. Six teachers/school principals and 8 students joined focused group interviews to share their experiences in bilingual education and their recommendations on the MBEM study program. The findings indicated two key points that should be considered for establishing the MBEM study program. First, the main competencies that are determined to be the graduate attributes are managerial knowledge and skills in the context of bilingual education. Second, a decision should be made whether the new study program will focus on the applied management of bilingual education or the science of management of bilingual education. Overall, the participants showed enthusiasm and interest toward the establishment of MBEM as the graduate will be equipped with the knowledge and skill to manage bilingual education and, thus, ready to be the school principal or program coordinator. The study findings recommend further analysis of the curriculum design resulting from this study for justification.

Keywords: management of bilingual education, Indonesia

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1. INTRODUCTION

This study assessed the need for the establishment of a Master of Bilingual Education Management (MBEM) study program at State University of Malang (SUM). The first objective of this study was to assess the need for the establishment of the MBEM study program at SUM. In the context of this study, a needs assessment was conducted to study stakeholders' perspectives and preferences. The main focus of this study is to obtain empirical evidence in determining whether there is a need, demand, and interest for a bilingual education management study program. The second objective of this research is to solicit useful inputs for curriculum and pedagogy development for

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the MBEM program that are appropriate to the needs of the Indonesian context. The resulting data will serve as an evaluation tool for whether there is sufficient interest and rationale in establishing the MBEM Study Program.

This study was piloted to 12 bilingual school teachers/leaders in some schools in Indonesia, and it revealed challenges of managing bilingual schools, among others due to teachers' English low competencies, lack of capabilities in combining national and international curriculum, and the absence of framework in implementing bilingual education (Muniroh, Febrianti, Rachmajanti, Sobri, & Kusumaningrum, 2022). From this piloting study, the leaders of bilingual schools acknowledged that they acquired their competencies to manage the program after years of experience. They were not specially trained to be the leader or manager of bilingual schools. The pilot study suggests a need for a postgraduate study program that will prepare its graduates with capabilities in managing bilingual schools (Muniroh et al., 2022). SUM has the advantage of having several excellent language education study programs so that it can be used as a strong capital to establish this MBEM study program. This MBEM master's qualification can be a valuable investment for Indonesia's future because it fits the challenges and needs faced by the world of education in Indonesia (Norman, 2011). Schools often apply mechanically by taking international-based programs such as Cambridge Assessment International Education (CAIE), which is a testing organization, not a bilingual educational institution (Tran & Le, 2020). Many schools rely on CAIE to implement a bilingual education program without designing their own program in its own right. Every country and every school has different student backgrounds, language communities, and learning objectives (Hoang & Filipi, 2019) so that experts and professionals are needed in designing it. Of course, this requires a strong and well-established higher education function, in essence, special content and curriculum need to be prepared. Therefore, before the MBEM study program is established, the needs and curriculum must be identified (Szczypkowski, 1980).

2. METHOD

The needs assessment employed in this study was carried out using a mix-method with surveys, and focus group interviews (FGI) as data gathering method (Grant, 2002, 2018; Gray, 2008; Harrington & Knox, 1982; Lin et al., 2012). This study involved two groups of participants, namely student group and teacher group. There were 89 (eighty nine) students of undergraduate and postgraduate programs participating in this study. The student group consisted of 89.9% (80 respondents) of master program students, 5.6% (5 respondents) undergraduate students, and the 4.5% (4 respondents) doctoral program



students. In short, most of the respondents from the student group were the undergraduates. Another group of participants were a teacher group which consists of principals, vice principals, subject teachers, homeroom teachers, extracurricular teachers, and curriculum coordinators to find out what is needed to establish a MBEM program. Based on their education background, the participants in the teacher groups were 2, 67.1% (53 respondents) bachelor's degree graduates, 30.4% (24 respondents) master's program graduates, and 2.5% (2 respondents) doctoral degree. None of the respondents from the teacher group graduated from high school because they have worked for more than 5 years and held respectable positions. Six teachers (one of whom was an elementary school principal) and 8 students were interviewed to dig further information about their experiences of bilingual education and their recommendations.

