



Merdeka Curriculum implementation at Wonoayu 1 Junior High School as Sekolah Penggerak

Varary Mechwafanitiara Cantika¹, Lathifah Khaerunnisa², Rika Yustikarini³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Kota Bandung, Indonesia

vararymc@upi.edu¹, lathinisa@gmail.com², rikayustikarini@gmail.com³

ABSTRACT

The concept of Ki Hadjar Dewantara's education was adopted in Indonesia's current curriculum, known as Kurikulum Merdeka. The Kurikulum Merdeka is implemented with the support of all stakeholders and policymakers, following the school's readiness. Wonoayu 1 Junior High School is one of the schools that has become "Sekolah Penggerak" and because of its readiness, the school implements Kurikulum Merdeka. This study aims to describe the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka at Wonoayu 1 Junior High School, Sidoarjo Regency, as "Sekolah Penggerak". The method used in this research is a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques using interviews and observation. The results showed that implementing Kurikulum Merdeka at Wonoayu 1 Junior High School followed the standards and curriculum guidelines for implementing Kurikulum Merdeka for "Sekolah Penggerak". These aspects are viewed from three main aspects, namely, the learning planning aspect, the learning implementation aspect, and the learning assessment aspect. Some obstacles require more attention and further handling in implementing Kurikulum Merdeka at Wonoayu 1 Junior High School.

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ABSTRAK

Konsep Pendidikan Ki Hadjar Dewantara diadopsi dalam kurikulum di Indonesia saat ini yang dikenal dengan nama Kurikulum Merdeka. Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka dilaksanakan dengan dukungan seluruh stakeholder dan para pemangku kebijakan, dengan mengikuti kesiapan dari sekolah itu sendiri. SMPN 1 Wonoayu merupakan salah satu sekolah yang menjadi Sekolah Penggerak dan karena kesiapannya, sekolah tersebut mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan bagaimana implementasi kurikulum Merdeka di SMPN 1 Wonoayu Kabupaten Sidoarjo sebagai sekolah penggerak. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode deskriptif dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan wawancara dan observasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi kurikulum Merdeka di SMPN 1 Wonoayu telah sesuai dengan standar dan pedoman implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka bagi sekolah penggerak. Adapun kesesuaian tersebut ditinjau dari tiga aspek utama, yaitu aspek perencanaan pembelajaran, aspek pelaksanaan pembelajaran, dan aspek penilaian pembelajaran. Pada pelaksanaannya terdapat kendala yang memerlukan perhatian lebih dan penanganan lebih lanjut dalam implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka di SMPN 1 Wonoayu.

Kata Kunci: implementasi; kurikulum; Kurikulum Merdeka; Sekolah Penggerak.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a system that influences two aspects, namely macro and micro. From a macro perspective, education is a system that creates quality Human Resources (HR). At a micro level, education is a system that focuses on teaching staff and students through interaction and communication. Implementing education is one of the benchmarks that can show the quality of society in a particular area.

The education system generally includes three main components: input, process, and output (Zafi, 2018). The education system emphasized in Indonesia is different from the education systems that exist in other countries. The educational concept adopted by the Indonesian education system refers to the educational concept created by Ki Hadjar Dewantara. As explained in the article presented by Marwah et al. (2018), the concept of education emphasized by Ki Hadjar Dewantara is the concept of education to form humans with good personalities and become lifelong learners (lifelong learning). The educational concept emphasized by Ki Hadjar Dewantara was adopted in the curriculum innovation in Indonesia in 2020, known as Kurikulum Merdeka.

Kurikulum Merdeka was developed with a foundation. Educational concepts have existed since ancient times and are still relevant today, especially those related to personality and awareness of lifelong learning. Research presented by Fitriyah & Wardani (2022) states that Kurikulum Merdeka carries the concept of Merdeka Belajar, which aims to create a generation of lifelong learners with the personality of Pancasila Student. Based on this explanation, it can be described how Kurikulum Merdeka prioritizes students' personalities to become someone with good personality and quality, as described in Profil Pelajar Pancasila concept.

