

Evaluation Program of Independent Curriculum in Elementary School: A New Curriculum in Indonesia

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Abstract. Indonesia has new curriculum called independent curriculum. Independent curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intracurricular learning where content will be optimized so that learners have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competencies. Teachers have the flexibility to choose various teaching instruments so that learning can be synchronized with the learning needs and interests of students. Projects to strengthen the achievement of the Pancasila learner profile are developed based on specific themes set by the government. This study aims to determine the learning planning, implementation, and assessment of the independent curriculum at elementary school in Barru regency, South Sulawesi province, Indonesia. The type of this study is evaluation study with a qualitative approach. This evaluation is a descriptive qualitative type of Stake model program evaluation. The subjects in this study are teachers who implement independent curriculum learning program in elementary schools. The results showed that learning planning, learning implementation, and learning assessment carried out by teachers were good. Student learning outcomes are better after the implementation of independent curriculum. But there are several obstacles experienced by teachers. Teachers need independent curriculum training evenly. Independent curriculum is a good curriculum. Independent curriculum can continue to be implemented.

INTRODUCTION

Background of The Study

National education must be able to ensure equality of educational opportunities, improve the quality and relevance and efficiency of education management. Equality of educational opportunities is realized in the 9-year compulsory education program. Improving the quality of education is directed at improving the quality of Indonesian human beings through empathy, thinking, feeling and sports to have competitiveness in facing global challenges. Increasing the relevance of education is intended to produce graduates who are in line with the requirements based on the potential of Indonesia's natural resources. Improving the efficiency of education management is conducted through the application of school-based management and renewal of education management in a well-planned, directed and continuously.

The learning process in education unit is organized interactively, inspiring, fun, challenging, motivating students to actively participate, and providing sufficient opportunities for initiative, creativity, and independence in accordance with the talents, interests, and physical and psychological development of students. For this reason, each education unit conducts learning planning, implementation of the learning process and assessment of the learning process to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of achieving graduate competencies.

Learning outcomes are the abilities that students have obtained through learning activities. Learning itself is a process of a person trying to obtain a relatively permanent form of behavior change. In programmed and controlled learning activities called learning activities or instructional activities, learning objectives have been set in advance by the teacher. Students who succeed in learning are those who achieve learning objectives or instructional goals (Abdurrahman, 2003).

The causes of the learning process and learning outcomes of a school are considered to be of poor quality, which can be occurred because; a) students themselves do not have the motivation to learn in the learning process, b) inappropriate teachers and personals, c) unsuitable materials, d) insufficient teaching methods and evaluation systems, e) lack of supporting facilities, f) inappropriate administrative systems (Sudjana, 2006).

The National Education Standards are adjusted in a planned, directed, and sustainable way to improve the quality of education in line with the changing demands of local, national, and global life in accordance with Article 3 paragraph (3) of Government Regulation No. 57 of 2021. Thus, the applicable curriculum can be adjusted along with changes in national education standards which are a reference in curriculum development. The National Education Standards that are a reference in development include graduate competency standards, content standards, process standards, and education assessment standards.

Implementation of the curriculum by education units can use a curriculum that is in accordance with the learning needs of students and must pay attention to the achievement of student competencies in education units in the context of learning improvement. So, education units are given options in implementing a curriculum that suits the learning needs of students. The three curriculum options are the 2013 Curriculum, the Emergency Curriculum (namely the 2013 Curriculum simplified by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Study, and Technology), and independent curriculum.

Independent curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intracurricular learning where content will be optimized so that learners have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competencies. Teachers have the flexibility to choose various teaching instruments so that learning can be synchronized with the learning needs and interests of students. Projects to strengthen the achievement of the Pancasila learner profile are developed based on specific themes set by the government. The project is not directed to achieve specific learning outcome targets, so it is not restricted to subject content.

