The Quality of Graduates of the Public Administration Master's Program

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Abstract

Universitas Terbuka (UT) Indonesia has implemented an open and long distance education system since 1984. One of the Study Programs that organizes open and long distance education master's degrees at the Open University is a Public Administration Masters Program under the Faculty of Law, Social Sciences, and Political science. In accordance with the regulations by the Ministry of Research and Technology, each study program which has been running for four years and has produced graduates must conduct alumni or graduate tracing studies conducted in a systematic, institutional, and continuous manner to determine the quality of graduates of the study program. This research was conducted through a survey of graduates of the Public Administration Masters Program. The results of the study indicate that the quality and competitiveness of graduates of the Public Administration Masters Program are generally in the good category. Most students have worked and after graduating most of them get promoted. The element that needs to be considered by the Public Administration Masters Program is the implementation of online tutorials and the use of technology related to work that are considered to be not optimal in increasing graduates' knowledge and graduates. Improving the quality of graduates of the Public Administration Masters Program can be sought through efforts to improve the quality of learning assistance services to students.

Keywords: open and distance education, study of graduates, graduates of master's programs

Introduction

Open University (UT) implements an education system that is different from conventional universities. If in general conventional higher education implements face-to-face education system, UT implements a distance education system. One concept of the distance education

system is related to learning methods (More, 1973) where distance education systems as a learning method that the teaching process occurs separately from the learning process, so that communication between teaching staff and students must be facilitated through printed materials, media electronics, and other media. Holmberg (1977) emphasizes the distance education system as a form of education that includes various forms of learning at various levels of education that occur without the supervision of tutors directly and / or continuously towards students in the same location, but requires a planning process, organizing and monitoring an educational organization, and providing guidance and tutorial processes, both in direct (real conversation) and simulation (simulated conversations).

There are two components in the distance education system that are very important (Keegan, 1980), namely distance learning systems and distance teaching systems. There are differences in the concepts of the two components where the distance learning system emphasizes more on students and learner-centered processes, whereas the distance teaching system emphasizes the teaching process, organizational system, and the instructor (teacher and system centered). Harvest (1999) explains that the distance education system is very potential not only for meeting the needs of individual and independent learning, but also for efforts to distribute education in the form of mass education, especially in developing countries such as Indonesia. which greatly requires the acceleration of the process of improving the quality of human resources for development.

To realize the Open University's mission in providing access to higher education through a distance learning system for Indonesian citizens, the Public Administration Master's Program (MAP) was opened under the Faculty of Law, Social Sciences and Political Sciences. In 2004 the MAP program was opened for the first time for students at UPBJJ (Distance Learning Program Unit) - UT Bengkulu. The implementation of the MAP Program consists of two systems, namely the regular system and the online system. The regular system requires

face-to-face tutorials (TTM) where there are at least 20 students in an UPBJJ. The online

system does not implement face-to-face tutorials, so MAP students with online systems are

more spread to many UPBJJ areas. The objectives of the MAP Program are as follows (Katalog

Pascasarjana, 2018).

1. Produce graduates who are able to solve public problems in a comprehensive and integrative
manner by conducting research and development in the fields of administration and public
policy, both independently and in groups, especially issues of administration and public policy
based on broad interdisciplinary insights in the economic, political and social fields culture.
2. Produce public administrators who are standard in the field of public administration and
professionals in carrying out their duties as public servants.
3. Produce graduates who are able to anticipate and manage environmental changes to provide
fair services and achieve public welfare.
4. Produce graduates who can apply the science of public administration professionally by
using capabilities in the field of information and communication technology.
5. Produce graduates who are able to carry out research that analyzes complex development
problems and applies analytical and conceptual tools professionally to solve national and
regional development problems related to the implementation of regional autonomy.
6. Produce and maintain a network of cooperation agreements with the Regional Government
in the implementation of education, research and community service.

Not all students are able to adapt easily to the implementation of distance learning

systems because this system demands high independence from students to study. There are still

many who do not understand the distance education system, so that erroneous perceptions arise

towards institutions providing distance education (PJJ), especially at the level of higher

education (Wardani, 2004). If it is said that there are links between tutors and students,

Sukartawi (2004) said that one of the obstacles in the implementation of distance education is

the lack or absence of interaction between lecturers and students. Students who are members

of PTJJ institutions sometimes have difficulty understanding the courses taken due to the lack

of direct assistance from classmates, lack of direct access to resource persons, and also a lack

of understanding of the technology used (Andriani, 2004). With some obstacles faced by MAP

students who learn by using a distance learning system, the exit survey can be useful to obtain

information or feedback from students who have just graduated from their studies in order to

develop the institutional aspects of the MAP Program while improving the quality of MAP Program management.

