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KUKER (Curricular, Co-Curricular, and Extracurricular) Based Integrated Learning Model Development in Strengthening the Competitiveness and Independence

Syaiful Amri[1*], Dedy Febry Rachman[2], Rosyia Wardani[3], Baiq Ertin Helmida[1]

[1] Manajemen, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi AMM, Mataram, Indonesia
[2] Ilmu Komputer, Universitas Bumigora, Mataram, Indonesia
[3] Manajemen, Universitas Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia
**Corresponding author email: syaifulamri5@gmail.com*

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ABSTRACT

This study is to create an Integrated Learning Model Based on KUKER (Curricular, Co-curricular, Extracurricular) to improve the competitiveness and independence of AMM Mataram School of Economics graduates. The research method adapts the Borg & Gall model, which comprises problem identification, expert validation, limited trials, and qualitative and quantitative data analysis, using a mixed-method design (qualitative-quantitative) and a Research and Development (R&D) approach. Qualitative analysis findings reveal a rise in holistic integration among learning components, simplicity of structure, and digital-based innovations. While 100% of students said strong agreement on the gain in job preparedness, soft skills, and independence, expert validation showed a rise in the average score from 2.57 (fair) to 4.0 (very good). Therefore, this study demonstrates the KUKER model's efficacy and viability for use.

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INTRODUCTION

Higher education is required not only to generate academically qualified graduates but also those with great competitiveness and independence in the globalizing world and the more complicated and competitive 4.0 industrial revolution (World Economic Forum, 2020). As professional human resource development organizations, higher education institutions have a strategic role in preparing graduates who can fulfill the needs of the labor market and real-world difficulties in an adaptive and inventive way (UNESCO, 2015).

Graduates' competitiveness is shaped not only by knowledge of theory in the classroom but also by practical skills, leadership, creativity, and flexibility developed through holistic learning experiences (Widodo & Mustofa, 2020). Thus, in producing graduates who are not only capable but also independent and character-driven, an integrated learning approach among curricular (academic), co-curricular (academic support), and extracurricular (interest and talent development) activities becomes quite relevant and strategic (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2020).

One of the private higher education institutions in West Nusa Tenggara, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi AMM (STIE AMM), keeps working to raise the caliber of its graduates using several learning innovations. The Integrated Learning Model Based on KUKER (Curricular, Co-curricular, and Extracurricular) is one of the strategies that has started to be created. This strategy is thought to be able to produce a more contextual and relevant learning environment as well as enhance the synergy between the academic and non-academic spheres in forming exceptional and job-ready graduate profiles.

The creation of a successful learning model, therefore, calls for thorough scientific research, especially on the suitable kind of integration, implementation strategies compatible with the campus setting, and the degree to which the model affects graduates' competitiveness and independence (Tarman, 2020). Drawing on this backdrop, this study aims to develop and explain the Integrated Learning Model Based on KUKER at STIE AMM Mataram as a strategic tool to produce competitive and independent graduates within the dynamics of global change. Many other research have addressed the curricular learning model or the execution of extracurricular activities separately (Putra & Sari, 2021; Yusuf & Sulaiman, 2019). Very few, nevertheless, have thoroughly created a KUKER-based learning paradigm that systematically and contextually integrates all three. Especially at STIE AMM Mataram, there is still no consistent paradigm that combines the formal curriculum, supplementary activities, and student self-development under one learning framework.

Therefore, this study intends to close that gap by creating an integrated learning model appropriate for the local needs of the institution, while also emphasizing on the competitiveness and independence of graduates in the framework of the present digital economy and entrepreneurship.

Preparing the younger generation with better skills, ready to compete in the labor market, and independent in confronting global concerns depends much on higher education (OECD, 2021). Many university graduates, nevertheless, find it difficult to find work, create professional networks, and grow their abilities sustainably. This shows a disparity between the academic sphere and the always changing demands of the employment market (Brennan & Séné, n.d., 2019).

The learning method in higher education has to change from being solely academic to holistic and integrated in order to close this gap. The integrated learning model built on the integration of curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular (KUKER) provides a strategic approach that can fully develop students' potential (Sari & Rachman, 2022). While extracurricular activities help to build character, leadership, and creativity, the curriculum emphasizes the mastery of knowledge and theory, co-curricular activities as a reinforcement of practical skills and soft skills.

As a higher education institution grounded on the growth of entrepreneurship and the creative economy, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi AMM Mataram is responsible for creating a learning model that will improve the competitiveness and independence of its graduates. But so far, no thorough research has been done on the shape and application of the integrated KUKER-based learning model inside the STIE AMM Mataram setting or on the degree of its efficacy in raising the quality of graduates.