To learn in educational units to be of high quality, one of the standards that must be developed is process standards. The definition of process standards is "guidelines in carrying out an effective and efficient learning process to optimally develop the potential, initiative, ability and independence of students." (Standar Proses Pada Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Jenjang Pendidikan Dasar, Dan Jenjang Pendidikan Menengah, 2022)

The components of the learning process that are regulated according to the process standards in Permendikbudristek RI No. 16 of 2022 written in article 1 (1), namely "Process standards include learning planning, lesson implementation, and learning process assessment". In line with this, there is a learning planning document that must be prepared by the teacher and applied during the implementation and assessment of learning.

Problem of The Study

Currently, several elementary schools in Barru regency, South Sulawesi province, Indonesia have implemented independent curriculum. Independent curriculum is applied to grades 1 and grade 4. Independent curriculum is a new curriculum for teachers and the curriculum began to be implemented in the odd semester of the 2022/2023 academic year. Thus, there are still some teachers who have difficulties in implementing independent curriculum in terms of learning planning, implementation, and assessment. Therefore, it is very important to evaluate the implementation of this independent curriculum.

Research's State of the Art

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Independent Curriculum

Independent curriculum consists of intracurricular activities, projects to strengthen the Pancasila student profile, and extracurricular activities. The Pancasila learner profile is a graduate profile that aims to show the character and competencies that are expected to be achieved and strengthen the noble values of Pancasila of students and stakeholders. For learners to achieve the competencies and characters contained in the Pancasila student profile, it needs to be enriched besides intracurricular, extracurricular, and other programs. The Pancasila student profile enforcement project is implemented by involving students to explore real issues in the surrounding environment and collaborate to solve these problems.

In education units, the Pancasila students profile needs to be developed through various strategies that complement and strengthen each other, namely the culture of the education unit, learning activities, and co-curricular activities in the form of learning through projects. Thus, this project is not the only method but rather strengthens efforts to develop the Pancasila student's profile.

The dimensions of the Pancasila student profile are the character and foundation competencies that education units need to develop for students. The dimensions of the Pancasila student profile are (1) faith, devotion to The Almighty God, and morals, (2) global diversity, (3) cooperation, (4) independence, (5) critical reasoning, and (6) creativity. For example, being able to manage study time and design appropriate strategies.

Every subject, program, and activity in the education unit is expected to support the achievement of the Pancasila student profile by including it in learning. The Pancasila student profile will also be strengthened by project-based learning with themes that support the development of the targeted competencies and characters.

Learning Planning

Permendikbudristek RI No. 16 of 2022 about process standards explains that learning planning formulates learning outcomes that become learning objectives of a learning unit, how to achieve learning objectives, and how to assess the achievement of learning objectives. Learning planning is prepared in the form of a flexible, clear, and simple document that at least contains learning objectives, learning steps or activities, and learning assessment.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes that become learning objectives of a learning unit are a set of competencies and scope of learning materials in accordance with the Education Unit curriculum. Learning outcomes are formulated by considering the characteristics of students and the resources of the education unit. Learning outcomes are learning competencies that students must achieve in each phase. Learning outcomes are knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are assembled as a continuous process to build complete competency of a subject. process that is sustainable thus building the complete competence of a subject.

The preparation of learning outcomes per phase is an effort to simplify so that students can have enough time to acquire competencies. The preparation of learning outcomes per phase also provides opportunities for students to learn according to their level of achievement (Teaching at the Right Level), needs, speed, and learning style. This is because learning outcomes is developed by considering the phases of child development. In addition, the preparation of learning outcomes per phase is useful for teachers and education units. Teachers and education units can gain flexibility in adjusting learning so that it is in line with the conditions and characteristics of students.

Learning Objectives

After understanding the learning outcomes, the teacher starts to get ideas about what the students should learn in a phase. At this stage, the teacher starts to process these ideas, using the key words she has collected in the previous stage, to formulate learning objectives. These developed learning objectives need to be achieved by learners in one or more lesson hours, until finally at the end of the Phase they can achieve the learning outcomes. Therefore, for learning outcomes in one phase, teachers need to develop several learning objectives. In this stage of formulating learning objectives, the teacher has not yet sequenced the objectives, just designing more operational and concrete learning objectives first. The sequence of learning objectives will be arranged at a later stage. Thus, the teacher can carry out the process of developing a learning plan development process step by step.