The student survey contained 15 Questions (9 open ended questions and 6 close ended questions) that can be finished in 5 minutes. The teacher/leader survey contained 26 questions (20 open ended questions and 6 close ended questions). The questions of the survey were adapted from Indrawati, Savitri, and Kamidjan (2017), and were piloted to 12 teachers/leaders of bilingual schools prior to massive data collection to ensure the instrument validity (Muniroh et al., 2022). The Focus Group Interview (FGI) was held for one hour for each group participant. Both the questionnaire and survey were administered in Bahasa Indonesia to ensure smoothness in delivering the responses for the participants, without thinking about English grammar, sentence structure and pronunciation (Cortazzi, Pilcher, & Jin, 2011). To analyse the data derived from the survey, descriptive statistics was employed by tabulating the frequency of participants' responses which then were presented in percentage (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, content analysis (Patton, 2015) was employed for the FGI data dealing with the participants' aspiration on the new study program. The FGI results were presented in the form of excerpts, and the participants' names were written as pseudonyms.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Inquiry about the Existence of Similar Study Program

The results from the survey inform opportunities for establishing an MBEM study program based on the participants' knowledge of similar study programs at other universities, interest to enrol to the MBEM program at SUM, and willingness to share information about the MBEM program to others (see Table 1).

TABLE 1:	Opportunities	for E	stablishing	the	Program.

Aspects	Student Responses (%)		Teacher Responses (%)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Know other universities offer similar program as MBEM	5.6	94.4	6.3	93.7
Interested to enrol in the MBEM program at SUM	48.3	51.7	55.7	44.3
Willing to recommend others to enrol to the MBEM program at SUM	94.4	5.6	98.7	1.3

The data from a student survey regarding the existence of the MBEM study program revealed that 94.4% of respondents did not know if public/private universities offer a similar program to MBEM, but 5.6% did. In other words, it is very likely that the program has not been available so far, which is confirmed by the data in the Indonesian higher education databases (https://pddikti.kemdikbud.go.id/). Further, 51.7% of student respondents would be interested in enrolling in the new program once it is established, while 48.3% of them were not interested. The reason could be that the MBEM study program is not familiar so that the tendency of respondents' interest is still not high. Interestingly, the survey results also show the student participants' willingness to recommend the MBEM program to others, with 94.4% of respondents are willing to recommend friends, family, and others to enroll in the MBEM program if offered by SUM, and only a very small percentage (5.6%) did not. In other words, most respondents indicated a willingness to persuade others to join the program if it was offered by SUM.

The data from a teacher group survey regarding the existence of the MBEM program shows similar trends with the results from the student group. As can be seen in Table 1, 93.7% of respondents stated that they did not know of public/private universities that offer MBEM programs, but 6.3% did. In other words, it is very likely that the program is not yet available. It turns out that 55.7% of respondents would be interested in enrolling in the MBEM program if the SUM postgraduate school had offered it. In contrast, 44.3% of the teacher participants showed no interest, which could be triggered by their unfamiliarity with the MBEM program. However, the results also show that the majority of the teacher participants (98.7%) are willing to recommend the program to friends, family, and others to enrol and take part in the MBEM program if offered by SUM postgraduate school. Only a very small percentage (1.3%) did not. In summary, most of the respondents indicated a willingness to persuade others to join the program if it was offered by the SUM.

Students' Previous Experiences of Joining Bilingual Program



The FGI with the students dug information about the students' experiences of joining bilingual programs in their high school, when the international standard school pilot project (Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional) program was implemented. Jessi (pseudonym) recalled her observation on her teachers' English language proficiency as follows.

