Evaluation of Implementation of Independent Curriculum

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Abstract

Pandemic Covid-19 brings many influences in our life, including educational system in Indonesia. The students experienced learning loss and learning gap during pandemic. Without any solution, the education in Indonesia can be left behind. Therefore, The Minister of Education and Culture revised the national curriculum. This curriculum will be used as recovery of educational crisis because of Pandemic. This curriculum is *Kurikulum Merdeka* or Independent Curriculum. This curriculum has not been fully implemented in nationwide until 2024. However, the preparation of this curriculum is on progress. The school can apply *Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka* or Implementation of Independent Curriculum. This aim of this study was to evaluate the implementation of this curriculum through analysing related document such educational system law, regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture, article, and journal. Based on analysis, te result showed that implementation of new curriculum has both challenges and positive impact. The main challenge is related to the readiness of the teacher while the main positive impact is there is improvement in terms of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creative thinking of the students. The result of this study can be used as consideration in formulating educational policy, reflection for the teachers ,principal and other stakeholders

Keywords: Kurikulum Merdeka, The Implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka, Educational System

Introduction

The revision of curriculum is not something new in every educational system, included in Indonesia. It is recorded that educational system of Indonesia has renewed its curriculum at least twelve times started from *Rencana Pembelajaran* 1947 to *Kurikulum Merdeka*. The revision or reform of curriculum is commonly conducted, and it is considered based on many factors such as unsatisfied learning outcomes, number of drop-out students, stress level of teachers and students and lack of skills to meet labor market

(Gouëdard., al, 2020). Then the et principles of implementation new curriculum must be based on those principles (Muhammedi, 2016). First, it must be on the centered of the students and society need. Second, diverse integration means that it must consider the potential and character of the students environment. Third, response to changing of development of science, technology, art, and politics. Fourth, it must be life and necessities of work. Therefore, it can be applicable in the labor market. Last, it must uphold the lifelong learning.

The changing of curriculum in Indonesia has been based on the principles above. differently with the latest However. curriculum in Indonesia. Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum), the main consideration in formulate this curriculum is to recover educational system in Indonesia that crisis during COVID-19 pandemic (Marisa, 2021). Other studies conducted by Engzell, Frey, & Verhagen, (2021) and (Bonal & González, 2020) strengthened that pandemic Covid-19 brought significant impact on education, it is learning loss and learning gap. According to Minister of Education and Culture (2021) stated that achievement of Indonesia students in terms of literacy and numeracy cannot achieved like what expected to get because of learning loss. The expected achievement of the student in literacy was 522, but it could be reached on the 482 level. Meanwhile, expected the achievements od students' numeracy was 583 and it could be achieved at the level of 532. Specifically, learning loss and learning gap during pandemic happened because the learning and teaching process conducted through long distance learning where long distance learning is not that effective. There are many factors that make this problem arise such as poor internet connection, no supporting device and the incapability using ICT. Therefore, the the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology released the new curriculum, Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum) with its four main programs, namely comprehensive USBN Assessment, national examination replaced assessment, shortened lesson plan and **PPDB** zoning more flexible. The advantages offered by this curriculum are project-based learning to develop students'

