

## The Implementation of Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak

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### KEYWORDS

### ABSTRACT

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This study is a descriptive qualitative method. The purpose of this study was to identify and obtain information about the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in the Sekolah Penggerak. It becomes useful information and will be easily understood by readers. The purpose of this study was to identify and obtain information about the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak. This study explains and provides an overview about the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in the Sekolah Penggerak. The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the curriculum in the Sekolah Penggerak has been carried out optimally and is ongoing, although in practice there are still many shortcomings and obstacles. The key to the success of implementing the curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak is that the principal and teachers must have the will to make changes. The principal as a leader must be able to change the mindset of the Human Resources in the school to want to make changes so that the independent curriculum can be applied. The principal as a leader must be able to change the mindset of the Human Resources in the school to want to do changes so that the Merdeka curriculum can be applied.

**Keywords:** *Implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, Sekolah Penggerak*

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## Introduction

Education plays an important role in determining the quality of human resources and the progress of a nation. In the educational process, creative and innovative ideas can emerge that keep up with the times. Curriculum development is used as an instrument to improve the quality of education. The success of educational policy can be reflected in the implementation of the curriculum used because "the curriculum is the heart of education" and is the main factor in teaching and learning activities.

There have been various changes of curriculum and improvements in the implementation of the curriculum in Indonesia. In 2013, the government through the Ministry of National Education changed it back to Curriculum 2013 and in 2018 it was reformed into Curriculum 2013 Update” (Ulinniam et al., 2021). At present a new curriculum has been used, namely the Merdeka curriculum, where the Merdeka curriculum is defined as a curriculum that offers students the opportunity to study in a calm, relaxed, comfortable manner, without pressure and tension, to demonstrate their natural abilities. Independent learning focuses on freedom and think creatively. One of the programs presented by the Ministry of Education and Culture for the declaration of independent learning is the declaration of the Sekolah Penggerak program. This school program is designed to support each school in creating generations of lifelong learners with Pancasila personalities. The success of everything requires the role of the teacher. Which is in line with the statement (Ainia, 2020) "Teachers is hoped to initiate the students do the movement in the teaching learning process so the students can do the positive activities “. The existence of a Merdeka curriculum is an order in the Indonesian national education system, where (Yamin and Syahrir, 2020) "stated that this statement means that we have to adapt in eras changes for change and progress of the nation ". In line with that, the Minister of National Education Nadiem Makarim stated that "educational reform cannot be carried out only in administrative, but also in cultural changes " (Satriawan et al., 2021). According to the view that "the concept of independent learning can then be accepted, bearing in mind the vision and mission of Indonesian education going forward to create quality human beings who are able to compete in various fields of life" (Sibagariang et al., 2021). With the help of an Merdeka curriculum, it is hoped that students can develop according to their talents and abilities, because an Merdeka curriculum provides critical, quality, expressive, applicable, versatile and progressive learning. "In addition to this new curriculum change, we need strong commitment and collaboration to produce profile pelajar pancasila from all of sides”(Fetra Bonita Sari, Risda Amini, 2020).

The program of Sekolah Penggerak is one of the efforts to realize the vision of Indonesian education by realizing an advanced Indonesia that is sovereign, independent and has a personality through the creation of students who are philanthropic. The program of Sekolah Penggerak focuses on developing student learning outcomes holistically or as a whole which includes competence (literacy and numeracy) and character, starting with superior human resources (principals and teachers). The program of Sekolah Penggerak is an evolution from the previous school development program. It is hoped that the Mobilization School Program will accelerate public/private schools in all schools to move on to several higher levels. This program of Sekolah Penggerak will be carried out in stages and will also be integrated with all areas of schools in Indonesia implementing Sekolah Penggerak program.

Problems in education in Indonesia, where there are still several challenges in improving the quality of education, such as low student

motivation and lack of active involvement of students in the learning process. The Mobilizing Schools Program was established by the Indonesian government as an effort to improve the quality of education in Indonesia by finding and promoting best practices in schools across the country. The Merdeka curriculum, which encourages students to be more independent in the learning process and places students as active subjects in the learning process, was chosen as one of the approaches in the Mobilizing School program. However, implementing this curriculum certainly raises its own challenges such as a lack of teacher training, lack of support and readiness of educational infrastructure, and development of an appropriate curriculum to suit students' needs. Through research on the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak, it is hoped that it can provide an understanding to policymakers, school administrators, teachers and parents about the benefits and challenges of implementing Merdeka curriculum in schools in Indonesia. This research can also provide useful information for further curriculum development and encourage government efforts to improve the quality of education in Indonesia.