"The teachers, especially those whose education background is not English, but science, mathematics are not familiar with using two languages in teaching. Their English competence is low. Some of my friends had difficulty understanding the lesson because the teachers' explanation is not clear." (Jessi, undergraduate student)

Not only teachers, students also felt the challenge of using foreign language, especially English in communication in the contexts of bilingual program at Muslim boarding school where English and Arabic are used. One of the student participants, Tesla, studied at Madrasah Aliyah where English is used as the language at schools and dormitories. She said,

"I used to go to Aliyah school which uses Arabic and English, the principal decided that English or Arabic is used both at school and the dormitory to increase our proficiency. It was challenging...the reason is to help students who have difficulty understanding the material presented using both languages." (Tesla, UIN undergraduate student)

At the university level, for the context of international classes, there are also obstacles in the English language skills of students and lecturers. Molly said,

"In the International Class Program, several courses select English language skills. There is a written test and an interview test. The obstacles faced by students are usually limited knowledge of English vocabulary, especially those that are rarely spoken in everyday life. The second is that the lecturers are not from the English department. Except for lecturers with foreign graduates who are superior in delivering material." (Molly, S2 student)

Molly's statement above shows the importance of building the English competence of students and teachers, as well as students and lecturers for bilingual and international classes. It seems that teachers' lacking in English proficiency is a common problem faced in bilingual programs, and this confirmed the previous studies on the practice of bilingual schools in Indonesian contexts (Jayanti & Sujarwo, 2019; Ma'ruf & Sari, 2020; Mukminin, Haryanto, Fajaryani, & Thabran, 2013; Zein, 2016). The results of the FGI can be the consideration for the MBEM program to implement English as the means of communication in the teaching and learning process.



3.2. Expected Competencies for the Graduates

The data from the survey also inform the participants' aspiration regarding the graduate competencies (see Table 2). Both groups of participants surprisingly nominate three similar top three competencies for the graduates' attributes, namely: bilingual education management, bilingual education supervision, and leadership in bilingual education.

Percent (%) **Perspectives** Perspectives Percent (%) Students' Teachers' on the **Expected** on the **Expected** Competencies Competencies Education 88.8 Education 88.6 Bilingual Bilingual Management Management Education 55 Bilingual Bilingual Education 57 Supervision Supervision Leadership in Bilingual 51.7 Leadership in Bilingual 48.1 Education Education Teaching skills 19.1 English/Foreign Language 30.4 Competencies Bilingual Education 19.1 Pedagogical Competencies 23.9 Psychology Multimedia & Technology 11.2 Curriculum Development 15.2 Coaching skills 10.9 English/Foreign Language Competencies Communication 3.4 Strategies motivate 6.5 to students Curriculum Development 1.1 Evaluation & Assessment 6.5 Research skills Media development 2.2

TABLE 2: Graduate Expected Competencies.

Table 2 presents aspiration from both student and teacher groups regarding graduate competencies that the MBEM program should be included in the curriculum. The student group respondents recommended the MBEM program to have a curricular structure with the following subjects: Bilingual Education Management (88.8%), Bilingual Education Supervision (55%), Leadership in Bilingual Education (51.7%), Teaching Competence and Educational Psychology in Bilingual Education (19.1%), Multimedia and Technology (11.2%), Proficiency in English or other Foreign Languages (9%), Communication Skills (3.4%), and at least 1.1% for Research and Curriculum Development Ability.

The results from the teacher group indicate almost similar competencies to the ones proposed by the student group for MBEM curricular structure. The teacher group respondents recommended MBEM program to have a curricular structure with the following subjects: Bilingual Education Management (88.6%), Bilingual Education Supervision (57%), Leadership in Bilingual Education (48 ,1.7%), English/other foreign languages



(30.4%), How to apply teaching strategies in bilingual classes (23.9%), Curriculum Development (15.2%), Ability to conduct training for development schools (10.9%), How to motivate students to be active in class and How to evaluate and assess learning (6.5%), and Public Relations (4.3%). Finally, the least expected skill to be achieved was 'How to develop teaching media for bilingual class' (2.2%). Thus, curriculum content should be largely aimed at equipping prospective students with relevant knowledge and skills for Bilingual Education Management.