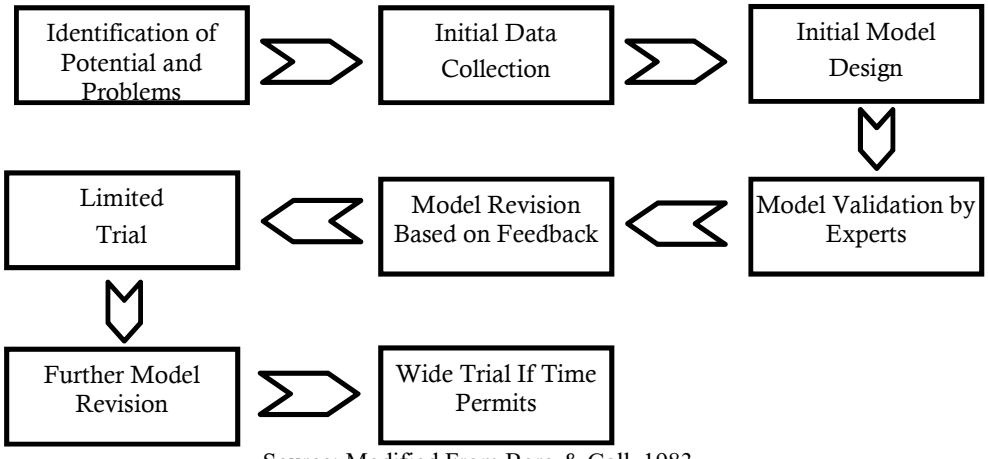
Thus, this study is essential to methodically create and explain the KUKER learning model, so that it may act as a guide in the evolution of learning strategies and curricula in the future. The aim of this study, then, is to create an integrated learning model to improve the competitiveness and independence of graduates at the AMM Mataram School of Economics.

METHODS

Aiming at generating a particular product or model, the Research and Development (R&D) strategy used in this study tests the efficacy of that product in the context of actual implementation (Sugiyono, 2019). Designed to improve the competitiveness and independence of graduates in the higher education environment, the Integrated Learning Model Based on KUKER (Curricular, Co-curricular, and Extracurricular) is the product created in this study. This study offers a more complete knowledge of the process of needs exploration, model design, expert validation, and limited trials of the model's efficacy using a mixed methods approach a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques (Creswell & Plano, n.d.).

The development model used in this study refers to the R&D framework by (Borg & Gall, 1983), which has been simplified into several core stages: (1) Identification of Potential and Problems; (2) Initial Data Collection; (3) Initial Model Design; (4) Model Validation by Experts (Expert Judgment); (5) Model Revision Based on Feedback; (6) Limited Trial; (7) Further Model Revision; and (8) Wide Trial If Time Permits.

Figure 1. Stages of Research and Development of the Integrated KUKER Learning Model in Enhancing Competitiveness and Independence of Graduates



Source: Modified From Borg & Gall, 1983

The School of Economics (STIE) AMM Mataram carried out the study. The study participants are institutional leaders (chairperson and vice-chairperson), permanent lecturers, co-curricular and extracurricular program managers, active students, alumni, industry or business

partners, and others. In-depth interviews with campus stakeholders and alumni users, learning practices and student activities observations, document analysis (curriculum, syllabus, and activity programs), and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) for model validation and feedback gathering all contributed to data collecting methods. A quantitative survey also helped to gauge students' views of the model's efficacy during the trial period.

This paper's qualitative data analysis method combines a theme analytic approach with (Miles & Huberman, 1994) interactive model, which has three key components: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. Descriptive statistics were used to examine quantitative data to evaluate opinions of the model's efficacy and to contrast findings before and after its application, if feasible (Creswell & Plano, n.d.).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Several primary themes reflecting notable changes before and after the application of the KUKER-based integrated learning model were derived from the outcomes of qualitative data analysis using the data reduction technique. Four key problems were found before the model was put into use: Before the model was put into use, four main problems were found: (1) the integration between curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular components has not been harmonious and remains sectoral; (2) the current learning structure is considered complex and difficult for field implementers to grasp; (3) there are no significant innovations compared to the previous model, making it less appealing to lecturers and students; and (4) the focus of student development is more on cognitive aspects, while the formation of entrepreneurial character and self-leadership has not been optimal.

The KUKER model's implementation, however, brought about a change shown by the appearance of new themes: (1) holistic integration between curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities supporting one another synergistically; (2) the model structure became simpler and more adaptive, facilitating its application in various study programs; (3) continuous innovations that make this model responsive to the times and modern educational trends; and (4) significant improvements in student independence development, particularly in forming strong entrepreneurial character and self-leadership.

Table 1. Presentation of Data Phase Before and After Model Implementation

Phase	Theme	Key Quatation
Before	Integration's Disharmony	*"Integration is still not harmonious; component synchronization is required".* (Specialist)
Before	Structural Complexity	*"The intricacy of the model could make implementation challenging".* (Specialist)
After	Complete Integration	*"Harmoniously integrated with synergy among components".* (Specialist)
After	Eco-friendly invention	*"Being adapting to the times and having novelty".* (Specialist)
After	Strengthening of Independence	*"Following this approach makes me more self-assured and autonomous".* (Student)

Source: Miles & Huberman (1994) processed data

The thematic consistency between professionals and students suggests that the model redesign effectively addressed the first shortcomings. The rise in expert scores from 2.57 to 4.0 and the shift in student attitudes from neutral/disagree to strongly agree help to confirm the validity of the results.