The purpose of this study was to describe the educational outcomes produced by the MAP program to get a picture of the quality of graduates of the MAP study program

Literature review

Tracer Study

Graduate tracking studies are empirical studies that can produce valuable information in evaluating an educational program. Study information can be used as a quality assurance effort for the institution as a whole, in the sense that the institution continually repairs the program in accordance with the input from the results of the graduate traceability study (Schomburg, 2003). Student satisfaction can make a strength in providing attractiveness to prospective students or the community, a good response from students can have a positive impact on the institution or college they favor (Putra, et al., 2018, p.5).

The study of understanding of graduates plays a role in evaluating the curriculum of a study program, showing the strengths and weaknesses of the program in order to produce quality graduates. Graduates have a more independent bond with the institution of learning so that graduates have a more objective perception and perspective in providing information about the courses they have taken. Thus, the opinion of graduates is information that is very important for the development of an institution.

Information about how a graduate search study is conducted, tracing the history is very varied, from a simple survey form, to a large study that is very elaborative, which takes enormous time, effort and funds. Experience about how people carry out graduate tracking studies is a valuable lesson for any institution that will and has done more or less the same thing.

Alumni

Alumni are those who have completed a teaching and learning process in a particular study program. According to Ridley and Boone (2001) who explain about royal or loyal alumni, where loyal or royal alumni are graduates who recognize the contribution given by educational institutions to themselves so that the alumni become professionals and have active interests during college. According to Faturrahman & Muqtadiroh (2013) what is meant by alumni or graduates is the term for someone who has completed education to the end in an institutional institution. Thus what is meant by alumni is someone who has left an educational institution.

According to Suharti (2012) alumni are elements that cannot be separated from universities, because alumni are representatives of universities. Furthermore, Suharti explained that alumni also have their own benefits for universities, both in academic and pragmatic fields, such as curriculum updates, based on relevance to the needs of the market or the world of work; universities can be developed as a lifelong learning media for alumni; develop satisfaction customer indexs; and utilization of alumni as guest lecturers, professional lecturers, seminars, training, etc. (Suharti, 2012).

Research Methodology

This research is descriptive analysis using survey methods in order to describe the extent of the educational outcomes produced by the MAP program to obtain a picture of the quality of graduates of the Administrative Sciences   in the field of interest in Public Administration. In this study, the population is all students of the Public Administration Masters Program, UT graduates who graduated in the 2017 period as many as 700 are spread over 27 UPBJJ UT Master Programs Organizers. Of the respondents distributed to as many students, there were

101 questionnaires. The amount was obtained after going through 3 times the questionnaire to obtain an adequate number of samples. Data collection is done by using a survey method using a questionnaire from the Center for Quality Assurance Open University (Pusmintas UT) and structured interview guidelines as a data collection tool.

Discussion

A. Reasons for entering MAP study program

When asked what was the reason for entering MAP UT, most of the respondents answered that they entered MAP because they did not need to leave their assignments or jobs (56%). The implementation of the MAP study program is motivated by several factors, including: (a) In the current era of globalization, public administration in Indonesia has become a demand and need of government institutions in developing human resources; (b) Conventional universities have not been able to reach prospective students spread all over Indonesia; (c) Various public administration curricula in many universities in Indonesia are still oriented towards face-to-face education. Based on this background, the mission of the study program is tailored to the needs of students to obtain knowledge in accordance with the current field of work and at the same time do not have to leave daily tasks.

To meet the needs of students with these conditions, the mission of the MAP study program is: (1) Enhancing the ability of Public Administrators to solve public problems comprehensively and integratively; (2) Improving the performance standards of Public Administrators as public servants and implementing public activities; (3) Improving the ability of Public Administrators to anticipate and manage environmental changes to achieve justice and welfare of the community; (4) Developing the field of Public Administration through studies and research; and (5) Developing the capacity of Public Administrators in applying the science of public administration in public life.

A large percentage of respondents who answered that they did not have to leave work to study in the MAP Study Program showed the importance of the teaching and learning process through a medium that uses the distance education system, does not necessarily have to go to a campus, and the main thing is still able to carry out tasks and his daily work. Therefore the use of multimedia in the learning process can be expected to improve learning outcomes (Hardhono, 2004).

