

The Teacher's Obstacle in Applying Merdeka Curriculum

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Abstract

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Curriculum Merdeka is new curriculum that the government applied in the school. Curriculum Merdeka also new for the teacher to understand and to apply it at the class. This research aims to know the teachers' obstacles in applying Merdeka Curriculum. As a new curriculum, of course the teachers will faced many obstacles. This research also aims to know how the teachers find the solutions to fix the obstacles they faced. This research sites at SMA Negeri 5 Kota Tidore Kepulauan. The participant of this research consists of all the teachers in class X that have implementing curriculum of Merdeka Belajar. Technique of collecting the data is using questionnaire and analyzing the data by organized the data, then interpreted the data from google form, and the last is presented the data into the research result. The result of this research is there are many obstacles that the teachers at SMA Negeri 5 Kota Tidore Kepulauan faced. They are administrative difficulties such as analyzing teaching modules and assessment, and the implementation of Curriculum Merdeka such as not utilizing the technology and not implementing differentiated learning.

Keywords: Teachers' Obstacle, Curriculum Merdeka

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INTRODUCTION

According to OECD Reviews of National Policies for Education (2015), Education and skills are central to Indonesia's growth prospects in the next decade. It now has the opportunity to capitalize on the very substantial progress that has been made in expanding access to education. At the turn of the century, over 1.5 million students were out of school but today, Indonesia is close to achieving universal basic education. These efforts have involved relatively high levels of investment on educational facilities, teaching personnel and learning materials.

Another point in Walker's (1987) view regards educational planning. According to Walker, trusted groups evidently include parents and students' representatives, and when students reach legal age or possibly after the stage of compulsory education, the majority of delegates should be students who determine the curriculum. The compulsory education stage has no need for a patriarchal curriculum, but the existence of optional units in a curriculum may prevent such a relationship

Education may help and guide individuals from one class to another. Educated people and groups can do things like help less-educated people and encourage them to get educated. Curriculum is the one important thing in education. It is completing the education. Curriculum is the foundation in implementing education. The orientation of learning is curriculum. Curriculum is various based on the location, culture, social, needs, and implementation. It is the

arrangement of what countries and or institutions need to manage the education system grounded on institution's goal and objectives.

To develop the quality of education is the prime defiance to improve the education In Indonesia. The government did very much things to repair the quality of education, for example to repairing the condition and to complete the infrastructure and tools of education and improve teacher's quality.

One of the things that the government repairing is curriculum. As we know that almost every year, the government always changes the curriculum. The reason is to improve quality of education. So, in 2022/2023 we know that Merdeka Belajar is the new curriculum that implementing in the school and university. Many cases about Merdeka Belajar are posted in social media. They complain about that curriculum implementation and considerate between the curriculum Merdeka Belajar and curriculum before it.

Curriculum of Merdeka must be adopted by the government of area whereas the government of a city or a province as an orientation for the area to prepare and implementing the system of education perfectly. The curriculum must implemented by the teachers' quality. The government of area has a responsibility to guiding the teachers' preparing more professional to leading the Curriculum of Merdeka. (Vhalery at all, 2022).

Nasution (2023) said there are many obstacles in applying Curriculum Merdeka, they are teachers still have experience with low learning independence, limited references, access to learning uneven, time management and so on. Meanwhile, the challenges in the school are, 1) teacher readiness (house resources) as the main pillar implementing the independent curriculum; 2) teacher's ability to support digital-based technology facilities; 3) network enhancement communication and collaboration between the school and stakeholders; and 4) difficulty to implement the learning evaluation function as an integral part of learning. Assessment Learning is an important component that schools often ignore in achieving goals of curriculum.

Rumiati, at all (2024) found that obstacles in applying Curriculum Merdeka such as varying level of students' understanding, limited of school facilities and infrastructures, limited of reference, limited of teacher knowledge, and human resources.