3.3. Competencies in Demand for Managing Bilingual Program at All Levels of Education

The results of the FGI with teachers and school principals indicate that the capability to manage bilingual education is needed in society at all levels of education. The following is the statement from Hirsi, an elementary school teacher:

"Competence to manage bilingual schools is very much needed. The elementary school where I teach actually uses bilingual language, but now its application is starting to fade. We need a department that builds this capability to shape the concept, direction, and design of the bilingual class in a clear and orderly manner." (Hirsi, elementary school teacher)

Participants who are high school teachers (Neni dan Nana) also said the same thing. As said by Neni, as follows,

"Yes, this MBEM program is highly needed. As a teacher in a boarding school that has two curricula, I am still confused about the mapping of the two curricula. We are required to speak English, but there is no clear direction and system. So, it would be very good if this program is established, because it would give more knowledge about proper bilingual education." (Neni, high school teacher)

In the pesantren environment, the capability to manage bilingual programs is also needed, as reported by Nana, a pesantren teacher:

"Yes, MBEM is demanded. Because mastery of foreign languages for teachers is one of the requirements in the accreditation assessment. So, if there is no special guidance, then the teachers will keep facing difficulties." (Nana, teacher at Islamic boarding school)

The findings from FGI with teacher group participants highlight the stakeholders' need for an MBEM program that will educate prospective leaders of bilingual schools to cope with the existing demand: teachers' strong competencies in foreign language, especially English, and leaders with competencies in management of bilingual schools.



3.4. Participants' Aspirations Regarding Graduate Competencies

The results of FGI with the teacher group inform the participants' aspiration for the MBEM graduate competencies which include pedagogic competencies, leadership, psychology, and English language skills, as conveyed by Hirsi below.

"In addition to having competencies in pedagogic skills, the graduates must have good leadership skills and environmental psychology. So, when they graduate, they will have a strong mentality, and can survive in any environment and terrain. Unaffected by others. In addition, they also need to master foreign language proficiency relevant to their field." (Hirsi, elementary school teacher)

Of the several competencies expected by participants, the two main competencies that are expected are foreign language skills and competence to manage bilingual programs, as said by Sentot,

"Graduates must have language skills and managerial competencies." (Sentot, Elementary School principal).

Additionally, competence as a school supervisor was also mentioned by the teacher group. Nuri said,

"Relevant to the name of the MBEM study program, it is not enough if the graduates just be professional in pedagogies. They are also supposed to have competent material development on managerial and supervisory skills for specifically bilingual schools which are certainly different from regular schools." (Nana, Islamic boarding school teacher).

In short, the participants from the teacher group expect the graduates' competencies to cover the fields of program management, leadership, supervision, and foreign languages, which in this case is English, which is relevant with the results from the survey in Table 2.

3.5. Prospective Professions for the Graduates

Table 3 shows the results of the analysis on the survey about the relevant profession for the MBEM graduates. The student group respondents think that the future professions that MBEM graduates might pursue will vary, including: Education Consultant (78.7%), Principal/Coordinator (75.3%), Lecturer (76.4%), School Founders (69.6%), Researchers (53.9%) and Supervisors (43.8%). In summary, there is likely to be a wide range of positions available to prospective MBEM graduates.

Students' Responses on the Prospective Professions	Percent (%)	Teachers' Responses on the Prospective Professions	
Education Consultant	78.7	Education Consultant	73.4
School Principal /Coordinator	75.3	School Principal /Coordinator	64.6
Lecturer	76.4	Bilingual program coordinator	60.8
School Founder	69.6	School Founder	67.1
Researcher	53.9	Supervisor	30.4
Supervisor	43.8	Lecturer	59.5
		Researcher	49.4

TABLE 3: Graduate Prospective Professions.

The results of the analysis in Table 3 also reveal the teacher group respondents' thoughts about the future professions that Bilingual Education Management graduates might pursue as follows: Educational Consultant (73.4%), Principal (64.6%), School Founder (67.1%), Head of Bilingual Program (60.8%), Lecturer (59.5%), Researcher (49.4%), and Supervisor (30.4%), and. In summary, it is likely that there are a variety of positions available to future graduates of the MBEM program.

