

SCRUTINIZATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM MERDEKA IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to scrutinize the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka in elementary schools. The type of research used in research is qualitative research, namely research that does not use quantitative data or statistical measurement tools. Under the object of this thesis, this type of research is in the category of library research (library research), namely a series of studies using library research. The Curriculum Merdeka also supports project-based learning strategies. Through this strategy, students are expected to be able to apply the material learned through projects and case studies. Later, the projects and case studies carried out by students will be known as the Strengthening Pancasila Student Profile Project. The project is implemented so that students can achieve the Pancasila Student Profile. The Pancasila student profile itself is a character and ability that is built in everyday life and exists within every student. This includes faith and devotion to God Almighty, global diversity, cooperation, creativity, independence and the quality of critical reasoning. Pancasila student profiles can be built through educational cultural institutions, curricular learning, Pancasila student profile improvement programs, and extracurricular activities. The implementation of independent elementary school level courses prioritizes project-based learning to achieve the Pancasila student profile. This is also very relevant to learning in the 21st century, where learning does not only focus on knowledge but also emphasizes the acquisition of character, literacy, skills and technology. Independent study will again be subject-based.

Keywords: Curriculum Merdeka, A Literature Review, Elementary Schools.

PENDAHULUAN

Elementary school is the most basic level of formal education in Indonesia. Elementary school is taken within 6 years, starting from grade 1 to grade (Hayati et al., 2021). Elementary school graduates can continue their education to junior high school (or equivalent). Elementary school students are generally aged 7-12 years. In Indonesia, every citizen aged 7-15 years is required to attend basic education, namely 6 years of primary school (or equivalent) and 3 years of junior high school (or equivalent). In every elementary school, there is always a teaching team led by a principal. This instructor or teacher has an important role in the learning process, not only as a transmitter of lesson material, but also as a facilitator for students to understand the material presented (Okianna, 2016);(Prananda et al., 2020). The role of the teacher is

very important in the learning process, as well as advancing the world of education. The quality of students in education is very dependent on the quality of teachers (Siregar, 2020). Therefore, teachers must have competencies that are in accordance with national education standards so that they can carry out their duties and roles with good competency standards that produce students who are knowledgeable and have certain skills. According to Mahmudah, (2018) the role of the teacher determines the effectiveness of learning because of his position as the leader of the learning process among students in a class. Etymologically or in a narrow sense, a teacher who is obliged to realize a class program is someone whose job is to teach or give lessons in a school or class. More broadly, teachers mean people who work in the field of education and teaching who are also responsible for helping children to reach their respective maturity (Mahmudah, 2018). The teacher in the final sense is not just a person who stands in front of the class to convey certain knowledge material, but is a member of society who must be active and free-spirited and creative in directing the development of his students to become members of society as adults (Supardianto, 2022);(Lusianifah, 2019). His knowledge and understanding of teacher competence will underlie his pattern of activities in carrying out his profession as a teacher (Sudirman, 2022). The teacher competencies referred to include personal competencies, professional competencies and social competencies.

Based on the definition above, we can see that a teacher is a figure who has a very important role, apart from being a teacher, he also functions as an educator who educates students and helps direct and develop their potential or abilities. Both in terms of intellectual or intelligence, attitudes or behavior regarding the norms that apply in society and skills or competencies to be prepared later so that they can be beneficial in the community. Article 1 paragraph 20 of Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 states that learning is "the process of interaction between students and educators and learning resources in a learning environment."² The interaction that is expected to occur between students and educators is an educational interaction, namely the interaction between two human elements where teachers as educators and students as educated.

In the world of education what is often referred to is the curriculum. The curriculum occupies a very strategic position because it is an illustration of the implementation of the vision, mission and goals of educational institutions (Suryaman, 2020);(Firdianti, 2018). This also makes the program a central repository of what is transferred to students. The orientation and objectives of the educational curriculum will experience changes and dynamics of change caused by various factors, both internal and external (Bahri, 2017). Because of its dynamic nature, the response to the curriculum must be flexible. Based on these considerations, curriculum development is one of the main tasks of the government and stakeholders to regulate and develop education in

such a way. Apart from that, active participation is also expected to contribute ideas for any changes.

The role of teachers in schools to guide students is also inseparable from the curriculum that applies or is implemented at the school. Fujiawati, (2016) Defining the meaning of the curriculum is the application of the official curriculum by educators in the classroom or classroom. A curriculum that is implemented (official), the results are in the hands of the teaching staff, namely seen from the interactions and what is carried out by the teaching staff and students in the classroom (actual). Therefore, educators play a very crucial role in planning, compiling and implementing the curriculum in the field. A curriculum based on the definition above is a design or program that is implemented and carried out by teachers to be used as a basis or reference for education in schools, especially in the classroom. The teacher is the spearhead of implementing the curriculum in the field. Curriculum development begins in the classroom, so teachers are required to be creative and innovative in implementing the curriculum in their classes as optimally as possible. Thus, based on the urgency of the background explained above, the author was interested and took the initiative to raise the research title, namely scrutinization of the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka in elementary schools.

