



Early Childhood Teacher's Ability to Implement Independent Curriculum at State Kindergarten Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the ability of PAUD teachers to implement the Independent Curriculum at Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu State Kindergarten, over a period of 3 months, namely September-December 2023. Based on its type, this research is descriptive qualitative research. The data collection method in this research uses three models: interviews, observation and documentation. The data obtained is valid and has a degree of trust, so researchers use two techniques: diligent observation and data triangulation. The data analysis technique used is the Miles and Huberman method which consists of data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing. The results of this research show that teachers have been able to implement the Independent Curriculum by implementing project-based learning, formative assessments, summative assessments, portfolios and performance-based assessments, as well as creating teaching modules that suit children's interests and talents well.

Keywords: *Early Childhood Education, Independent Curriculum, Teacher Capability.*



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INTRODUCTION

The freedom to learn curriculum provides and also presents a principle of freedom to learn that can be expected to accelerate the process of educational reform in Indonesia. The curriculum used in Indonesia is old and needs updating. Through the new program, the Ministry of Education and Culture has ideas about deregulation of education. According to Munandar (2017), the curriculum has a definition as a parent in determining a process in the world of education (Munandar, 2017). Meanwhile, according to the Curriculum Law (2003) No. 20, the curriculum has a definition as a set of plans in the teaching and learning process which is found to have content, material, and also objectives and methods that can be used as a guide and foundation in organizing the learning process in achieving national education.

In Indonesia itself there have been several curriculum changes. Adapted from Ulinniam, Barlian, Iriantara (2021), changes and improvements occurred in 1947, 1964, and 1968. Then in 1973, 1975, 1984, and 1994. Curriculum changes occurred again in 1997 where this curriculum was a revision of the 1994 curriculum. Changes again occurred in 2004 by issuing a Competency-Based Curriculum. Then the 2006 Curriculum with the basis of the Education Unit Level Curriculum. Then in 2013, the 2013 Curriculum or Kurtilas was issued and most recently in 2018 a review was carried out regarding Kurtilas. (Ulinniam, et al., 2021). Then a new curriculum emerged called the Merdeka Curriculum. The pandemic period is one of the milestones where the ministry finally issued a decision regarding independent learning for students to do at home according to Fahrina (2020). This situation certainly provides an opportunity to increase development in the industrial sector due to the condition of students learning at home, which can present educational transformation to develop through improvements in the technology sector. The development of industry 4.0 is one of the new sciences that has received a fairly rapid transformation in all aspects, one of which is the education sector which has had a considerable influence (Fahrina, 2020).

Teacher's ability to teach, in teaching and socializing in schools, there are 10 basic teacher abilities in teaching, namely: developing personality, mastering the foundation of education, mastering learning materials, compiling teaching programs, implementing teaching programs, assessing the results and teaching and learning processes that have been carried out, organizing guidance programs, interacting with peers, and organizing school administration. organize school administration, interact with peers and the community, organize simple research for teaching purposes.

Teachers have a dominant role in the learning process in separate subjects based on Ananda & Fadhilaturrahmi (2018). The media used by teachers in the teaching and learning process is more monotonous than conventional methods, which use blackboards and books continuously. Without any changes and reforms to the learning media, it will certainly not attract the interest of students because there is no variety in learning (Ananda, R., & Fadhilaturrahmi, F., 2018). In choosing the right learning activities for children, it is important to consider their age, interests and abilities. In addition, learning activities must be tailored to the subject matter being studied. By combining the right learning media and fun learning activities, it is hoped that children can learn more effectively and enjoyably.

Learning media is a form of independent curriculum that provides alternative learning models for students and teachers in presenting lessons in schools, especially in kindergarten and elementary schools. The Independent Learning Curriculum is one of the innovations to develop students' potential and learning interests so that they can learn optimally by setting learning goals, setting strategies, and monitoring progress according to what can hone students' independence. Before starting to compile teaching modules, teachers must first understand the components of the Independent Curriculum Teaching Module. In general, there are 3 main components in the composition of the teaching module or Independent Curriculum lesson plan: available information, core components, and attachments. Pancasila Learner Profile One of the important keys in preparing Merdeka Curriculum lesson plans.

Furthermore, the profile will be implemented in student learning methods. Facilities and Infrastructure, Supportive infrastructure can help the learning process to be more optimal. However, teachers also need to have creativity by optimally utilizing existing infrastructure. Furthermore, the Merdeka Curriculum lesson plan

must also contain the learning methods used. The selection of this learning method can be adjusted to the circumstances and learning needs of students. The learning model in the Merdeka Curriculum system is quite diverse. Among them are face-to-face, online distance, off-network distance, and blended learning models.