Curriculum implementation must be distinct from the stakeholders involved (Sari et al., 2020). Thus, implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka requires cooperation, commitment, sincerity, and actual implementation from all parties involved to instill Profil Pelajar Pancasila in students, including full stakeholder support. As an educator, the teacher plays an essential role in the smooth implementation of the curriculum. This is because the teacher, as an educator, is directly involved in classroom learning. The current developments require teachers as educators to adapt to technology to maximize the abilities and potential of students (Astutik et al., 2022). This is in line with the concept of lifelong learning, which is related to the use of technology in learning and digital competence (Pérez-Escoda et al., 2021; Možanić & Bukvić, 2021).

One of the programs that is part of implementing Kurikulum Merdeka is Sekolah Penggerak program. Implementing Sekolah Penggerak program must be distinct from the role of teachers as educators in the implementation process. Sekolah Penggerak program is an innovation from a school development program previously initiated by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. Sekolah Penggerak program is one of the efforts to accelerate existing schools in Indonesia, both public and private schools, towards improving the quality of education. The implementation of Sekolah Penggerak program is carried out in stages and is integrated with the ecosystem so that all schools in Indonesia can become Sekolah Penggerak. Judging from the official website of

Sekolah Penggerak program as of December 9, 2022, in the first batch, 2,492 schools joined Sekolah Penggerak program, with details of 343 PAUD levels, 1,112 SD levels, 573 SMP levels, 383 SMA levels, and 81 levels SLB.

SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu is one of the state schools in Sidoarjo Regency. This school is one of 573 junior high school (SMP) education units participating in the first batch of Sekolah Penggerak program. Apart from SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu, in Sidoarjo Regency, five other schools participate in Sekolah Penggerak program. As schools that are members of the first batch, it indicates that SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu and the five other schools are ready to implement Kurikulum Merdeka fully.

SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu's participation in Sekolah Penggerak program manifests the school's direct efforts to prepare students for the Industrial Revolution 4.0 by carrying out various breakthrough programs. These programs are designed to improve the quality of graduates. SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu was chosen as the research location because, based on the results of observations, it showed that one of the strategies implemented by SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu as a Sekolah Penggerak was to implement Kurikulum Merdeka by carrying out careful planning in aspects of curriculum implementation. Based on this, the researcher considered that Wonoayu 1 Public Middle School as a Sekolah Penggerak had tried to implement Kurikulum Merdeka to the fullest. Hence, the researchers decided to conduct an observational study regarding this matter. Researchers try to study and analyze how Kurikulum Merdeka is implemented in Sekolah Penggerak in three main aspects: curriculum, learning planning, learning implementation, and learning evaluation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Curriculum Development

The concept of curriculum development has developed since the curriculum was introduced. In Indonesia itself, there have been several curriculum developments since independence in 1945. Curriculum changes are considered natural due to other changes that occur in the world, starting from the political, social, cultural, economic, and science and technology aspects (Nugraha, 2022). Another study by Julaeha (2019) stated that the curriculum must be responsive. The term responsive here means that the curriculum must be able to answer challenges and be relevant to the needs of every period. This was confirmed by Azis (2018), who stated that curriculum development is essential as an operational basis for the learning process. Nowadays, society's needs and demands are increasing in quality along with technological developments (Yasa et al., 2021). Based on this phenomenon, in the end, the curriculum, as one of the core elements in the implementation of education, must continue to develop.

Kurikulum Merdeka

Kurikulum Merdeka is a new curriculum that improves the deficiencies in Kurikulum 2013. Kurikulum Merdeka is designed to create learning that provides opportunities for students to experience a learning atmosphere that is fun and relaxed, does not cause stress, is calm, does not give pressure, and provides opportunities for students to show their talents

(Rahayu et al., 2022). Kurikulum Merdeka carries the concept of Merdeka Belajar, which focuses on freedom and creative thinking.