METODE PENELITIAN

The paper applies qualitative research, namely research that does not use quantitative data or statistical measurement tools. In accordance with the object of this thesis, this type of research is in the category of library research, namely a series of studies using library research. The research method is an attempt to test as a science, these efforts use the scientific method (Purwati, 2020). In order to ensure that knowledge remains scientifically valuable when conducting research. Thus, research is testing knowledge using scientific method procedures. In this research, we will conduct a study of concepts and theories from various literature, journals and books. Building a concept and theory is the basis of library research or literature review.

Data collection technique

This study applies a library method. The library study method is research by reading literature and exploring literature related to the researcher's object. Data like this is like reading journals, news, and books and other literature.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Curriculum Merdeka was launched at the beginning of this year, but is not yet mandatory for all schools. Currently, implementing the Curriculum Merdeka is one of 3 curriculum options that each school can choose. The three options include the 2013 Curriculum, the Emergency Curriculum (the 2013 Curriculum which was simplified to support learning during the COVID-19 pandemic), and the Curriculum Merdeka.

Curriculum Merdeka

The Curriculum Merdeka is a curriculum with various intra-curricular learning and is designed to make the learning process flexible (Purnawanto, 2022);(Ahmad, 2023). Apart from giving freedom to students, teachers can also freely choose teaching equipment according to creativity to foster students' interest in learning. Teachers have the freedom to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be tailored to students' learning needs and interests. Projects to improve the achievement of Pancasila student profiles have been formulated based on certain themes set by the government. This project is not designed to achieve specific academic performance goals and is therefore not related to subject content. Teachers can freely design the learning process according to the needs of the environmental conditions of each school. In order to support the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka, the Ministry of Education and Culture provides learning support for implementing the Curriculum Merdeka independently. There are three options for implementing the Independent Path Curriculum Merdeka that can be applied, namely Independent Learning, Independent Change, and Independent Sharing (Widiastuti et al., 2023). The Independent Learning Choice gives freedom to educational units when implementing the Curriculum Merdeka, several parts and principles of the Curriculum Merdeka, without changing the educational unit curriculum that is being implemented in educational units (Nurhasanah et al., 2022). *Mandiri* Changing gives flexibility to educational units when implementing the Curriculum Merdeka by using the teaching tools that have been provided in the education unit. Choice of *Mandiri* Sharing will give flexibility to educational units in implementing the Curriculum Merdeka by developing various teaching tools for the unit themselves.

Learning Principles in the Curriculum Merdeka

The Curriculum Merdeka includes three types of learning activities as follows (Ahmad, 2022):

1. Extracurricular learning is carried out in a differentiated manner so that students have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competence. This also provides flexibility for teachers to choose teaching tools that suit the needs and characteristics of their students.
2. Co-curricular learning is in the form of a project to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile, with the principles of interdisciplinary learning oriented towards character development and general competence.
3. Extracurricular learning is carried out in accordance with student interests and educational unit resources.

The allocation of study hours in the curriculum structure is written in total in one year and is supplemented by suggestions for the allocation of study hours if delivered on a regular/weekly basis. Implementation of learning in the Curriculum Merdeka is a cycle that goes through the following three stages:

1. Diagnostic assessment

Teachers conduct initial assessments to identify students' potential, characteristics, needs, development stages and stages of learning achievement. Assessments are generally carried out at the beginning of the learning year, so the results can be used to make further planning regarding the learning method that should be used.

2. Planning

The teacher organizes the learning process according to the results of the diagnostic assessment, and groups students based on ability level.

3. Teaching and Learning Process

During the learning process, the teacher will conduct formative assessments periodically, to find out the progress of student learning and make adjustments to learning methods, if necessary. At the end of the learning process, teachers can also carry out summative assessments as a process of evaluating the achievement of learning objectives

Concept and Implementation of Independent Learning Curriculum in Elementary Schools

As the name implies, the Curriculum Merdeka carries the concept that education in Indonesia must be "Free to Learn." With this curriculum, it is hoped that Indonesian students can explore their interests and talents by choosing the types of subjects that can support these interests and talents. In short, Indonesian students are no longer required to study all subjects as in the previous curriculum. Students are allowed to choose subjects according to their interests and talents Kurniati et al., (2022) explained that the Curriculum Merdeka is a curriculum with diverse intra-curricular learning and is designed so that the learning process becomes flexible. In addition to students being given freedom, teachers are also given the flexibility to choose teaching devices according to creativity so that they can foster students' learning interest.

The Curriculum Merdeka also supports project-based learning strategies (Shalehah, 2023). Through this strategy, students are expected to be able to apply the material learned through projects and case studies. Later, the projects and case studies carried out by students will be known as the Strengthening Pancasila Student Profile Project. The project was implemented so that students could achieve the Pancasila Student Profile. The Pancasila student profile itself is the character and abilities that are built in everyday life and brought to life in each student (Rachmawati et al., 2022). This includes the character of faith and devotion to God Almighty, global diversity, mutual cooperation, creativity, independence and critical reasoning. Pancasila student profiles can be built through the culture of educational units, extracurricular learning, projects to strengthen Pancasila student profiles, and extracurriculars.

The implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka at the SD/MI level prioritizes project-based learning in order to realize the Pancasila student profile (Inayati, 2022). This is also very relevant to 21st century learning where learning focuses not only on

the realm of knowledge but also emphasizes aspects of character, mastery of literacy, skills and technology. Learning in the Curriculum Merdeka will be returned to a subject approach (Barlian, 2022).

As for the preparation of the schedule, it is quite easy for the teacher because the division of time per week uses subjects. The preparation of this curriculum is different from the preparation of the schedule in the 2013 curriculum which must consider the details of effective days and effective weeks. Even though preparing the schedule is quite easy, teachers must pay attention to several things in the Curriculum Merdeka, namely related to the Project for Strengthening Pancasila Student Profiles (P5). This project is learning that combines project-based or practice-based cross-disciplines about understanding material and solving problems that are solved directly by students. The preparation of the schedule must include P5 with options that can be done at the end of the lesson, per week or period.

Examples of the Implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka in Elementary Schools

One of the programs of the Curriculum Merdeka is the implementation of a project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. The project was implemented to achieve student character that matches the Pancasila profile (Noviyanti, 2023);(Belia, 2023). According to Kemendikbudristek, (2021), Various project themes are applied, ranging from entrepreneurship, the environment, to diversity. However, what is clear is that projects must have four principles, namely: Holistic or looking at something as a whole and as a whole, not partial or separate. Contextual, that is based on real experiences encountered in daily activities. Centered on learners, which means students become subjects of learning and the process is still carried out independently. Explorative or related to the spirit to open up space for self-development and inquiry. Based on the guidelines issued by the Education Curriculum Standards and Assessment Agency (BSKAP) of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the following are some examples of implementing the Curriculum Merdeka project in elementary school. Students like egg roll snacks but can't make them themselves. As an educator, he will design an entrepreneurial-themed profile project entitled "*Gulung dan Enak.*" Through this project students learn about the tools and materials for making, including the dosage of the ingredients needed. Profile projects are carried out through mentoring, repetition and habituation at school and at home. Furthermore, encouraging students to sell egg rolls at the profile project exhibition.

Discussion

Implementing policy changes, including the curriculum, is a long process so the government provides opportunities for educators and educational units to carry out independent studies according to their level of preparation (Fauzi, 2022). Just as students learn based on their readiness to learn, educators and units must also learn to apply a Curriculum Merdeka based on their respective readiness to become increasingly

competent in its use. The level of curriculum implementation is not mandated or standardized by the government. This stage is designed to help educators and educational units set goals for implementing a stand-alone curriculum (Sudarmiani, 2022). The level of readiness of educators and educational units will of course vary, so this implementation stage is designed so that each educator is confident in implementing a stand-alone curriculum (Widiansyah & Fitriansyah, 2022). Confidence in this context refers to the belief that educators can continue to learn and develop their abilities to do their best in delivering the curriculum and more importantly in educating. The ability to learn continuously is an important capital for educators.

This phase was developed as a learning step or process to change the learning and assessment practices that educators need to carry out when using a stand-alone curriculum. Technology educators may conduct separate courses at different stages. However, philosophically, each stage is designed so that educators continue to refer to the principles of learning and assessment (the principles of learning and assessment can be studied in the Learning and Assessment Guide). For example, learning based on the stages of student achievement is highly recommended. However, the application of differentiated learning does not necessarily run smoothly. Educators who are less confident with its application can start practicing at the simplest stages, assessing at the beginning of the lesson, and then becoming more sensitive to students' different learning needs.

There is only one criterion for schools implementing the Merdeka Elementary Curriculum, namely being interested in implementing the Curriculum Merdeka to improve learning (Rahimah, 2022). Then, school principals who want to implement the Curriculum Merdeka will be asked to study material prepared by the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding the concept of the Curriculum Merdeka. Furthermore, if after studying the material the school decides to try implementing it, they will be asked to fill out a registration form and a short survey. The elementary school curriculum structure is divided into 3 (three) phases:

1. PHASE A for Class I and Class II
2. PHASE B for Class III and Class IV
3. PHASE C for Class V and Class VI

Elementary/MI education units can organize learning content using a subject or thematic approach. The proportion of learning load in elementary school is divided into 2 (two), namely:

1. Extracurricular learning,
2. Project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students, allocated around 20% (twenty percent) of the study load per year.

CONCLUSION

It can be deemed that the implementation of the Curriculum Merdeka at the elementary school level prioritizes project-based learning in order to realize the Pancasila Student Profile. This is also very relevant to 21st century learning which equips students with the 4C skills needed to respond to the challenges of the times. With the aim of this Curriculum Merdeka is to optimize the spread of education in Indonesia with a variety of extracurricular learning. Supporting learning recovery is a main characteristic of the Curriculum Merdeka. This curriculum also integrates literacy skills, knowledge skills and attitudes in using technology. Students are given the freedom to think and learn from any source, in order to be able to seek knowledge and solve real problems they face.

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