Duren Sawit 02 State Kindergarten School has been implementing the independent curriculum since 2021, students are given the opportunity to explore and also express their learning interests which have the aim of optimizing the spirit of competence and also good character. Another effect is that students are more active in the learning process. Learners in the independent curriculum, learners are not only focused on numerical targets. Learners have the opportunity to explore other segments such as character to the thinking patterns needed to become a much better person. Meanwhile, from the teacher's side, the role of this independent curriculum provides a positive relationship to the development of teacher potential and independent media or platforms in teaching. This can give birth to qualified educators who can develop their competencies and maintain a much better independent curriculum.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in seeing how the competence and abilities of teachers at the Early Childhood Education level in implementing an independent curriculum at school and its influence on students at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses qualitative data methods with the data obtained is not statistical or numerical data. However, the data obtained has the nature of word descriptions as data in this study (Rukajat, 2018). With the use of these data, qualitative research presents the principle of understanding objects in a more in-depth way. According to Creswell (2015), the purpose of qualitative research is to present information that is closely related to the phenomenon that needs to be studied in the form of research (Creswell, 2015). This research collects qualitative data through interviews and observations. The research approach using qualitative methods is research conducted through description and analysis of phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes and beliefs. Furthermore, the purpose of this method is to recognize people's thoughts from the perspective of individuals and groups.

Data collection in this research includes the study of natural conditions of primary and secondary data sources for the data collection process. This is done through observation and interviews with the addition of documentation data collection. This qualitative approach is a research method that presents descriptive data in the form of written data and data from oral sources obtained from interviews with respondents or informants selected for observation. (Sugiyono, Understanding Qualitative Research, 2018)

The interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman technically consists of 4 (four) main things, namely data collection, data reduction or data simplification, data presentation and conclusion drawing or verification. Data validity was reviewed through source and document triangulation techniques. Furthermore, it was analyzed using an interactive model starting from data collection, data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After conducting research, it was found that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu, since being designated as a leading school at the end of 2021, has increasingly enhanced the desire to create enjoyable learning experiences. The Merdeka Curriculum provides greater freedom to schools and teachers in designing and implementing child-centered learning, prioritizing children's needs with enjoyable learning experiences, simplifying the previous curriculum, and making the Merdeka curriculum more flexible, allowing teachers the freedom to develop child-centered learning. Through the presentation of programs and activities at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 during the beginning of the academic year by inviting all parents through committee meetings. This is done by attending training sessions organized by the government. The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum began at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu on July 11, 2023, at the beginning of the 2023 academic year. The findings of this research correlate with research by As time goes by, changes in curriculum thinking and rationalization will evolve from time to time. The existence of the curriculum can certainly have a significant impact on the quality of education in Indonesia. Therefore, it is very important to analyze the education curriculum more deeply and carefully according to the thinking of Alhumuddin (2015) (Alhumuddin, 2015).

The objectives of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu encompass several aspects. Firstly, the Merdeka Curriculum aims to make a positive contribution to the students at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu. Furthermore, it aims to instill in children the perception that learning is enjoyable according to the talents and interests of students, enabling students to become more active and enthusiastic in their learning and enhancing the teaching-learning process for the participants. How to conduct teacher training in the Merdeka Curriculum, by organizing competency-based, experience-based, and needs-based training, establishing learning communities for sharing experiences. Meanwhile, according to research by Budiman, Melina, Muazza, & Rahman (2023) related to the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at the Khalifah TK Paud School, there is a correlation that teacher experience and references are important factors in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Lack of experience and references can slow down the implementation process. Meanwhile, supporting factors such as adequate media and technology are one of the factors that support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum to run smoothly.

The ability of PAUD teachers in planning learning and Teaching Modules can already be carried out well and in accordance with the interests and needs of children. Special development or adjustments are made related to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu by participating in Merdeka Curriculum implementation training organized by the government to constantly update knowledge about the Merdeka Curriculum. Based on Kunandar (2015), the ability is an aspect possessed by someone in carrying out tasks and responsibilities assigned to them. (Kunandar, 2015). From this definition, teacher ability is a potential and capability possessed by educators or teachers in carrying out activities and tasks.

In the development of PAUD teacher competencies regarding the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok

Bambu by participating in training sessions on the Merdeka Curriculum so that teachers can implement the Merdeka Curriculum well. The steps to be taken during the opening, core, and closing activities of learning in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu are initiated by opening activities: Preparing students psychologically and physically, motivating students, asking questions that relate previous knowledge to the material to be learned. The core activities are carried out through a learning process consisting of five main learning experiences: observing, questioning, reasoning, trying, and communicating. The closing activity is the final activity conducted by the teacher to end the learning process, here the teacher tries to understand the formation of competencies and the achievement of learning objectives and students' understanding of the material learned, as well as ending the learning activity. Based on Suprayati in Kunandar (2015), teacher competence in learning is defined as the competence of teachers who present their performance professionally. This ability can show how teachers have competencies in the teaching and learning process. Teachers who serve as professional staff have the goal of implementing the national education system by prioritizing the development of students' potential to become human beings who fear God with noble morals and have responsibility towards the nation. (Kunandar, 2015).

