

EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE ABILITY OF CLASS I AND CLASS IV STUDENTS IN FOLLOWING THE INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM AT SDN 064976 TEMBUNG

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Abstract

Objective: This research aims to identify the obstacles and challenges faced by class I and IV students in following the Independent Learning Curriculum at SDN 064976 Tembung, as well as finding effective strategies to improve their abilities. By addressing these issues, the study aims to improve the educational outcomes and experiences for students at SDN 064976 Tembung, ultimately enhancing their ability to meet learning goals.

Design/Methods/Approach: The research methodology used in this research is descriptive qualitative research. In order to provide a thorough and comprehensive picture of the issues faced in the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum. Data was collected through observations, interviews, and documentation studies involving first and fourth-grade teachers at SDN 064976 Tembung

Findings: The research results show challenges related to limited teacher understanding, limited resources, and students' difficulty adapting. Recommended strategies include increasing teacher understanding, developing resources, and intensive mentoring for students. And The findings and recommendations from this research can serve for refining the Independent Curriculum and improving the overall quality of the education system. reveal significant challenges including limited teacher understanding, inadequate resources, and difficulties in student adaptation.

Originality/Value: This study is based on previous research that dealt with independent curriculum education, with further discussions on efforts and strategies in independent currency education. it emphasizes the importance of teacher preparedness, community and parental support, and infrastructure improvements in overcoming implementation challenges. The insights gained from this research contribute to a deeper understanding of how the Independent Curriculum can be optimized in elementary school settings.

Practical/Policy implication: This research provides insight into the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in elementary schools and can be used as a basis for optimizing its implementation. his study contributes valuable insights into the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in elementary schools and offers practical implications for optimizing its application.

Keywords: Independent Learning Curriculum, Student Abilities, Elementary School

JEL Classification: M42, M48 [author should add 1-3 JEL classification number, information guide for the Journal of Economics Literature (JEL) can be found at <https://www.aeaweb.org/jel/guide/jel.php>]

Received June23,2024 ; Received in revised form June 23, 2024 – July 9, 2024 .Accepted:July 15, 2024

Introduction

Minister of Education, Culture research and Technology (Kemendikbud) introduced the Independent Learning Curriculum, a curriculum that offers various intracurricular learning opportunities. The curriculum combines various additional competencies that educators need for the Merdeka Belajar program, such as problem-solving skills and developing literacy and numeracy competencies.

The Independent Learning Curriculum emphasizes more independent, relevant, interactive, and important material that aids learning recovery. Teachers must adapt their lessons to each student's achievement level and developmental stage, but students are allowed to choose subjects based on their interests, skills, and goals. Additionally, schools can create and oversee curricula tailored to the needs of their students and the unique characteristics of the educational unit.

An innovative strategy in the Indonesian education system is the Independent Curriculum. Therefore research must be carried out to assess and improve its implementation in schools, including SDN 064976 Tembung. Students in grades I and IV were the chosen focus of study. This decision is supported by the knowledge that while fourth grade is a transitional stage to a higher level, the early years of a child's education are critical in building a foundation of knowledge and skills.

The history of this research is also related to initiatives aimed at increasing students' capacity to comply with the Independent Curriculum. The purpose of this study was to determine the barriers and difficulties first and fourth grade students face when attempting to follow this curriculum and to identify practical ways to help them become more proficient.

The Merdeka Curriculum at SDN 064976 Tembung can benefit locally from this research. Appropriate tactics and approaches can be developed to enhance the educational experience for students by considering their needs and challenges.

This study can explain how the Merdeka Curriculum is implemented in elementary schools and how it affects students' ability to meet their learning goals. The recommendations and findings from this research can serve as a basis for refining the Independent Curriculum and improving the overall quality of the education system.

Chelsi herwanti wrote a paper entitled Implementation Of The Curriculum In Sdn 01 Keahiang 2023 that it has implemented the curriculum gradually and on these curricula teachers only as motivators for pupils, after which there is some preparation of teachers as well as schools, namely by preparing adequate means and facilities in implementing this curricula, following the CCG, preparing the Curriculum Module, and following the workshops held by the government (Herwanti, 2023).

Script written in 2022 Meisin With the title "Problematics of Teachers in Implementing their Curriculum" they studied in class I and IV at SDN 17. Then the problem of teachers in applying the Curriculum of Free Learning to the planning, implementation and evaluation of learning is the difficulty of analyzing the CP, formulating the TP and compiling the ATP and the Teaching Module, determining the methods and strategies of learning, the minimum ability to use technology, the limitation of student books, the lack of ability and readiness to use the method and learning media, the teaching material is too extensive, defining class I and IV projects, lack of allocation of project-based learning time, determine the form of assessment and form of evaluation on project based learning (Meisin, 2022).