With regard to the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak, at this time researchers are motivated to conduct research. For this reason, the purpose of this research is to identify and obtain information about the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak so that it will describe and provide an overview of the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak.

## **Method**

The method of the research was descriptive qualitative. (Sugiyono, 2020) says that "the qualitative method is classified as an artistic method because the research process is less patterned and is classified as an interpretive method because the data produced in a study tends to relate to the interpretation of data collected in the field."

Qualitative research is a process of collecting data in a natural way with the aim of interpreting and analyzing phenomena when the researcher can be the main tool. "In qualitative research data is not sought through statistical methods or other quantitative measurement methods" (Anggito et al, 2018). Likewise, the descriptive method according to (Sugiyono, 2020) "a method that is used in analyzing or explaining findings, but not used to draw broad conclusions".

The qualitative description method has meaning as a research method that describes, describes, and analyzes objects from a particular situation from all data obtained during activities that occur in the field. Interview and observation are techniques that have been used in this study. In this study, the role of school principals and teachers is explained in implementing the Merdeka curriculum with the aim of making the Merdeka curriculum program successful in Sekolah Penggerak. In addition, another objective is to review whether the Merdeka curriculum can be efficiently implemented, especially in Sekolah Penggerak, and whether there are any problems or obstacles experienced and

felt during the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak. The application of this design is achieved by collecting data, processing the data, and then presenting the data with useful information that is easy for the reader to understand. The elements that are the subject of qualitative research using observation techniques are places, actors, and activities. This research was conducted in several elementary schools which became schools in Tegal district. The target group of this research are teachers and school principals. This research was conducted through observation and interviews.

## Results

There are six Sekolah Penggerak. They got the program of Sekolah Penggerak from government. We got the data from six Sekolah Penggerak. The data consist of three aspects. Those are; curriculum planning process, the implementation of curriculum, and the principal leadership. Here is the result:

Table 1 The data of curriculum planning process, the implementation of curriculum, and the principal leadership

<b>School</b>	<b>Curriculum planning process</b>	<b>Curriculum implementation of curriculum</b>	<b>Principal Leadership</b>
<b>SD N Banjaranyar 3</b>	3	4	5
<b>SD N Buniwah 2</b>	2	3	4
<b>SD N Kajenengan 3</b>	2	3	4
<b>SD N Bumijawa 2</b>	2	3	5
<b>SD N Begawat 1</b>	3	4	5
<b>SD N Cintamanik 2</b>	3	4	5

(range of score 1-5)

5 = Strongly good

4 = Good

3 = Average

2 = Bad

1 = The worst

## Discussion

All of schools have done the step of planning in designing curriculum. The schools did all of the ways in preparing curriculum. Identify the goals and

objectives: The first step is to identify the goals and objectives of the curriculum. Determine what the learners should know and be able to do after completing the curriculum.

Determine the content: Once the goals and objectives are identified, determine the content that needs to be covered. This will include the subject matter, concepts, and skills that need to be taught. Decide on the teaching strategies and methods: Select the teaching strategies and methods that will be used to deliver the content. This will vary depending on the subject matter and the targeted audience. Determine the assessment methods: Design assessment tools that align with the goals and objectives of the curriculum. These tools will evaluate the learners' knowledge and skills. Gather resources and materials: Collect resources such as textbooks, articles, videos, and other materials required for teaching the curriculum. Develop a plan: Organize the content, teaching strategies, and assessment methods into a comprehensive plan that guides instruction. Implement and evaluate: Implement the curriculum and continuously evaluate its effectiveness to identify opportunities for improvement. Remember that designing a curriculum is an iterative process. Be prepared to make adjustments along the way based on feedback from learners and other stakeholders.

A committee should be formed to plan and prepare for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The committee can consist of teachers, school administrators, curriculum developers, curriculum experts, and other stakeholders. The committee should ensure that all necessary resources are available for the implementation of the curriculum. The committee can also conduct a needs assessment to ensure that the curriculum aligns with the school's mission and vision. The committee should ensure that the revised curriculum is age-appropriate, relevant to students, and supports the development of socially responsible citizens.