The Flow of Learning Objectives

After formulating the learning objectives, the next step in learning planning is to organize the flow of learning objectives. The flow of learning objectives has a similar function to what is known so far as a "syllabus", which is for planning and organizing learning and assessment in outline for a period of one year. Learning and assessment for a period of one year. Therefore, teachers can use the flow of learning objectives only, and this flow of learning objectives can be obtained by teachers by designing their own based on learning outcomes, developing, and modifying the examples provided, or using the examples provided by the government.

For teachers who design their own flow of learning objectives, the learning objectives that have been developed in the previous stage will be organized as a sequence that is systematically and logically sequenced from the beginning to the end of the phase. The flow of learning objectives also needs to be linear, one-way, and non-branching, as is the sequence of learning activities carried out from day to day.

Learning Module

A learning module usually contains a learning plan for one learning objective based on the flow of learning objectives that have been compiled. Teaching modules in the Merdeka Curriculum are intended to help teachers teach more flexibly and contextually, not always using textbooks. Learning modules can be another option or alternative learning strategy.

Learning Implementation

The implementation of learning is organized in a learning atmosphere that is interactive, inspiring, fun, challenging, motivates students to actively participate, and provides sufficient space for initiative, creativity, independence in accordance with the talents, interests, and physical, and psychological development of students. Implementation of learning is carried out by Educators by providing role models, assistance, and facilitation.

Learning Assessment

Assessment of the learning process is an assessment of learning planning and implementation. Assessment of learning planning and implementation is carried out after the implementation of learning at least 1 (one) time in 1 (one) semester. Assessment of learning planning and implementation is carried out by means of self-reflection on the implementation of planning and learning processes and self-reflection on the results of assessments carried out by peer teacher, heads of education units, and / or students. Apart from being carried out by the teachers concerned, the assessment of the learning process can be carried out by peer teacher, the head of the education Unit, and / or students.

Assessment is an activity that is integral to the learning process. Assessment is carried out to find evidence or a basis for decision about the achievement of learning objectives. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to conduct formative assessments and summative assessments. Both types of assessment do not have to be used in a lesson plan or learning module, depending on the scope of the learning objectives. Educators are the ones who best understand learners' learning progress, so educators need to have the competence and flexibility to conduct assessments to suit the needs of each learner. This includes the design of assessments, the timing of implementation, the use of assessment techniques and instruments, the determination of criteria for achieving learning objectives, and the processing of assessment results. Included in this flexibility is the decision about midterm assessment. The teacher and education unit are authorized to decide whether to conduct the assessment.

Gap Study & Objective

Several studies have been conducted to know the implementation of independent curriculum, but fewer in evaluating the independent curriculum. To obtain the right results and information by connecting independent curriculum learning program at elementary school in Barru with the implementation of program evaluation, the author chose Stake's Countenance Evaluation model. This model was developed by Robert E. Stake. According to (Tayipnapi, 2008), that "Stake identifies three stages of educational program evaluation, namely: antecedents (input), transaction (process), and outcomes (results). In this model the three stages are compared not only to determine whether there is a difference in the actual state objectives, but also compared with absolute standards, to assess the benefits of the program. The authors are interested in evaluating independent curriculum learning program at elementary school in Barru using the Stake model. The evaluations of independent curriculum have

been conducted in Indonesia, but only in western Indonesia and never did in central and eastern Indonesia. This study is conducted in central Indonesia. This study aims to determine the learning planning, implementation, and assessment of the independent curriculum at elementary school in Barru regency, South Sulawesi province, Indonesia.

METHOD

This type of study is evaluation study with a qualitative approach. This evaluation is a descriptive qualitative type of Stake model program evaluation. The author collected information regarding the implementation of independent curriculum learning, in this case specifically the results of this evaluation provide an assessment of independent curriculum learning developed by teachers at elementary schools in Barru regency, South Sulawesi province, Indonesia. Assessment in this context involves a measuring instrument in the form of a standardized criterion. The data or information collected is based on qualitative data that provides a complete description of the reality, phenomena, or condition of the object being studied and the information received is descriptive in nature.