The outcomes of the quantitative data study indicate:

Table 2. Results of Expert Validation

Aspect	Before Score	After Score	Change
Institutional Alignment	2	4	+100%
Model Structure	3	4	+33.3%
Three-Part Integration	2	4	+100%
Graduate Competitiveness	3	4	+33.3%
Graduate Independence	2	4	+100%
Feasibility of Implementation	3	4	+33.3%
Creativity and Uniqueness	2	4	+100%

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Explanation: The average assessment scores from the experts reveal a notable improvement, from 2.57 (Satisfactory-Good category) before the model implementation, to 4.00 (Very Good category) after the model was built and enhanced. According to expert evaluations, this rise is 55.6%, indicating the better viability and quality of the integrated learning model based on KUKER.

Table 3. Results of Student Surveys

Statement	Before (% Agree)	After (% Strongly Agree)	Change
Comprehension of integration	50% (A)	100% (SA)	50%
Application of theory using co-curricular activities	50% (A)	100% (SA)	50%
Development of soft skills using extracurricular activities	0% (D)	100% (SA)	100%
Work readiness	0% (D)	100% (SA)	100%
Enhancement of independence	0% (D)	100% (SA)	100%
Advice for broad use	0% (SD)	100% (SA)	100%

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Explanation: Before the model was put into place, the learning was judged qualitatively as not yet properly integrated, still difficult, and missing novelty. But, following execution, the approach was judged to be more holistic, straightforward, flexible, and beneficial for the growth of student independence. From a quantitative standpoint, the rise in expert scores by 55.6% and the attainment of 100% "Strongly Agree" from students bolster the proof of the efficacy of the integrated learning paradigm founded on KUKER. The most notable changes were seen in the areas of enhancing soft skills, work preparedness, and the strong recommendation for the more general use of the model.

From 0% before the model's application to 100% after, the findings of the quantitative study indicate a notable rise in the total proportion of "Strongly Agree (SA)" replies. Expert data comparison reveals that every facet of the model showed notable gains, particularly in the integration and innovation areas, which each rose to 100%. From the students' viewpoint, negative answers like "Disagree (D)" and "Strongly Disagree (SD)" did not show at all in the final stage, totally substituted by the response "Strongly Agree" (100%).

Discussion

From both practical and theoretical angles, the integrated learning approach based on KUKER has demonstrated notable effectiveness in improving the competitiveness and independence of graduates at the AMM Mataram School of Economics. Practically, the application of this paradigm effectively tackled the structural flaws and integration disharmony that were first obstacles. Co-curricular activities like internships and field projects, for instance, are meant to enhance students' theoretical knowledge; extracurricular activities like leadership training and business competitions emphasize soft skills like communication and teamwork (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2020). Results from the student poll revealed that every responder strongly believed this strategy improves independence and job readiness, two significant signs of practical success. The model's structure being simplified also lets it fit different study curricula. For instance, the Faculty of Engineering includes industry-based design projects as co-curricular activities; the Faculty of Economics uses digital business simulations to increase relevance to market needs (Rogers, 2003). This adaptability helps to lower faculty opposition and promote the broad acceptance of the approach.

Theoretically, the KUKER model fits with the ideas of holistic education (Miller, 2007) which stresses the balance between cognitive, emotive, and psychomotor components. Reflecting Vygotsky social constructivism theory (1978), the three elements of learning curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular interact to enhance the learning experience. Graduates' rising competitiveness (expert score 4/4) further confirms Becker human capital theory (1964), which holds that investment in education corresponds with personal output. Furthermore, the rise in student independence (100% strongly agree) corresponds with Deci & Ryan (1985) self-determination theory, which holds that a learning environment supporting autonomy and competence sparks intrinsic drive. Entrepreneurship training and other extracurricular activities emphasizing character growth take an experiential learning approach. Kolb (1984) whereby the evolution of soft skills is based on reflection on pragmatic experiences.

The KUKER model's effectiveness supports Fullan (2013) the idea of educational transformation as well, which underlines the need for cooperation among stakeholders experts, professors, and students in educational reform. Rising from 3 to 4 in the implementation feasibility score suggests this model satisfies the tenets of Rogers diffusion of innovations (2003),

namely compatibility with institutional values and relative superiority in comparison to the prior model. Innovations include the use of digital platforms e-learning, and webinars not only improve the model's relevance to current educational trends but also help to solve the problems of the 4.0 industrial revolution age. This corresponds to the (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (2020) advice on maximizing technology in education.

CONCLUSION

The research and discussion findings lead one to conclude that the KUKER-Based Integrated Learning Model (Curricular, Co-curricular, and Extracurricular) has shown to be efficient and viable to apply in improving the competitiveness and independence of graduates at STIE AMM Mataram. The findings of the qualitative data analysis, which revealed that it is holistic, simple, adaptive, and positively affects student independence, as well as the results of the quantitative data analysis, which indicated a 55.6% increase in expert scores and a 100% percentage, support this. Students Strongly Agree demonstrates how well the model works.

To see the generalization of the model and the possibility for a more thorough model development, it is advised for future research to evaluate the efficacy of this model in a larger setting, across various study programs, other higher education institutions, or on a national level.

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