soft skills and characters in accordance with Profil Pelajar Pancasila (Pancasila profile students), more focused on essential material such as literacy and numeracy, and flexibility for teacher to execute their lesson based on students' ability and it can be adjusted contextually. Profil pelajar Pancasila has relevant principles to the needs of labor market. They are holistic, student centered. contextual. explorative. The main purposes of *Profil* Pelajar Pancasila are to maintain noble values and morals of the nation, readiness to become a citizen of the world, the embodiment social justice, as well as the achievement of competence 21st century (Nugrohadi & Anwar, 2022). Therefore, implementation of Profil Pelajar Pancasila brings new hope for the future educational system in Indonesia. Unfortunately, this curriculum has not been implemented fully and nationwide yet. Based on the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture. Research, and Technology Number 56 of 2022 this curriculum will be implemented fully for all educational units in 2024. Therefore, Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka (IKM) Implementation of Independent Curriculum can be applied as preparation curriculum. To implement this curriculum, must register school and fill questionnaire about their readiness. The result of the questionnaire will decide which the best alternative that can be used by the school. They are first Mandiri Belajar (independent learning). Educational units are given freedom to implement several parts and principles, but they do not change the applied curriculum before. The second is Mandiri Berubah (independent changing). This alternative gives the flexibility to educational unit to apply the independent curriculum and use teaching tools that already provided. The last is Mandiri Berbagi (independent sharing). It given flexibility to is educational units Independent in Curriculum by developing their own teaching tools. Those three alternatives can be implemented for Early Childhood Education (PAUD), grades 1, 4, 7, and 10. (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology,2022). Observing grade that can implement Independent Curriculum, it can be concluded that this curriculum can be implemented in the beginning grade in each educational unit. The main difference between the new curriculum and the previous curriculum, K13 is its flexibility. In Independent Curriculum, the teachers can give the lesson material based on the needs and abilities of the students. It does not need to be given orderly. The teachers can plan the lesson creatively based on their needs. The minimum passing grade is also formulated by the condition of the students and the school. Other differences are there is Capaian Pembelajaran (Learning Achievement), Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran(flow of learning objectives), and twenty percent of the learning process is project-based.

The changing of curriculum from K13 to Independent Curriculum is a new breakthrough in educational system in Indonesia. It is influential revision for the teachers. Fortunately, before Independent Curriculum is nationwide implemented, the Ministry of Education and Culture provide adjustment and preparation. It is started by using *Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka* (Implementation of Independent Curriculum). It is a good step provided by government. Because we need to reflect

toward previous curriculum the Indonesia. They were brilliant in terms of concept and the idea were brilliant, yet the results did not meet expectations. The most common root problem is lack evaluation and supervision, in addition inequality of teachers' capabilities (Suprapto, Prahani, &Cheng, 2021). Based on the background, the research conducted the study to evaluate the preparation of Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum) through analyze implementation of **Implemntasi** Kurikulum Mardeka (Implementation of Independent Curriculum). The result of the study can be taken as suggestion and reflection for the teachers, principals, The Minister of Education and Culture before the Independent Curriculum implemented fully in Indonesia.

Methods

The type of research designed used in this study was qualitative. According to the Creswell (2014), qualitative research means inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions inquiry that explore a social or human problem. Then the method used was literature study through content analysis. Therefore, to collect the data, the researcher searched various relevant studies, Indonesia educational system law documents, official articles from the official website of Minister of Education, Culture, Research, Technology and other official documents. That data source was both primary and secondary data. Then the researchers conducted analyzing through comparing, contrasting, criticizing, and synthesizing. The process of research activities started by collecting library data, reading, and analyzing data. The study Independent Curriculum about

Implementation of Independent Curriculum was limited because they are new regulations in Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

implementing implementation In independent curriculum, the main challenge is the readiness of the teachers and school staff. According to (Sumarsih, Ineu, et beginning al.,2022), in the implementation, teachers and school staffs experienced the difficulties in terms of applying learning and teaching process with new paradigm and preparing school administration based on Independent Curriculum guidelines. This is in line with Arifa (2022). It is found that many teachers have not been able to construct the lesson plan appropriately. It means the training is needed for them. Unfortunately, training must be supported financially technically and this only facilitates for Sekolah Penggerak, but for school that applying this curriculum independently, must support themselves independently. They do not get in-house training, support from expert trainer, mentoring program even financial support (Hayati, 2022). Wiguna Tristaningrat(2022) stated the preparation of implementation Independent Curriculum has not been ready yet because the human resources applying this curriculum has not been qualified yet. Obviously, it can be one of the factors that brings gap quality of the teachers, and it has possibilities to bring the gap of education quality as well.

The second challenge is changing mindset of members of school, especially teacher where the center of learning process is the students not the teacher. It means the teachers should cultivate the students' motivation to passionate to study.