This study was conducted in elementary schools in Barru regency, South Sulawesi province, Indonesia and this study was conducted in 2023. The evaluation study model used is the Stake model which consists of three components, namely: input, process and output developed by Robert E. Stake. Each stage is divided into two stages, namely description and judgment. The Stake model is decision oriented and the technique of making actuality decisions on each evaluation focus or aspect by measuring each evaluation focus summarized in a matrix adapted in the case order effect matrix.

Based on the process standards which are the criteria for evaluating independent curriculum learning program which consists of three aspects, namely (1) the aspect of learning planning, which is the input component of the model, (2) the aspect of learning implementation, which is the process component of the model, (3) the aspect of assessment of learning outcomes which is the outcome component of this model. Therefore, the author chose the Stake model in evaluating independent curriculum learning program in primary schools in Barru regency, South Sulawesi province, Indonesia, constructing a frame of reference involving the three focuses of the Stake model evaluation.

The subjects in this study are teachers who implement independent curriculum learning program in elementary schools in Barru regency, South Sulawesi province, Indonesia. Barru regency has seven districts, namely Barru, Tanete Rilau, Tanete Riaja, Pujananting, Balusu, Soppeng Riaja, dan Mallusetasi. We conducted research at two schools in each district. Thus, we conducted research in 14 schools. The data collection techniques utilized to obtain data for this study were collected through questionnaires, observations, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique utilized in this study is a qualitative descriptive analysis technique consisting of data condensation, data display, and verification/conclusion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Currently, elementary schools in Indonesia have implemented the Merdeka Curriculum since the 2022/2023 academic year. So the Merdeka Curriculum has been implemented for two semesters, namely the odd semester and even semester in the 2022/2023 academic year. One of the regencys that implement the Merdeka Curriculum is Barru Regency, South Sulawesi Province. The Merdeka Curriculum has been implemented in grades 1 and 4. Researchers evaluated the Merdeka Curriculum program that has been implemented in elementary schools in Barru Regency, which includes planning, implementation, and assessment of the Merdeka Curriculum implemented in schools.

Learning Planning

Based on the results of the study, it was found that teachers have analyzed learning outcomes well, formulated learning objectives appropriately, know how to arrange the flow of learning objectives, and design teaching modules systematically, and understand well the differences between Kurikulum Merdeka and the K-13 Curriculum that was previously implemented. In addition, for the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka in schools to work optimally, teachers first recognize Kurikulum Merdeka, prepare themselves to be ready to collaborate, implement Kurikulum Merdeka well, and share with other teachers.

Teachers analyze the learning outcomes that have been provided first by referring to the achievement of knowledge, attitudes and skills, then formulate learning objectives based on learning outcomes, as well as analyze

the competence and scope of the material. Furthermore, teachers arrange the flow of learning objectives by developing and modifying the examples provided and adjusted to school conditions and the needs of students. In addition, another planning activity carried out by teachers is preparing teaching modules. The material contained in the teaching module is presented more specifically so that it makes it easier for teachers to deliver lessons to students. The results research from (Fitriyah & Wardani, 2022), the results of their research show that teachers welcome Kurikulum Merdeka because its implementation is adjusted to students' needs.

In line with this study, in the learning planning process, teachers also experience obstacles, one of which is that teachers have difficulty in preparing all learning planning documents. This is because the document must be in accordance with the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile in each learning objective and must be adjusted to the students' needs. In addition, it was found that there were still many shortcomings in the implementation of the Pancasila Learner Profile Project, which was caused by the design still lacking systematicity so that the school only carried out the project as an obligation in one semester's activities (Ardianti & Amalia, 2022). Thus, a comprehensive understanding of Merdeka Curriculum is needed, including its concept, preparation, and practice in the real life (Nadila, 2023).