Associated with learning without having to leave work, Wardani (2004) explains that the desire to learn while working is one manifestation of lifelong learning ability, learning ability will be able to overcome all kinds of obstacles and in other words there are no obstacles that cannot be overcome if someone does want and want to learn.

Other students said they entered the MAP program because the diploma was accepted by the government (17%). A number of students consider that in organizing the teaching and learning process there needs to be a legality organized by a Study Program. The legality in question is the recognition of the government of graduates of the Study Program which is indicated by the existence of accreditation by an institution called the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN PT), with a minimum level of accreditation received by the government is B. Some universities carry out study programs without pay attention to the accreditation of BAN PT so that students have difficulty using their diplomas. For students who are State Civil Apparatus (ASN), the legality of a diploma is very important because they will be able to officially use the MAP degree given by the Open University, while also enabling them to get promotion in their work such as getting a promotion or rising to a level or class of positions that are higher.

On the other hand UT as one of the mega universities in the world, UT has a management with high complexity. According to Suparman (2004) due to the distribution of the number of UT students who reach almost all corners of the sub-district in the country, it

causes difficulties in the field of transportation and communication, because Indonesia still does not have adequate facilities and infrastructure in that field. With the limited facilities and infrastructure, the demand for UT students' independence is very high even though the culture of independent learning has not yet been formed among the community, including among UT students themselves. Furthermore, the culture of independent learning has been exacerbated by the phenomena that live in society, namely what is important is the diploma, not the learning process (Suparman, 2004).

Thus there is actually a connection and inconsistency between education at the Open University that implements independence with the needs of students who actually only seek diplomas without regard to the teaching and learning process and ultimately students only pursue diplomas recognized by the government because with the aim to improve career and at the same time increase income or the salary, for students who are already working.

B. Learning Experience at UT

In this sub-section it is shown about the aspects of teaching and learning and the impact of the learning experience of UT MAP students.

1. Aspects of Teaching and Learning

The results of the study show that most aspects of teaching and learning are used or used well by graduates who are characterized by a high enough percentage. However, aspects such as Tutorial Online, are considered to be of little application in the workplace by graduates (42.9%).

Quite a lot of students have not been able to optimize the results of the learning process through organizing online tutorials. It is possible for students to experience difficulties when operating an online tutorial application organized by the MAP program. Students may also not be able to express ideas and thoughts in accordance with the questions or discourse raised in

the online tutorial. On the other hand there is the possibility that students do not consider it important to follow online tutorials and only focus on studying material obtained from face-to-face tutorials or teaching materials in the form of these modules.

Actually online tutorials or internet-based electronic tutorials conducted by the Open University are one of the best methods of Distance Education to bring institutions closer to students without students being constrained by distance and time. Through this electronic tutorial, students feel served and cared for by their learning needs (Darmayanti, et al., 2014). However, because of the possibility that students have not been able to absorb knowledge through online tutorial activities or activities, students still experience problems when applying knowledge gained from the interaction of teaching and learning processes through online tutorials.

2. Impact of Learning Experience

Aspects concerning the impact of learning experience provide understanding and information about the learning experiences that they have acquired as long as they take the MAP UT study program to improve their abilities in academic abilities, communication skills, use of technology, skills according to the field of science and attitudes that include independence in making decisions as well as the confidence of graduates. The results of the study show that in general the impact of this learning experience has many benefits except for the use of technology related to work (42.9%). This shows that the technological aspects for graduates are still an obstacle to increasing their capacity to carry out their daily tasks. It is possible because of the age factor that it is not responsive to technological changes that are quite fast.

According to Suparman and Zuhairi (2004) although the use of technology in the world of education has succeeded in attracting the interest of many people, students need

adequate experience in applying the technology and this takes time. The use of technology that is not well planned can lead to incomplete communication, incomplete or delayed, even not reaching the students regularly or not being captured properly.

The role of media and technology is very dominant in Distance Education because it replaces the role and function of education as in face-to-face education. The latest developments in the field of information and communication technology provide opportunities and challenges for distance education to meet the diverse needs of students. The technology-based learning process requires and at the same time helps students recognize and utilize the available technology (Zuhairi, 2004).