Based on the explanation, the purpose of this study is to know "Ensures to Improve the Ability of Class I and IV Students in Following the Free Curriculum in SDN 064976 Tembung" in order to improve knowledge about the potential and difficulties associated with the application of the Self-Curriculum at the elementary school level and offer advice that can improve the educational experience of students in SDN 064986 Tembung.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

1. Independent Curriculum Concept

Developing independence in thinking is the idea behind the autonomous learning curriculum (Manalu, Sitohang, & Turnip, 2022). Freedom of thought is determined by the instructor. Thus, the main factor that helps students achieve academic success is their teacher. The quality of education is influenced by technological advances in the current digital era. where digital devices are an integral

part of every activity carried out by teachers and students. Self-directed education ideas Curriculum education combines technology proficiency, literacy abilities, knowledge proficiency, skills, and attitudes. This idea allows students to think freely and absorb as much information as possible. According to the idea of a 21st century curriculum, students should be independent in their learning,

both in formal and informal settings. The flexibility built into 21st century concepts will give students the opportunity to learn as much as they can. Literacy training, skill development, and other constructive actions that encourage the growth of each student are some of the things that can be done.

Currently, Indonesian educational institutions are of course implementing the autonomous learning curriculum concept evenly. This idea will not only impact student growth but also make it easier for educators to adopt creative teaching methods. A curriculum for independent learning can lighten the burden that educators have been carrying all this time. Moreover, in today's digitally advanced world, the idea of an autonomous learning curriculum will also be a way to overcome educational problems. Therefore, academics must be able to take the lead in developing curricula for independent learning in Indonesian schools today.

2. Goals of the Independent Curriculum

Independent Curriculum seeks to give educators and schools the flexibility to create curricula that meet the needs of local communities and students. The Independent Curriculum emphasizes a flexible, inclusive and student-centered educational approach, claims Tuerah & Tuerah (2023). The curriculum is created to support students in acquiring 21st century skills such as teamwork, creativity, communication and problem solving. There are several interconnected components involved in implementing the Independent Curriculum. The active involvement of teachers as learning facilitators who can help students develop skills, knowledge and attitudes is very important for the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum. In addition, the Driving School program is an important component of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. The aim of this program is to inspire and guide other schools as well as become a model or center of excellence for implementing the Independent Curriculum.

3. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum

The way the Merdeka Curriculum learning is implemented in the classroom is modified to follow a holistic and contextual approach to the curriculum. Instructors provide individual attention to the needs of each student and encourage their participation in the learning process. To help students understand the material being taught, teachers create opportunities for discussion and dialogue. Teachers also provide students with access to a variety of learning resources, which they can use in the form of printed or digital materials.

In order for students to develop into a generation that appreciates cultural diversity in Indonesia and has a positive character, teachers must also incorporate national values and character into the curriculum in accordance with the guidelines in the Pancasila student profile. According to a study (Irawati, Iqbal, Hasanah, & Arifin, 2022), the Pancasila student profile is a policy that encourages the achievement of national education goals and the implementation of sustainable character development initiatives. The aim of this policy is to shape student character in accordance with Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution.

The state of the school environment, facilities and infrastructure, and available human resources all have an impact on how the independent curriculum is implemented in elementary schools in terms of classroom learning. There are challenges in providing adequate infrastructure and facilities to enable independent curriculum implementation, including a shortage of textbooks and other learning materials, a lack of laboratory or library space, and a shortage of classrooms. Additionally, there is a dearth of competent and experienced applicants. An additional barrier to the adoption of autonomous curricula in elementary schools is the use of creative and innovative teaching strategies. Teachers' lack of teaching experience and inadequate educational background are further problems. This is in line with research findings (Saputra & Hadi, 2022) which show that educational qualifications are one of the factors that influence the creation of teacher RPPs.

4. Evaluation of the Independent Curriculum

Evaluation plays an important role in the Independent Curriculum's assessment of the effectiveness of the learning process. In the Merdeka Curriculum, evaluation is not only limited to final exams or assessments; ongoing formative and summative assessments are also included.

Throughout the learning process, formative assessments are conducted with the aim of providing feedback and direction to students on how to advance their knowledge and abilities. Teachers can also identify their students' learning needs and modify their teaching strategies with the help of formative assessments. Summative evaluation is carried out at the end of the learning process, such as a final semester or academic year exam, with the aim of measuring student progress towards the

competencies specified in the curriculum. Aspects of student character development are also evaluated in the Independent Curriculum. Character evaluations assess students' affective, psychomotor, and cognitive qualities in addition to their cognitive abilities.

Teachers feel challenged to implement it because, in the teaching module, there must be a diagnostic test at the beginning of the learning process. KKM was removed, which caused teachers to struggle with benchmarks for student success. In addition, there are two report cards in learning assessment: the academic assessment report and the project assessment report, which require teachers to add a lot of time. This is in line with research findings conducted by Barlian, Solekah, and Rahayu (2022) which evaluated learning as preparation for implementing the independent curriculum. This research includes the administration of diagnostic tests, the implementation and processing of formative and summative assessments, and the reporting of learning outcomes.