Merdeka Belajar is also an effort to realize the vision and mission of Indonesian education, namely creating quality Human Resources (HR) that can compete in various fields of life. Through Kurikulum Merdeka, it is hoped that students can develop their potential and have superior abilities in critical, expressive, varied, quality, and progressive learning (Sibagariang et al., 2021). Based on this explanation, Kurikulum Merdeka seeks to create superior human resources in various aspects by creating a learning atmosphere that prioritizes the potential of each student for more significant opportunities to achieve general educational goals.

Free Learning in the Independent Curriculum is one of the efforts made by the government to overcome the learning crisis due to the pandemic (Nugraha, 2022; Thohir et al., 2021; Yusuf, 2021). Students face problems due to the pandemic, especially in the implementation of learning. In addition, the Kurikulum Merdeka focuses on the abilities of individual students in accordance with one of its goals, namely to create superior human resources.

Sekolah Penggerak

Sekolah Penggerak is a program initiated by the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology on 1 February 2021. This program starts in the 2021/2022 school year in 34 provinces and 111 districts or cities. It is hoped that Sekolah Penggerak program will become an educational reform focusing on cultural transformation. This hope arises from the notion that school culture should not only focus on administrative approaches but also be able to provide student-focused innovation and learning (Satriawan et al., 2021). Through this Sekolah Penggerak program, schools are hoped to produce graduates in line with Profil Pelajar Pancasila. This program is also one of the innovations of the Indonesian government through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology to create a curriculum oriented towards the needs of students according to the character and characteristics of students in Indonesian territory (Sumarsih et al., 2022). As a new program, most of Sekolah Penggerak is carried out by schools that are in a condition ready to implement Kurikulum Merdeka. In its implementation, it is hoped to maximally become one of the educational reform efforts.

METHODS

The research method used in this research is a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Nugrahani & Hum (2014) stated that qualitative research collects empirical data to describe routines and problems that occur and are meaningful in everyday life. Departing from this statement, researchers try to use descriptive methods to analyze and explain research findings but are not used to conclude broadly. The data source used in this study is a primary data source. The data collection techniques used in this study are interviews and observation. The interview technique used in this research is a structured interview, in which the researcher has determined a list of questions to be asked of the interviewees. The resource persons in this research were the Deputy Principal for

curriculum and subject teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu. Another data collection technique uses observation; this is done to increase the depth of research findings. The research findings data are strengthened by reviewing literature that is relevant to the research findings. The literature review was obtained from books and accredited scientific articles.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Learning Planning

The learning planning aspect in Kurikulum Merdeka is related to developing teaching modules, identifying learning outcomes, formulating learning objectives, developing learning materials, establishing learning models/strategies/methods, and determining the type of learning evaluation along with the assessment instruments. Apart from that, an important aspect differentiating Kurikulum Merdeka from the previous curriculum lies in Profil Pelajar Pancasila. The learning planning aspects of Kurikulum Merdeka at SMPN 1 Wonoayu follow the standards and guidelines for implementing Kurikulum Merdeka for Sekolah Penggerak. All teachers who were respondents to this study stated that they had developed teaching modules following general information and the core components of learning.

Teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu also identify learning outcomes for each subject that will be taught to students. Apart from that, they also analyze learning outcomes in the phases mapped out in learning activities. This aligns with the formulation of learning subject matter in Kurikulum Merdeka, which emphasizes learning outcomes and phases at each level of education. In addition to learning outcomes, teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu also formulate learning objectives by considering the competencies to be achieved, the content to be learned, and what kinds of thinking skills students need to master to achieve learning goals. Setting learning objectives is followed by linearly compiling learning objectives as the learning activities will be carried out. The actions taken by the teacher at SMPN 1 Wonoayu show that SMPN 1 Wonoayu teachers have an essential awareness of setting learning objectives in the learning process.

Teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu also develop learning materials following previously established objectives. Not only learning materials but the pedagogical competence of a teacher is also related to the selection of appropriate learning models, strategies, and methods to improve students' abilities in their learning. This has been done by teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu. Teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu have determined models, strategies, and learning methods tailored to the learning outcomes and materials to be delivered.

SMPN 1 Wonoayu teachers also determine the type of learning evaluation adjusted to learning outcomes by developing relevant learning evaluation instruments. Choosing a learning evaluation is one of the most essential parts of learning planning. Through proper learning evaluation, it will be known how the achievement of students in mastering the goals that have been determined and knowing which parts need to be learned and which do not need to be studied by students. In addition, learning evaluation is also helpful as feedback on all interests with education implemented in the school concerned. The use of learning evaluation determined by the teacher at SMPN 1 Wonoayu at the planning stage is an evaluation aimed at providing early-stage assistance in preparing learning programs.

Implementation of Learning

Implementing learning in Kurikulum Merdeka is related to selecting learning resources, either deductively or inductively, which focuses on learning objectives. The implementation of learning is adapted to Bloom's Taxonomy theory to measure students' affective, cognitive, and psychomotor development and Pancasila Student Profile project activities. Aspects of implementing Kurikulum Merdeka at SMPN 1 Wonoayu are following the standards and guidelines for implementing Kurikulum Merdeka for Sekolah Penggerak. Several conditions must be considered in implementing Kurikulum Merdeka at SMPN 1 Wonoayu.

Firstly, teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu do not always use the handbook provided by the school as the primary source for learning, with the assumption that some of the learning material contained in the handbook is felt to be less appropriate to the load of learning material in Kurikulum Merdeka so that students are required to look for it. Information via the Internet. This condition emerged due to the rapid developments in education and information technology. Using the Internet as a teaching resource can increase students' critical thinking skills (Rahman, 2021). This is because the Internet, as a source of information, makes it easier for students to access all the information they want to find. Students can also quickly get as much information as possible for their development. Using the Internet as a learning resource also makes it easier for students to access theories or information from experts in the field of science. Apart from that, the Internet as a teaching resource also allows students in various corners of the world to collaborate in expressing their thoughts on a problem for which a solution is being sought.

Second, teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu only sometimes use a deductive approach, namely learning that teaches (general) theory first and then accompanied by (specific) examples. They tend to choose to go directly to the practice stage and then ask students to conclude their own. The learning model applied by teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu can be categorized as a learning model known as Project Based Learning. Apart from Project Based Learning, this learning model can also be categorized as a Problem-Based Learning model depending on the output (achievement) of the specified learning outcomes.

Third, teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu carry out Proyek Profil Pelajar Pancasila in co-curricular activities. This action aligns with the provisions of implementing Profil Pelajar Pancasila in Kurikulum Merdeka. The co-curricular program is a program formed to support the intra-curricular program. The existence of Profil Pelajar Pancasila in the co-curricular program is expected to strengthen the character and competence of students in line with Pancasila values. Apart from that, the implementation of learning at SMPN 1 Wonoayu also prioritizes Bloom's Taxonomy theory, which consists of six stages, namely: 1) knowledge; 2) comprehension (understanding or perception); 3) application (implementation); 4) analysis (decomposition or elaboration); 5) synthesis (integration); and 6) evaluation (assessment). The application of Bloom's Taxonomy theory is one of the efforts of teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu to develop higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) in their students.

Learning Assessment

The learning assessment aspect in Kurikulum Merdeka is related to assessment activities to measure the achievement of indicators or learning outcomes. The learning assessment aspect of Kurikulum Merdeka at SMPN 1 Wonoayu follows the standards and guidelines for implementing Kurikulum Merdeka for Sekolah Penggerak. Teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu assess student learning outcomes using tests, while assessments on Proyek Profil Pelajar Pancasila are carried out using descriptive notes. Assessment of learning outcomes and Proyek Profil Pelajar Pancasila is carried out through diagnostics, formative assessments, and summative assessments. Teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu carry out diagnostic assessments before learning activities to determine students' readiness and entering behavior.