From the explanation above, the researcher entitled this research as 'The Teachers' Obstacles in Applying Curriculum Merdeka'.

METHODOLOGY

The research design of this research is using Qualitative research. The qualitative research is an approach that consist of transformative worldview, ethnographic design, and observation of behavior (Creswell, 2018, P.66). The researcher used descriptive qualitative method. It is tells about solving existing problems through the data that has been collected. Nazir, 2003, P.4)

This research sites at SMA Negeri 5 Kota Tidore Kepulauan that located in Sofifi district. In collecting the data, the researcher used questionnaire to get the data. The questionnaire gave to the teachers by google form. The content of the google form including about curriculum of Merdeka Belajar. After the researcher got data, the researcher analyzed the data by using Creswell. The data

from questionnaire had organized, interpreted, and presented. The researcher organized the data, and then interpreted the data from google form, and the last is presented the data into the research result.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings of the research that have been concluded by the researcher are as follows: 1) administrative difficulties: analyzing teaching modules and assessment, 2) the implementation of Curriculum Merdeka: not utilizing the technology and not implementing differentiated learning,

A. Administrative Difficulties

The difficulties experienced by teachers lie in lesson planning in preparing the administration.

1. Analyzing the teaching module.

From the participants' response of this point as the finding can show as follow:

“The 2013 curriculum and the independent curriculum have different approaches and learning tools, with K13 being more structured and detailed in learning tools, while the independent curriculum is more flexible, innovative and contextual according to the needs and potential of students. The independent curriculum gives more freedom to teachers and schools to develop relevant and effective learning in composed and using a learning module”. (Wednesday, 02 August 2023)

In preparing learning tools, teachers still have difficulties because there are differences with the previous curriculum. However, the teaching tools owned by the teacher are complete. This is because teaching tools such as teaching modules that come from the center can already be accessed through various media information. With the availability of this teaching module, teachers should be able to study or explore the teaching module. However, teachers do not study the contents of the teaching modules so that teachers cannot understand the contents of the existing teaching modules.

2. Assessment.

Referring to the results of the study, which found that teachers had difficulty in providing assessment for students. It can show by the teacher' response as follow:

“The difficulties encountered are administrative difficulties. I am still confused in developing teaching modules and giving assessments to students.” (Wednesday, 02 August 2023)

This is due to differences in terms with the previous curriculum. Teachers also still have difficulty in compiling question grids and assessment rubrics. Teachers have not been able to distinguish between summative and formative assessments. The inability of teachers to sort out the types of assessments causes teachers to have difficulty in filling out report cards.

B. The Implementation

In implementing the Curriculum Merdeka at SMAN 5 Tidore Kepulauan, the teacher's ability is quite good. However, the implementation of learning in the classroom that implements the Curriculum Merdeka, the researchers found that the teacher did not utilize technology and curriculum; researchers found that teachers did not utilize technology and did not apply differentiated learning.

1. Not utilizing technology.

Technology is the important one for design content in learning. The teacher should use technology to create some learning media. The participant's response as follow:

"The Curriculum Merdeka is a curriculum with a variety of extracurricular learning where the content will be more optimal so that students have enough time to understand concept and strengthen competencies. (Wednesday, 02 August 2023)

In the Curriculum Merdeka, students have enough time to explore the essential material of basic competencies such as literacy and numeracy, which are supported by the use of technology to facilitate learning. In the Curriculum Merdeka, teachers can use the technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) learning model to improve the learning process to make it more interesting and memorable. TPACK learning is very interesting with the use of learning media that is in accordance with the material being taught so that teachers must be creative and innovative so that students are not bored and can learn independently. The use of digital learning media has not been utilized by teachers in the learning process. Learning only utilizes textbooks and does not use digital-based learning media. This is because teachers are still less capable in using technology and information.