The use of the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu PAUD teacher abilities involves several learning methods by educators based on the Merdeka curriculum as a guide in the teaching and learning process at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu. Educators or teachers can already assess with the Merdeka Curriculum quite well. Assessment indicators used to assess students based on the Merdeka Curriculum are: Formative Assessment, Summative Assessment, Project Assessment, Portfolio, Performance-based Assessment. According to Mulyasa (2013), teacher competence is knowledge, abilities, and skills performed and possessed by educators in carrying out their duties. The standard of teacher competence itself is a way to obtain professional teachers and have competencies to carry out the functions and goals of education at the school level that are in accordance with the needs of the times. Mulyasa (2013) mentions that teachers are required to be professional in their work and to play their role as educators who must be able to adapt to the needs of society and the adjustment of the times in terms of knowledge and technology, which are currently developing.

The learning methods used in Merdeka Curriculum-based learning at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu use a differentiation approach by grouping student learning achievements based on the child's growth phase, as this method allows teachers to accommodate differences in the abilities, interests, and learning styles of students. It can be implemented well. The Merdeka curriculum will not teach all subjects that are not the main interests of the students. Students can choose material independently according to Desi's statement (2022). Students can focus more on learning and no longer just prepare themselves for the exams they face. With such a focused system, of course, it can provide enjoyable learning activities and students can also work on practice questions (Desi, 2022).

The instructional media used in Merdeka Curriculum-based learning at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu include instructional videos, educational applications, learning modules, and educational games. The ability of PAUD teachers to use instructional media based on the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren

Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu can be carried out well, making teachers more creative and innovative according to the characteristics and needs of the students. According to Kunandar (2015), ability is an aspect possessed by someone in performing tasks and responsibilities assigned to them. From this definition, teacher ability is a potential and capability possessed by educators or teachers in carrying out activities and tasks.

The advantages of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu include customized learning tailored to the needs of students, encouraging students to become more active, creative, innovative, and independent learners, using basic competencies such as literacy and numeracy, as well as 21st-century competencies such as collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. What are the shortcomings of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu? It requires high readiness from teachers, schools, parents, and students to implement the Merdeka Curriculum. It requires human resource support and adequate infrastructure to carry out quality implementation. According to Restanti (2022), running the Merdeka curriculum certainly requires careful preparation. And this can be achieved by enhancing educators' competencies through training. With such training, educators can maximize the information and training they receive. This is one way to enhance teachers' competencies in the Merdeka curriculum. (Restanti, 2022)

As for the obstacles or challenges faced in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu, there is a lack of time in conducting assessments based on the Merdeka Curriculum. There is still an inability to maximize time management during assessment creation. The solution to overcoming or resolving these obstacles is to start planning in detail what needs to be accomplished, create a task list for assessment components and allocate time for each part, prioritize tasks that are most important and require time and attention, and use available resources. According to Suprayati in Kunandar (2015), teacher competency in learning is defined as the competence of teachers who present their performance professionally. This ability can show how teachers have competencies in the teaching and learning process. Teachers who serve as professional staff have the goal of implementing the national education system by prioritizing the development of students' potential to become human beings who fear God with noble morals and have responsibility towards the nation (Kunandar, 2015).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research conducted at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu, several significant findings have been revealed. Since being designated as a leading school at the end of 2021, there has been an increasing desire to create enjoyable learning experiences. With the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, schools and teachers have gained greater freedom in designing and implementing child-centered learning, prioritizing children's needs with engaging approaches. The objectives of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at TK Negeri Duren Sawit 02 Pondok Bambu include several aspects, such as making a positive contribution to students, activating participation and learning enthusiasm, and enhancing teaching and learning processes. Teachers' abilities in lesson planning and module creation have developed well through Merdeka Curriculum implementation training provided by the government. Teachers have implemented various teaching methods, using differentiation approaches to accommodate differences in students' abilities, interests,

and learning styles. Various instructional media have been used, including instructional videos, educational applications, learning modules, and educational games. The advantages of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum include customized learning tailored to students' needs, encouraging creativity, innovation, and independent learning, as well as leveraging basic and 21st-century competencies.

However, some challenges are faced, such as a lack of time to conduct assessments based on the Merdeka Curriculum. Solutions to overcome these challenges include detailed planning, task prioritization, and effective use of available resources. To enhance the effectiveness of Merdeka Curriculum implementation, several suggestions are provided. For teachers, they can develop detailed planning, prioritize tasks, and effectively use available resources. For schools, it is recommended to frequently conduct Merdeka Curriculum implementation activities and maximize the use of learning facilities and infrastructure. For researchers, the next step could involve following up with experimental research methods to improve the effectiveness of Merdeka Curriculum implementation.

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