Student learning outcomes are assessed using tests, observations, and projects. Project assessment is carried out to measure students' achievement in psychomotor learning outcomes. Meanwhile, test assessments are carried out to determine student learning outcomes that align with mastery learning theory. Apart from that, Kurikulum Merdeka assessment of student learning outcomes no longer uses Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM), so teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu also eliminate the Minimum Completeness Criteria in assessing student learning outcomes. However, assessing student learning outcomes in Kurikulum Merdeka still adopts Bloom's Taxonomy theory, which assesses the affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains. One of the problems found in the learning assessment aspect of the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka at SMPN 1 Wonoayu is related to the assessment of Proyek Profil Pelajar Pancasila, namely that some teachers do not always carry out daily assessments after learning for one or several predetermined profile dimensions.

Discussion

Based on the presentation of research results, three main aspects, namely the learning planning aspect, the learning implementation aspect, and the learning assessment aspect, have been implemented well by SMP Negeri 1 Wonoayu. In the planning aspect, based on the results presented, Kurikulum Merdeka learning at SMPN 1 Wonoayu is following the standards and guidelines for implementing Kurikulum Merdeka for Sekolah Penggerak. Teaching modules are essential for teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu in implementing Kurikulum Merdeka. Following research conducted by [Magdalena et al. \(2020\)](#) that the critical role of teaching modules in implementing learning has a positive and significant impact on the learning carried out, not only from the teacher's perspective but also the benefits obtained from developing teaching modules that are following general information and learning core components also bring benefits to students both in individual and group learning.

The identification carried out by teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu regarding learning outcomes on each subject and analysis of learning outcomes in the phases mapped out in learning activities is in line with the formulation of the primary learning materials in Kurikulum Merdeka. The aim is to provide teaching staff opportunities to adjust each student's level (Basuki, 2022). Other research conducted by Suluh & Jumadi (2019) also stated that identifying appropriate learning objectives will help learning and student activities.

Development of learning materials that follow the objectives set and carried out by the teacher at SMPN 1 Wonoayu. Developing learning materials that are appropriate to the objectives can help improve students' abilities both in thinking abilities or output, which refers to students' learning outcomes (Halawa et al., 2022; Waruwu, 2021; Winaya et al., 2018; Zega, 2020). Apart from that, several studies conducted by Jamin (2018), Utami & Hasanah (2019), and Ilyas (2022) explained that not only improving students' abilities but developing teaching materials that are appropriate to learning objectives can also increase teachers' professional competence. Capabilities related to the development of teaching materials are included in the professional pedagogical competence of an educator. Pedagogical competency is one of the competencies related to learning management and optimizing students' abilities or potential (Lubis, 2018). Not only learning materials but a teacher's pedagogical competence is related to selecting appropriate learning models, strategies, and methods to improve students' abilities in learning. This has been done by teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu. Teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu have determined learning models, strategies, and methods tailored to the learning outcomes and learning material to be delivered.

About the evaluation planning carried out by teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu, through appropriate learning evaluations, it is possible to determine how students have mastered the predetermined goals and to know which parts students need to study and which parts they do not need to study. Learning evaluation is also helpful as feedback on all interests related to education implemented at the school. Sanjaya's research in the book "*Planning and Design of Learning Systems*" states that learning evaluation can also provide information about developing educational unit-level curriculum programs.

Aspects of implementing learning in Kurikulum Merdeka relate to activities in selecting learning resources, implementing learning either deductively or inductively, implementing learning by focusing on learning objectives, implementing learning following Bloom's Taxonomy theory to measure students' affective, cognitive, and psychomotor development, and activities—Pancasila Student Profile project. The aspects of implementing Kurikulum Merdeka at SMPN 1 Wonoayu are following the standards and guidelines for implementing Kurikulum Merdeka for Sekolah Penggerak.