Unfortunately, the practice of teacher as center of learning still occurs and it becomes resistor of implementation of Independent Curriculum (Khusni, Munadi, & Matin, 2022). Student as the center of learning is not that new in our curriculum, realization can be implemented in Independent Curriculum or Implemented Independent Curriculum. It can be observed through project-based learning process in this curriculum and the use of authentic assessment. Rosidah, Pramulia, & Susiloningsih, (2021) found that the teachers perceived that they nature of understand the authentic assessment theoretically, but they faced difficulties when implementing namely constructing rubric score before converting into actual score, sorting, and distributing score and unavailability specific training in making lesson plan with authentic assessment. It was found that the teachers in of terms applying Implementation of Independent Curriculum showed satisfaction result because they perceived "very good". Surprisingly, it is not followed by satisfaction results in terms of assessment and evaluation. It was found that the teacher perceived "enough" when it comes to evaluation and assessment (Subandrio & Kartiko, 2021). They face difficulty in evaluate and assess the students based on the guidelines of Implementation of Independent Curriculum. The fully understanding about Independent Curriculum of teacher is essential element should be owned. It is that teachers can be independent in thinking, more creative and innovative and happy during teaching activities when the teachers fully understanding about the meaning Independent Curriculum (Daga, 2021).

Beside of that, other challenge faced by the teachers in implanting Implementation of Independent Merdeka as the preparation for Independent Merdeka have difficulty to find appropriate method encourage students to to learn independently. Study conducted Ratsyari & Ghufron (2021) found that one of senior high schools in Purworejo instruct their students to read their lesson material and make summary based on their understanding. The purpose of this method is to enhance literacy of the students. Unfortunately, it cannot be implemented well because not all the students have visual learning style. Then, another method can not be implemented well is case studybased learning on Guidance Counseling subject. Instead of giving advice or guidance during learning session, the Guidance Counseling teacher gives the students case study and analyze them based on their perspective. Unfortunately, time allocation for this subject is only one lesson hour. Therefore, the teacher cannot discuss comprehensively with the students. It can be concluded that summarizing lesson material and case study-based on Guidance Counseling as part of the methods used in Implementation Independent Curriculum in that school has not been applied well. In addition, teachers assume that those methods can support independent learning as what in Implementation Independent Curriculum, however the teachers still assess the students like the previous curriculum. They still assess the students with the similar standards. The teachers have not applied what in Implementation Independent Curriculum means. teachers have not seen that every student is unique, so they cannot be assessed in one measurement (Mahfud, 2022). They are

supposed to have their own standard and measurement. This shows that the teachers have not change their mindset that they are a facilitator for their students who facilitate development of their student's potency. Qomar(2022) stated that it is still found the teachers who teach with the old method, lecturing, where they do not provide space for the students to widen their perspective and bravery to speak up about their opinion freely. Aside from the teachers itself, the role of the principals as the leader of the school is also crucial. Their main role is to understand about the new curriculum comprehensively and they can be mentor for the teachers to consult and discuss. According to Shala (2019), the failure of new curriculum is caused insufficiency informed principals with the content of new implementing curriculum. Consequently, they cannot support the teachers. The condition will worsen if the teachers are not supportive educator who do not have own initiative to develop themselves. Such as they do not participate in training, or they just solely read about the implementation of Independent Curriculum. It means that the principals must have initiative to learn more and find out more information about the new curriculum. Moreover, in the new curriculum, there are found several new terms and revisions compared to previous one. For example, the simplification of lesson plan. It is formulated to ease constructing the lesson plan, but it must include thirteen components of lesson plan regulated by Minister of Education and Culture on Regulation number 22 of 2016 about standard of basic and intermediate process of education. That lesson plan must uphold three principles, namely efficient, effective and student oriented. Principals need to be motivated to upgrade and

ability develop their include understanding of the new curriculum. They can initiate to find seminar or training held by non- government organization or other institution. They cannot solely wait for training from the Education Office, and they do not need to wait their school to be sekolah penggerak to participate in training or seminar. According to Satyawati et. al(2022), the teachers or the principals can participate in train held by community service such as held by Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana Salatiga. They held online seminar for teachers and principals. The purpose of this online seminar is to improve the ability of teachers and principals for child education (PAUD), early Kindergarten, Elementary, Middle and High Schools in four areas, namely Semarang, Salatiga, Brebes and Blora. Based on the survey conducted after online seminar. It was found that the satisfaction rate of participants reached 87, 03 percent with good category. The satisfied results was also showed through increasing of understanding about the participants' nature of Independent Curriculum and how to implement Independent Curriculum as the given guideline. It means that if the principals have determination motivation, they can understand the new curriculum even without training or mentoring from the Education Office. Other challenges related to principal is lack of supervision. Because the principal who lack conducting supervision to the teachers, consequently they do not get the control from the principal as the leader. According to Ramadina (2021), in implementing new curriculum, the principals have important role as supervisor and the leader. They also have strategic role in curriculum development process such as create the

similar perception about the nature of Implementation of Independent Curriculum and create collaboration among the school members and beneficiaries.