The next obstacle is that information about Kurikulum Merdeka has not been evenly distributed to every teacher in Barru Regency and the socialization of Kurikulum Merdeka in Barru Regency has not been maximized. The socialization and training of Kurikulum Merdeka tends to be carried out in a short time and unevenly for each region. The lack of socialization in schools has an impact on the limited time to study Kurikulum Merdeka because it takes a long time to study its parts deeply (Yunita et al., 2023). Whereas the implementation of a new curriculum, especially Kurikulum Merdeka, requires training that is not only carried out once but continuously to examine more deeply the components of each curriculum to be implemented (Ardianti & Amalia, 2022). Therefore, there is still a need for other trainings that discuss in depth by section to provide a clear overview to teachers and principals. Kurikulum Merdeka training at the primary school level should be carried out in many places at least at the sub-district level so that the process of completing tasks and mentoring can be done evenly (Zahir et al., 2022).

This obstacle has an impact on the teachers' limitations in compiling all learning instruments themselves because they only refer to the examples that have been given through socialization. This is because the training carried out has not targeted all teachers (Dewi & Astuti, 2022), not all teachers in elementary schools have the opportunity to participate in socialization about Kurikulum Merdeka, especially technical guidance related to the Pancasila Student Profile and as a result, teachers feel that the Merdeka Curriculum program seems forced (Sunarni & Karyono, 2023).

Besides the relatively short and uneven socialization, other obstacles also come from Human Resources who are less qualified in planning and designing the Merdeka Curriculum in the classroom. Teachers do not understand how to derivate or interpret learning outcomes into learning objectives, so the material provided does not refer to essential material, but is still stuck on the previous curriculum. In addition, teachers also still experience problems in making teaching modules. Thus, during the preparation process it takes a little longer (Nurcahyono & Putra, 2022).

The necessity to prepare creative, challenging and innovative learning every day is also one of the challenges for teachers in the classroom. This is because students are heterogeneous in terms of level of understanding, thinking ability, skills, learning style, confidence level and concentration level, making it difficult for teachers to determine learning models (Nurcahyono & Putra, 2022). In addition, references are quite minimal so teachers can only refer to the available examples. Teachers' skills and ability to adapt technology also contribute. Teachers are less qualified in utilizing technology-based learning media (Sunarni & Karyono, 2023) or Kurikulum Merdeka learning platform introduced during socialization is just installed without any follow-up (Suryani et al., 2023). Regarding the obstacles experienced, teachers in Barru Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesi hope that there will be continuous socialization so that teachers' knowledge of Kurikulum Merdeka will increase, so that teachers can be more innovative in preparing learning instruments.

Learning Implementation

The results showed that teachers have implemented the Pancasila student profile strengthening project. Teachers carry out learning that emphasizes achieving character in the Pancasila student profile based on the noble values of Pancasila with the aim of forming good character in students. Teachers implement student-centered learning and teachers act as facilitators. Learning in the classroom is carried out in an interactive and inspiring, fun and challenging learning atmosphere, teachers motivate students to actively participate in learning, provide opportunities for students to develop and communicate new ideas, familiarize students to be able to manage themselves in the learning process. The existence of Kurikulum Merdeka can provide significant impacts and

benefits in the learning process (Nadila, 2023). This is because the separate subject content taught by teachers in Kurikulum Merdeka makes it easier for students to relate it to the surrounding environment and makes it easier to understand the material being studied (Ardianti & Amalia, 2022).

Teachers implement differentiated learning in accordance with the interests, talents, and needs of students. This is done by providing opportunities for students to self-actualize, appreciating the talents, interests, and abilities of students, providing role models in their daily activities to students, guiding students in the learning process, and teachers providing access and learning opportunities for students according to their needs.

Teachers hope to be facilitated by being given socialization and technical guidance regarding how to prepare learning instruments for implementing Kurikulum Merdeka and the learning process. Teachers still need more examples of projects to strengthen the Pancasila student profile and examples of implementing differentiated learning, so that teachers get a lot of references and can develop themselves further in implementing learning according to Kurikulum Merdeka. This shows that the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka is good, but some aspects still need to be developed for better.