3.6. Job Opportunities for Bilingual Education Management Master's Degree Graduates

The aspirations of the teachers and principals of the FGI show that with the specified competencies, the MBEM graduates have the knowledge to establish an international school, as stated by Gigih,

"Graduates will be able to establish international schools if they are given autonomy by the government to regulate their own school curricula." (Gigih, Lab High School Teacher)

Gigih also mentions autonomy as a factor that can support graduates to design a bilingual program curriculum according to the needs and context of the school.

In addition to the founder of an international school, another prospective job for MBEM graduates according to the teacher participant is to become an education consultant, as said by Nana,

"Not all schools apply bilingual language, only certain institutions are able to employ graduates as principals/school officials. There is a bigger opportunity for MBEM graduates to become a consultant." (Nana, Islamic boarding school teacher)



Nana shows the consideration of the reality in society that it is not easy for new graduates to directly become school principals, because there are not many bilingual schools, therefore according to Nana, consultants are one of the opportunities for graduates.

One of the elementary school principals in the FGI, Sentot, thought that MBEM graduates can work abroad by becoming teachers or principals of Indonesian schools. Sentot says,

"According to my experience, graduates from this department will have the opportunity to manage schools and produce teachers and principals who teach at Indonesian embassy schools abroad. Therefore, graduates should be prepared to master English and the language of the destination country." (Sentot, KS SD)

Sentot's aspirations indicate that the ability to speak English and other foreign languages is a part of the expected competence of MBEM graduates, and this data is used as an input for determining the competence of MBEM graduates.

3.7. Students' Inquiry for the New Program

There were several students participating in the FGI who asked about the uniqueness of the MBEM program compared to the international program at SUM. Nonik said,

"If bilingual education is established, then, if someone from the mathematics department wants to teach at an international school, will they be directed to have a Master Degree in Management for bilingual education or an English course?" (Nonik, UM undergraduate student)

Nonik's question is interesting as she raised issues related to content and English competencies. The MBEM is certainly unique in the way it educates the students to be prospective leaders of bilingual schools. English will be used as the medium of instruction, and thus CLIL (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh 2010) is used as the framework underlying the concept of bilingual education used in the MBEM.

Another critical issue raised by Iqbal, a participant who incidentally is a Master of Education Management student, asked the difference between the Education Management study program and MBEM program, through the following statement.

"Maybe the public thinks why do you have to go to MBEM, not just go to Management of Education with a focus on bilingual school so that it's easier to convey the material." (Molly, S2 UM student)



This critical question represents a sceptical perspective on the uniqueness of MBEM, which should be solved through a distinguished curriculum of MBEM which offers different graduate attributes than the regular master of education management study program.

Overall, the findings from the survey and FGI indicated two key points that should be considered for the establishment of the MBEM program. First, the main competences that are determined to be the graduate attributes is managerial knowledge and skills in the contexts of bilingual education. Second, a decision should be made whether the new study program will focus on applied management of bilingual education or the science of management of bilingual education to differentiate between the existing program (Master in Management of Education) and MBEM. Overall, the participants showed enthusiasm and interest toward the establishment of MBEM as the graduate will be equipped with knowledge and skill to manage bilingual education and thus, ready to be the school principal or program coordinator.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of this study is to obtain empirical evidence of the needs and interests of the stakeholder community for the opening of the MBEM study program. The results of this study show empirical evidence that there is stakeholders' need for an MBEM study program. The stakeholders involved in this study also showed a willingness to register in this new study program and or recommend this new study program to others. However, this study is still limited in the forms of aspirations from the stakeholders that dealt with expected competencies, prospective professions, and the niche of the program which need to be formulated into graduate attributes and curriculum for MBEM. There are several things that need to be followed up for the realization of the opening and sustainability of this new study program. The main thing is related to the direction of the study program, whether it is academic or applied science that approaches the profession. If the direction has been determined, the competence of graduates can be finalized along with the curriculum and the resources involved. The curriculum draft then should be justified by experts in Bilingual Education and Management of Education until it is ready to be applied for the MBEM program.



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