The changing mindset about what ideally supposed to do in Implementation of Independent Curriculum does not only must be owned by the teachers and the principals, but also by the students as the main subject in this curriculum. According to Mahfud (2022) choosing what students must learn is not as easy as that for the students. They are used to be provided by the teachers and schools, consequently they have difficulty in making choice for themselves. Here the parents' role is needed. Parents must help the students to identify and know their own potency, talent, and passion. The parents must not force their children's choice they just need to help find what the best choice for themselves to encourage development of their potency and creativity. Choosing what they learn is the nature of Independent Curriculum Implementation and Independent Curriculum as well. The implementation of this curriculum must be supported by the positive perception of the students. If it cannot be fulfilled, it can create the negative mindset of the student toward the new curriculum. It means the socialization of the implementing of new curriculum must be given to the students as well comprehensively and intensively based on their grade level and age. Therefore, they know the advantages of the implementation of Independent Curriculum Sunismi, (Werdiningsih, Umamah, Wahyuni, 2022). Socialization about new curriculum can involve the role Guidance and Counseling teachers. Study conducted by Arumsari & Koesdyantho (2021) found that Guidance and Counseling teacher had significant role in

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implementing the implementation of Independent Curriculum such as socialization of the new curriculum, inform comprehensively about the program related to Implementation of New Curriculum and guide the student to select the most suitable program for them.

Although facing many challenges, the new curriculum, Implementation of Independent Curriculum, also brings the positive impact. Study conducted by Angga et.al (2022) in several elementary schools in Kabupaten Garut, Jawa Barat. The result showed that the project-based learning could boost the students' motivation in learning. addition, project-based learning contains value of Pancasila or it is known as Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila. According to Dewi (2022), project-based learning on Implementation of Independent Curriculum showed positive impact on improvement on learning outcomes, achievement, motivation, abilities in front of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creative thinking of students. Therefore, project-based learning as the main excellence of new curriculum must be continuously. developed Other study conducted by Lince (2022) revealed that there was ten percent increase of students' motivation after implementing Independent Moreover, the teachers' Curriculum. quality increased as well because they transformed as the guideline of Independent Curriculum where teachers not only as the educator, but also as facilitator, mediator, and motivator for their students.

Implementation of Independent Curriculum eases the workload of the teacher because they only focus on the essential material. Therefore, it will help the teacher to give lesson that applicable for their students. Lesson plan in Implementation of

Independent Curriculum is formulated shorter and simpler. This is helpful for the teacher because they do not administration burden like previous curriculum. The main job desk is teaching. Another advantage in applying this curriculum is in terms of its teaching platform. The name of that platform is Platform Merdeka Mengajar. This platform provides students assessment, teaching tools, proof of work, independent training, inspirational video, and community. Study conducted by Budiarti (2022) revealed that the use of Platform Merdeka Belajar is constructive in developing the potency of teachers and encourage them teach better. 87.6 percent respondent agree that the use of Platform Merdeka Belajar helps development of teachers' competencies because in that platform, it can be found inspirational video features, independent training, and proof of work. Meanwhile 86,6 percent participant specifically perceived that Platform Merdeka Belajar is a supporting tool the quality of Mathematics learning through student assessment feature and teaching tools.

Conclusion

The changing or revision on the educational system commonly happens. It can be caused by many factors, included crisis in educational system such as learning gap and learning loss. For this case, the crisis happens because of pandemic Covid-19. During its preparation, the implementation of this new curriculum has both challenges and positive impact. It means that teachers, principals, and other stakeholders must find the solution to minimize the challenge and maximize the positive impact. Therefore, when that curriculum fully implemented in nationwide in 2024, this curriculum can

bring development for educational system in Indonesia.

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