It was also found that not all schools can implement Kurikulum Merdeka well, some elementary schools are still trying to adapt to the new curriculum. This means that the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka has not been fully accomplished (Mustofa & Setiyono, 2023). In addition, teachers experience limited knowledge about the activities of the Pancasila student profile strengthening project. This is one of the obstacles in the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka where teachers only implement the Pancasila student profile project as curriculum fulfillment without understanding more deeply (Muna & Fathurrahman, 2023). Therefore, teachers are expected to continue to innovate and develop themselves by continuing to improve the quality of schools for the better. There is also a need for more detailed socialization of Kurikulum Merdeka (Fitriyah & Wardani, 2022) and the success of schools in implementing Kurikulum Merdeka, especially in the implementation of learning, is disseminated to schools that have not implemented Kurikulum Merdeka properly (Barlian et al., 2022).

In the successful implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka, it is not only carried out by maximizing the role of teachers and students, but also involving all school stakeholders and related parties. It takes the support of various stakeholders, especially the Government, in implementing Kurikulum Merdeka to be in accordance with the objectives and fulfill all the needs in the learning process. The involvement of all stakeholders with their respective roles is intended to optimize the advantages of Kurikulum Merdeka. This is because Kurikulum Merdeka comes as a solution that is considered the most effective in solving educational problems with various advantages over the previous curriculum (Nadila, 2023). These advantages include that teachers can be more creative and evolve, learning can be more fun and meaningful, learning is directed at the needs of students, and learning in Kurikulum Merdeka is directed towards Student Centered learning models (Sunarni & Karyono, 2023).

Learning Assessment

The results show that in Kurikulum Merdeka, teachers carry out assessments not only at the end of learning, but also at the beginning and during the learning process. The assessment applied is in the form of formative and summative assessments, the application of assessment as learning and assessment for learning, providing feedback on the results of the assessment to students, and teachers reflect on each learning process. Assessments are given in written and oral form, teachers do not mix the results of formative and summative assessments, involving students in carrying out assessments. Teachers also reflect on the learning strategies that have been implemented, the success of the learners, the difficulties experienced by the learners, and the things that the learners like, and provide feedback orally and in writing.

In terms of assessment, the existence of Kurikulum Merdeka is considered capable of fulfilling and providing benefits to various targeted stakeholders. Policies related to program goals in Kurikulum Merdeka are well accepted by the school and receive positive support from all stakeholders, including those involved in learning (Nadila, 2023). The implementation of this curriculum has more or less changed the behavior of stakeholder actors, which can be seen from the performance of principals and teachers. However, the goals of the assessment program in merdeka Kurikulum have not been fully achieved, such as students and parents who have not been able to adapt well to Merdeka Kurikulum (Siswanto et al., 2023).

However, students' readiness to face curriculum changes is also one of the obstacles to the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka, where some students are still not very enthusiastic about learning in class. This can be caused by teachers' limitations in understanding student heterogeneity. Limitations in understanding and accommodating student heterogeneity make it difficult for teachers to create opening questions that can be accepted by all students (Nurchayono & Putra, 2022). To meet the needs and abilities of different students, a variety of methods are needed.

In order to optimize assessment in Kurikulum Merdeka, the government, principals, parents, and all stakeholders besides teachers and students must be involved and collaborate according to their roles in implementing Kurikulum Merdeka. The government and other stakeholders are expected to be able to provide appropriate resources, facilities and infrastructure, assistance, and socialization so that the benefits of Kurikulum Merdeka will increase (Nadila, 2023). In addition, various evaluations are also needed to be carried out continuously on the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka policy so that optimal policies can be achieved from time to time. Thus, it is very important for the government, schools, and parents to work together to evaluate the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka assessment (Mustofa & Setiyono, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Learning planning, learning implementation, and learning assessment carried out by teachers are good, but there is still a need Kurikulum Merdeka training to all teachers in elementary schools. Kurikulum Merdeka can be continued with a note that the government facilitates widespread Kurikulum Merdeka training. Based on the the most crucial factors that have been identified in this study, it is expected to evaluate each implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka at each school level, namely at the elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school level. The evaluation results are used as feedback to plan follow-up in the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka. Furthermore, it is also expected that the results of this study can be used as a reference in developing appropriate learning instruments and conducting workshops of the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka.

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