The committee should work on developing teaching and learning materials that support the Merdeka Curriculum. The materials should be interactive, engaging, and student-centered. The committee should also ensure that the materials can be easily accessed by teachers and students. Teachers should receive training to be able to deliver the Merdeka Curriculum effectively. The training should focus on the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum. The training should also provide teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to teach the Merdeka Curriculum.

The results of observations and interviews in a study of six mobilizing schools in Tegal Regency show that one of the important elements of a mobilizing school is the principal who has a high motivation to advance the school. Principals must be able to lead, guide and inspire all areas of the school so they can focus on better education and produce quality graduates. Sekolah Penggerak are not big schools with perfect infrastructure, but Sekolah Penggerak are schools led by a school principal who has completed Sekolah Penggerak and of course, the principal wants to make changes in the education sector. Under the leadership of good leaders, small schools progress, and even the schools visited by

researchers can be said to be small schools with limited facilities and infrastructure and without large areas of land, not even libraries, but these schools can become agents of change which will certainly encourage people to send their children to these schools. Consultations, discussions, and support are carried out regularly to monitor the progress of the learning process if there are any obstacles in its implementation. One interesting thing that researchers found was that school principals introduced new innovations in managing school administration, namely launching a paperless concept that led to reduced paper consumption. In this case, the customer provides a special dashboard in the form of digital management memory. Important documents are neatly arranged and the principal can monitor teacher management on a regular basis. The teacher uploads all administration made to the dashboard provided by the principal. The teacher should make changes in implementing Sekolah Penggerak and it is not easy. Need a good strategy from the school principal, especially for old teachers, and important guidelines for teachers to want to move.

The process of learning the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak refers to the profile of Pancasila students which aims to produce graduates who are able to be competent and uphold character values. The structure of the Merdeka curriculum is intra-curricular activities, projects to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students and extracurricular activities. As stated in the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology No. 162 of 2021 that the basic curriculum framework consists of: a. curriculum structure; b. Learning achievement; and c. Principles of learning and assessment. In the Merdeka curriculum, each activity must result in a project. In this case, schools often hold exhibitions to display the results of their student's work. Even though they do not have a large yard, they work with parents or agencies to support the implementation of these exhibitions. The structure of the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak is divided into 3 phases, namely: Phase A for Class I and Class II, Phase B for Class III and Class IV, and Phase C for Class V and Class VI in elementary school. Phase A is the phase of developing and strengthening basic literacy and numeracy skills. Natural and Social Sciences (IPAS) has not yet become a compulsory subject in Phase A. Science begins to be taught in Phase B. The IPAS subject aims to build basic skills for studying natural sciences and social sciences. Schools can present learning for each subject or continue the thematic that refers to the formation of the character profile of Pancasila.

The assessment in the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak that is applied is a comprehensive assessment that encourages students to have competencies according to their talents and interests without burdening students with achieving a minimum score that students must take or it is said that there is no more KKM in the Merdeka curriculum. Independent teachers are free in making assessments. This is in line with what Nadiem Makarim said in Jakarta, on 11 December 2019. Regarding the 4 pillars of the policy, namely: The National Examination (UN) which will be abolished and replaced with a Minimum

Competency Assessment and Character Survey, each school is given full authority regarding related to the USBN policy, Simplification of Learning Implementation Plans (RPP), PPdB with more emphasis on the zoning system. Implementation in Sekolah Penggerak regarding assessment with independent learning has positive and negative impacts.

## Conclusions

Sekolah Penggerak is a school that has the spirit to move and wants to make a change. Sekolah Penggerak is required to build the concept of a digital school in the implementation of the teaching and learning process. The curriculum used in Sekolah Penggerak is the Merdeka curriculum which is the curriculum created by our Minister of Education Nadiem Mukarim where the Merdeka curriculum gives students the freedom to export their abilities and interests. By using Merdeka curriculum, changes are felt in schools, teachers are more flexible to be creative in teaching as much as possible and know more about the interests, talents, needs, and abilities of students. The process of learning the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak refers to the profile of Pancasila students which aims to produce graduates who are competent and uphold character values. In implementing the Merdeka curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak it is not as easy as turning the palm of the hand, there are many obstacles that are passed, especially instilling interest from school members to want to move forward towards change. The principal as a school leader must be able to move, direct, and inspire teachers to want to change toward better education. In addition, good cooperation is needed between teachers, school principals, agencies, parents and related parties so that the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in the Sekolah Penggerak can be implemented optimally.

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