2. Not implementing differentiated learning.

The implementation of a Curriculum Merdeka lacks the characteristics of a Curriculum Merdeka. This can be seen from the results of the research that do not strengthen the profile of Pancasila students and do not focus too much on exploring basic competencies.

"For learning resources, it is not yet adequate because the Merdeka curriculum applies different learning styles to each child, therefore teachers need a lot of time to prepare these learning resources." (Wednesday, 02 August 2023)

The characteristics of the independent curriculum are project-based learning to strengthen the profile of Pancasila learners (P5), focus on essential material to explore basic competencies (literacy and numeracy) and flexibility in learning by adjusting the abilities of students. context and local content (Kemendikbud, 2018).

Through the Curriculum Merdeka, students can develop projects to strengthen the Pancasila learner profile. In the implementation of learning, teachers relate the values of Pancasila in everyday life. To support the Pancasila learner profile, teachers can use project-based learning methods. Project-based learning focuses learning on students and teachers only as facilitators.

DISCUSSION

Merdeka Belajar Program is a policy that is considered transformative in the world of education, of course there are various changes that will be felt by

teachers. The changes that this teacher feels confront him with various obstacles or that need to be overcome properly.

Curriculum Merdeka 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 tools so that learning can be tailored to the learning needs and interests of learners. 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 tied to subject content. Teachers as learning friends for students design learning to be more fun so that students have self-awareness and dare to make their choices independently.

Teachers must be committed to learning and adapting to curriculum changes. Learning and understanding the new curriculum is an important step to achieving the best results in the learning process. In addition, while change can be challenging, teachers are expected to remain enthusiastic and strive to achieve the best results for the implementation of the new curriculum set by the government. It is important to remember that curriculum change is part of the effort to improve the education system, although it starts with challenges, the spirit of learning and adaptation of teachers is the key to success in implementing curriculum change.

1. Teaching Module

Recently, teaching modules are often discussed by teachers in every school at the early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Teaching modules are one of the novelties in the independent curriculum. One of the teaching tools is the teaching module, which arranged systematically starting from the opening, content, and closing. (Maulida, 2022). The teaching module serves as a guide for teachers to implement learning in the classroom.

Teaching modules are learning tools or lesson plans used by teachers to achieve certain competencies. Not only the government can develop teaching modules, but also every individual who has an interest can develop teaching modules such as teachers, communities, publishers, experts, etc. can independently develop teaching materials. So that with the teaching module, the learning process is expected to be more effective and efficient. The material in the teaching module can be adapted to students, so that with the teaching module it is expected that each student can achieve the minimum competencies that have been determined.

Teaching tools are one of the novelties in the independent curriculum. These teaching tools are various resources and teaching materials used by educators to create student profiles to achieve learning (Assessment and curriculum standards agency, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2021, p. 68). There are various types of teaching tools in education, including textbooks, educational modules and learning videos. In addition, to make it easier for teachers in learning, the government also provides examples of teaching modules, sample syllabi, examples of educational operational curricula, classroom assessments, and project guides for strengthening the Pancasila profile. The goal is to make it easier for educators who need references in teaching (Sholikhah & Wahyuni, 2023).

The result of the research, teachers still have difficulties because there are differences with the previous curriculum. However, the teaching tools owned by the teacher are complete. This is because teaching tools such as teaching modules that come from the center can already be accessed through various media information. With the availability of this teaching module, teachers should be able to study or explore the teaching module. However, teachers do not study the contents of the teaching modules so that teachers cannot understand the contents of the existing teaching modules

2. Assessment

In every learning process carried out by educators, learning evaluation is needed to improve the quality of learning in the classroom for students. The change in curriculum from K-13 to Merdeka Curriculum has an impact on changes in learning evaluation. Learning evaluation provides picture that more comprehensive about the progress of learners, so that education becomes more inclusive and empowers all learners to achieve their maximum potential (Arifin, 2015). Learning evaluation in the independent curriculum has developed and renewed, namely the development of formative assessment. The position of such assessment in curriculum and learning lies in objectives, content or teaching materials, methods or strategies, and evaluation or assessment.