Method

The research methodology used in this research is descriptive qualitative research. In order to provide a thorough and comprehensive picture of this problem, this research method seeks to characterize, interpret and understand phenomena or events that occur in the field. Sugiyono (2013) claims that because qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting and without changing or controlling the variables studied, it is often referred to as a naturalistic research method. Moleong (2007) goes on to say that qualitative research is defined as research that tries to understand what phenomena the research subject experiences as a whole by describing words in a context that is inherently qualitative. The goal of qualitative research is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the experiences, viewpoints, and attitudes of research subjects in a larger natural setting. Qualitative research by describing a real state of affairs with facts, but a report made is just a report of an event without a scientific interpretation (setiawan, 2018).

The steps taken in the research using descriptive qualitative methods were as follows: Data collection: observation, interviews and documentation studies were used to collect information from first and fourth grade teachers. To obtain precise and comprehensive data, researchers used observation, interviews and documentation studies with research subjects. Teachers are the focus of research because they oversee curriculum implementation and have varying perspectives and experiences with it. Reading, understanding, interpreting, and combining data that has been collected from various sources is the process of data analysis. There are several ways to analyze data: classification, reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions.

Result and Discussion

A. Results and interviews

It is clear from the interview with Mr Doli Silalahi that there are still many difficulties and obstacles in the way schools implement independent curriculum. The school environment, facilities and infrastructure, availability of human resources, as well as teachers' knowledge and skills in applying creative and innovative teaching techniques are factors that contribute to these challenges.

One of the challenges in implementing the Independent Curriculum in elementary schools is the lack of knowledge and training among teachers. It is very important that educators have a comprehensive understanding of the Independent Curriculum, which includes concepts, learning methodology, and assessment of learning outcomes. Lack of understanding and preparedness among educators can hinder the effectiveness of integrating the Independent Curriculum into elementary schools. Additionally, inadequate resources pose challenges to the adoption of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools. Adequate resources are required for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, including teacher training, learning aids and textbooks. One potential obstacle to implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools is a lack of resources.

The fact that students in grades I and IV are still unable to follow these curriculum changes is the most significant factor in this case. One of the challenges facing the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is a shift in students' perspectives and attitudes. Students' attitudes and mindsets must change to implement the Merdeka Curriculum, which calls for increasing curiosity, independence and social intelligence. It takes time to implement these changes, so they are not immediate. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum in elementary schools has been hit by

problems related to the difficulty of adapting to previous policies. The 2013 Curriculum and other outdated policies must be modified to align with the Merdeka Curriculum, which is the new curriculum. Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools may experience difficulties due to lack of coordination with previous policies. Especially for those who are still in the first grade of elementary school and are not even proficient in reading, writing or arithmetic. Instructors continue to play a critical role in supporting these students, making it impossible to successfully implement independent learning.

B. Efforts to improve students' abilities in the independent learning curriculum

Researchers have identified a number of strategies that schools can implement in responding to the challenges faced when implementing an independent curriculum in elementary schools, as stated by Wawur (2023). These strategies include:

1. Development and training of teacher and education staff competencies. Students will benefit from a more welcoming and encouraging learning environment if educators are better prepared to implement creative and innovative teaching strategies.
2. Increased community and parent support. Community and parent involvement is very important in helping elementary schools implement an independent curriculum. Thus, initiatives are needed to increase their understanding and involvement in the learning process.
3. Improved infrastructure and facilities. Upgrading classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and textbooks, among other infrastructure components and facilities, will contribute to the creation of a more comfortable and encouraging learning environment for students.
4. Tighter monitoring and supervision. There is a need to increase supervision and monitoring of the implementation of the autonomous curriculum in elementary schools. This can help in finding the right solution and identifying obstacles and problems that develop during the implementation process.
5. Growing stakeholder collaboration in the education sector. Teachers, principals, parents, and community members must work together to create a supportive and encouraging learning environment where students can reach their full potential. there is encouragement for teachers to take part in the teacher mobilization program

Conclusion and future direction

There are still many difficulties and obstacles in implementing the independent elementary school curriculum. The school environment, facilities and infrastructure, availability of human resources, as well as teachers' knowledge and skills in applying creative and innovative teaching techniques are factors that contribute to these challenges. Nonetheless, these challenges can be overcome with proper work and help from stakeholders in the education sector. Increasing the competency of educators and other staff members, getting more community and parent support, improving infrastructure and facilities, improving supervision and monitoring, fostering collaboration among educational stakeholders, and attracting people to enroll in driving teacher programs are some of the solutions that can be applied.

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