Using the internet as a learning resource makes it easier for students to access theories or information from experts in the field of science they are accessing. Apart from that, the internet as a teaching resource also allows students in various corners of the world to collaborate in expressing their thoughts on a problem for which a solution is being sought. These actions can improve students' critical thinking skills (Rahman, 2021). Besides the internet, e-books are one result of the sophistication of information technology. E-books are also considered capable of increasing students' insight and helping students' learning

independence (Suryani & Khoiriyah, 2018). This is because e-books have accessibility, functionality, and effectiveness that differentiate them from conventional books. The advantages of e-books make students more motivated to seek new knowledge that they are learning (Rosida et al., 2017).

In some conditions, the learning model applied by teachers at SMPN 1 Wonoayu is a Project Based Learning model. This learning model is a learning model that requires student involvement in solving a problem and can be done independently or in groups through scientific stages with specific time limits outlined in a product (Handayani, 2020). In the learning implementation process, the Problem-Based Learning model is also used to develop students' problem adjustment and critical thinking skills (Cahyani et al., 2021). This learning model can also mean implementing a discovery learning model because it requires maximum student involvement in finding or solving problems in the learning material (Winoto & Prasetyo, 2020).

The existence of Profil Pelajar Pancasila in the co-curricular program at SMPN 1 Wonoayu as a Sekolah Penggerak that implements Kurikulum Merdeka is expected to strengthen the character and competence of students in line with Pancasila values. Apart from that, the implementation of learning at SMPN 1 Wonoayu also prioritizes Bloom's Taxonomy theory, which consists of six stages, namely: 1) knowledge, 2) comprehension, 3) application, 4) analysis, 5) synthesis, and 6) evaluation (Gunawan & Palupi, 2016). The application of Bloom's Taxonomy theory is an effort to develop HOTS skills, which grow when an individual faces problems or issues that have not been solved so that it requires the individual to find and retrieve new information stored in memory and connect in order to expand information or answers that are in line with problems encountered or sought (Abidin & Tohir, 2019).

The learning assessment aspect in Kurikulum Merdeka at SMPN 1 Wonoayu is related to assessment activities to measure the achievement of indicators or learning outcomes. The results obtained in the diagnostic assessment can be used as a basis for providing appropriate treatment according to the weaknesses of each student (Dendodi et al., 2020). Student learning outcomes are assessed using tests, observations, and projects. Project assessment is carried out to measure students' achievement in psychomotor learning outcomes. The test assessment is carried out to determine student learning outcomes that are in line with mastery learning theory. Mastery learning is a principle that emphasizes complete learning, supporting students' learning activeness (Diantari et al., 2018). In addition, assessing student learning outcomes in Kurikulum Merdeka at SMPN 1 Wonoayu adopts Bloom's Taxonomy theory, which assesses the affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains. The learning evaluation function in terms of these three domains helps know the progress and success of students during the learning period and the success of a learning program (Suardipa & Primayana, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Based on the presentation of the research findings described, implementing Kurikulum Merdeka at SMPN 1 Wonoayu as one of the first batch of Sekolah Penggerak is in line with the standards and guidelines for implementing Kurikulum Merdeka in Sekolah Penggerak. This is viewed from three main aspects: lesson planning, learning implementation, and

learning assessment. However, several problems still require further attention and handling in the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka at SMPN 1 Wonoayu, such as the inadequate use of handbooks as learning resources and assessment of the implementation of Proyek Profil Pelajar Pancasila, which is not carried out regularly at each learning phase. It is hoped that this research can be a reference for other researchers who wish to research the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka in Sekolah Penggerak and can become a recommendation for improving the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka in other Sekolah Penggerak.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The author confirms that the data and content of the article are free from plagiarism.

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