Formative assessment is the process of collecting data in the learning process regarding the extent of learners' progress in mastering the competencies that must be achieved in the learning process. The purpose of formative assessment is to evaluate the process of students' understanding of lessons, learning needs, and academic progress during the learning process (Phafiandita et al., 2022). So formative assessment is data obtained in the learning process that will be interpreted carefully so that educators can decide on effective learning activities for students so that they can optimally master learning materials/competencies.

Formative assessment helps educators monitor learners' learning and provide regular, ongoing feedback. For schools, formative assessment serves to provide information on what challenges learners face in the project learning process so that adequate support can be provided. As for learners, formative assessment serves to assist them in identifying strengths and aspects that need to be developed (Musarwan & Warsah, 2022).

Summative assessment is an assessment carried out at the end of each unit of time / at the end of one subject / phase at the end of the learning process. Summative assessment is often carried out by educators using tests at the end of a certain teaching period. Summative assessment is an activity to assess the achievement of learning objectives and/or learning outcomes (CP) of students, as a basis for determining grade promotion and/or graduation from an education unit. Assessment of the achievement of learner learning outcomes is carried out by comparing the achievement of learner learning outcomes with the criteria for achieving learning objectives (Kemdikbud, 2020).

Summative assessment in schools is usually carried out after a set of lesson programs has been completed. Summative assessment will produce a score or number which is then used as a decision on learner performance. Summative assessment results are used to determine the classification of learners' awards at

the end of learning. This assessment is designed to record the overall achievement of learners systematically (Nugraha, 2022).

Thus, summative assessment has little direct impact on learning, although it often influences decisions that may have consequences for learners in learning. The purpose of summative assessment is as a tool to measure learners' ability and understanding and as a means of providing feedback to learners. Summative evaluation also has the function of providing feedback to academic staff as a measure of learning success, accountability and monitoring standards for academic staff, and as a means of motivating learners.

In this research, teachers had difficulty in providing assessment for students. This is due to differences in terms with the previous curriculum. Teachers also still have difficulty in compiling question grids and assessment rubrics. Teachers have not been able to distinguish between summative and formative assessments. The inability of teachers to sort out the types of assessments causes teachers to have difficulty in filling out report cards.

3. Utilizing the technology

The actual issues of today that we often hear for example environmental issues technology will not replace teachers because of the sophistication of technology. However, technology in the hands of teachers will make it very easy not to complicate. the second is more independent, the development of great character and competence will be transformational in all activities, especially in the world for students has the meaning that the learning profile of Pancasila relevant learning is very helpful from the goalscore there is no specialization program in high school with the daily life of students previously done manually and students choose subjects. Yes, that was the development of technology feels complicated and takes time according to the interests of talents and those in the Merdeka learning curriculum.

The existence of Merdeka learning curriculum technology in the digital era, teachers remain “Merdeka” for teachers, namely teachers teaching in learning. The teachers are more facilitated, everything becomes more practically easy and learning even though they have been teaching, that is, according to the stage of achievement and development in the process of generating and hopefully you are an excerpt from George about the students' brief, especially the various platforms and Merdeka for schools, meaning that teachers continue to be able to develop technology for teachers, which is currently provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture, all of themselves and their competencies so that they do not have the authority to be technology-based such as the Merdeka platform independently, lagging behind can be hopefully useful and education will not be separated from those who develop manage curriculum and teach educational meeting platforms and the name technology.

Teachers are currently faced with the challenge of dealing with the lack of technology-based facilities and infrastructure. This is an important issue as technology has become an integral part of everyday life. Reigeluth (2011) goes on to say that innovations in educational methods have increased the focus on organizing learning materials, developing lesson plans, and coordinating activities with an emphasis on goals, processes, and teacher characteristics, resulting in more effective and efficient learning outcomes.