Thus in the implementation of the implementation of education using the distance learning system there are obstacles faced by students. On the one hand, students are still experiencing difficulties in using information and communication technology where this technology is important in distance education, on the other hand, students are not optimally found in utilizing the technology that has an impact on the implementation of technology in the world of work.

C. Current Competence

Graduates' competencies are generally good, such as aspects of integrity, professionalism, breadth of insight between fields of science and collaboration in teams and there are only aspects that are considered inadequate, namely the use of foreign languages (English) (54.5%). The fundamental weakness of MAP study program students is in English both in terms of oral use and in terms of reading English literature. In general, the problem of foreign languages, especially English, is still an obstacle for the people of Indonesia. Various reasons for the use of English that are still inadequate both because of the environment that is less conducive to implementing the use of English as well because the form of teaching English

at the elementary or secondary level that still does not allow graduates to be able to understand and practice the use of English.

D. Graduate Satisfaction

There are two aspects in graduate satisfaction, namely academic services and administrative services.

1. Academic Services

Graduate satisfaction from academic service aspects can be seen from 4 indicators, face-to-face tutorials, online tutorials, academic guidance, and technical / thesis guidance. Aspects that need to get attention among the 4 aspects are academic guidance, where students have not been well served (42.9%).

Academic guidance is one of the important aspects in the teaching and learning process. Academic guidance can take the form of determining lecturers assigned by the study program to assist students in the learning process. Besides academic guidance can be done by lecturers to students when students start college in the early semester or when students will complete their studies. The purpose of academic guidance is so that students can plan their studies, solve problems encountered in the learning process, and be able to follow the teaching and learning process optimally so that they can graduate studies with satisfactory results.

Related to academic guidance organized by the MAP program manager, there is a tendency for students to receive less attention from the organizer of the study program. This issue needs to be considered carefully by the study program providers so that academic guidance services for MAP program students can be further optimized.

2. Administrative Services

Graduate satisfaction is seen from the aspect of administrative services. From various administrative service indicators, the aspect of case resolution in the value of the course needs to be taken into consideration by the MAP Program (57.1%). Various reasons cause students to have difficulty in organizing the teaching and learning process. One aspect related to administrative services is related to the subject matter. MAP program services for students who have problems in relation to the value of courses are still an obstacle. Some students get inadequate services from the manager of the study program, for example, the lack of responsiveness of the manager in replying to student questions or the lack of transparency in the form of assessment of the course so that students who feel graduated become dissatisfied with the value of the courses they obtain.

E. Graduates' Careers

Graduates' careers can be seen from the aspect of career change after graduating and getting a promotion after graduation

1. Career Changes after graduation

Career changes after graduation can be seen from 3 indicators, namely getting a promotion, getting an increase in income and getting an award for the achievements. Based on the results of the study, information can be obtained that the aspect of increase in income only has the lowest percentage (28.6%). Most students are government employees whose incomes or salaries per month are generally the same depending on their class or rank. Therefore, from 3 aspects related to career after passing the exam, students generally feel that there is no change or change in salary or income that is not much different from their time before studying at the MAP program. However, there is the possibility that students who have finished the MAP

program will then quickly get a promotion, then there is the possibility of getting an increase in salary or income

.

2. Position promotion after graduation

For the aspect of promotion, most of the respondents (71.4%) have received promotion at least 1 time promotion. The positive thing gained from most MAP program graduates is that they immediately get promotions or promotions after they graduate and get their diplomas. On the other hand there are students who feel fortunate because they can use their diplomas to fill a vacant position because they require diploma requirements with a master level.

b) Expectations for Further Study

Only a few respondents have the desire to continue to S3 if UT opens a S3 program in a field that is closely allied with MAP (13%). If asked to students about the prospect of continuing to a higher level that is a doctoral level, only a few students who answered want to continue. This condition is worth understanding because the higher the level of education, the heavier the workload will be. Students who are still working then continue to the doctoral level, must work hard to complete their S3 program because the doctoral S3 program will require many assignments including research. In addition to the increasingly heavy burden of education, the burden of expenses will also be higher so that not all students are able to allocate funds to pay for education costs at the doctoral level.

Conclusion

From the various indicators studied, it can be concluded that the graduates of the MAP study program have sufficient quality related to the field of study they are engaged in and when applying the knowledge they have acquired while taking the MAP study program. The problem

of learning services to students must be improved so that students do not get problems in relation to academic services and administrative services. On the other hand students benefit from graduating from the MAP program because their diplomas can be used to enhance their careers or occupy higher positions.

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