One of the challenges for teachers is the lack of adequate technology facilities such as computer devices, the internet, projectors or LCDs, and learning support software. In fact, the use of technology in the classroom can help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of learning. Teachers must innovate and be creative to overcome this limitation by utilizing available facilities and infrastructure, for example by using personal laptops or smartphones as learning aids.

In addition, the lack of training and understanding of technology is a problem for teachers. They must understand and master technology in order to utilize it optimally in the learning process. Therefore, training and mentoring are needed so that teachers can use technology effectively and efficiently. Lack of access to the internet is also a challenge for teachers. The use of the internet in learning can open up access to more complete and up-to-date learning resources, but if internet access is unavailable or slow then this will become an obstacle in the learning process. Teachers must overcome this by utilizing offline resources or editing learning materials to be accessed offline when the internet is not available.

Teachers in this research in learning only utilizes textbooks and does not use digital-based learning media. This is because teachers are still less capable in using technology and information.

4. Differentiated Learning

One method that has emerged as an effective approach in implementing the Merdeka curriculum is differentiated learning. Differentiated learning is not new in the world of education. Differentiated learning was originally introduced by (Carol Ann Tomlinson & Moon, 2014); (Carol Ann Tomlinson, 1999) which states that differentiated learning is learning that accommodates, serves, and recognizes the diversity of students in learning according to students' readiness, interests, and learning preferences. Herwina, (2021:178) suggests that adjustments in differentiated learning include interests, learning profiles, student readiness in order to achieve improved learning outcomes.

The concept of differentiated learning is a good and ideal concept, but it challenges teachers to be creative. With this learning, students' potential is developed according to their needs, characteristics and achievement levels. But to achieve learning in accordance with the concept, teachers must strive to be reliable facilitators.

First, teachers must know the various characteristics of learners. Teachers' knowledge about the condition of student diversity is the basis for designing learning, so that it is in accordance with the circumstances of the diversity of these learners. Teachers need to spend sufficient time in preparing learning plans.

Second, teachers need to prepare diagnostic and formative assessments at the beginning of learning. Diagnostic assessment is carried out to find out the diversity of learners. As for the formative assessment at the beginning of learning to find out the level of achievement of students. Thus, teachers can design competency defense for each learner.

Third, teachers need to use multi-methods, multimedia, and multi-sources. The application of various methods, media and learning resources can accommodate various types of learning for students, both visual, auditory and kinesthetic types. The implementation of differentiated learning is the hope of

improving learning so that each learner can grow and develop optimally. However, to realize it, teachers need to struggle and work hard.

The challenge in implementing differentiated learning is that teachers need to prepare multi-methods, multimedia and multi-sources so that learning varies to accommodate students' various learning styles. To arrange all of that, teachers need more time and it becomes a challenge for teachers because each school has allocated time for each teacher and their respective subjects. The allocation of learning time is closely related to the learning planning process. Learning planning as a process, scientific discipline, reality, system and learning technology that aims to make the implementation of learning run effectively and efficiently (Majid, 2005: 18). This is confirmed by Combs (1982:1) that learning planning is a rational application of systematic analysis of the educational development process with the aim that education is more effective and efficient in accordance with the needs and goals of students and society. Teachers' in this research do not strengthen the profile of Pancasila students and do not focus too much on exploring basic competencies.

CONCLUSION

Teachers' obstacles in applying the Merdeka Curriculum are very varied, in this study there are four challenges faced by teachers at SMAN 5 Tidore Kepulauan, namely: preparation of teaching modules, assessment, not using technology optimally and not implementing differentiated learning because it is considered difficult to do. From some of these teacher obstacles, it can be concluded that teachers still need to improve their competencies related to the Merdeka Curriculum. This should be a concern of the government and school leaders to improve teacher competence to be even better so that the impact will affect student-learning outcomes.

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