

Analysis of Teacher Readiness in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul

Ardian Arief^{1a}, Aprilia Devi Nur Khasanah^{2b}, Taryatman^{3c}, Abdul Rahim^{4d}

^{1,2,3,4}Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar, Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa, Yogyakarta 55167, Indonesia

^aardian.arief@ustjogja.ac.id; ^bapriadiadnk18@gmail.com; ^ctaryatman@ustjogja.ac.id;

^dpak_aim@ustjogja.ac.id

*Corresponding Author

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Abstract: Teacher readiness is important in implementing the independent curriculum. The purpose of this study is to describe teacher readiness and find out the supporting factors and obstacles faced by the teachers in the implementation of the independent curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul with a descriptive qualitative research design. Determination of data sources is done through purposive sampling techniques. Data collection techniques are carried out through interviews, observation, and documentation. Test the validity of the data using triangulation techniques. The results showed that; 1) teacher readiness in the implementation of the independent curriculum is not fully prepared based on the indicators of the four policies of the independent curriculum (*AKM and UN substitute Character Survey, National Assessment instead of USBN, summary RPP, and zoning PPDB*); 2) supporting factors in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, namely clear regulations, *PMM* accounts, school readiness, and adequate learning infrastructure; 3) obstacles faced in the implementation of the independent curriculum, the teachers have not understood the independent curriculum as a whole, the *Pancasila* student profile project and differentiated learning have not been implemented, also the school facilities are inadequate. Strategies to overcome these obstacles by continuing to study the independent curriculum and implementing the independent curriculum according to the capacity of the teachers, students, and schools. What is needed to implement an independent curriculum needs support from various parties, so that the objectives of this independent curriculum can be achieved properly and realized at all levels in the elementary schools.

Keywords: elementary school; independent curriculum; teacher

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Introduction

Based on the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential for religious personal strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by themselves, society, nation, and state. Based on this description, it can be seen that each

student has their potential, and the teacher's task is to explore and develop that potential. Reporting to the [sindonews.com](https://www.sindonews.com) page on September 17, 2022, education is said to be ideal if it can meet the needs of students, one way is by giving freedom to the students and teachers to be able to learn independently, creatively, and innovatively according to their potential (Elizabeth, 2020).

Regarding the practice, Indonesian education currently does not fully provide this "freedom". Reporting from the [gatra.com](https://www.gatra.com) page on September 17, 2022, the education system in Indonesia is currently unable to accommodate the potential of its students (Khoirur, 2019). Generally, the teachers still rely on the lecture method in their learning (Ainia, 2020: 96). The use of the lecture method is not wrong, but learning becomes teacher-centered only and it is likely that the students get bored and lose enthusiasm to learn. This is exacerbated by the condition of the students who currently have different learning competencies as a result of the implementation of online learning during the pandemic which causes the students to learn independently at their respective homes. From the Ministry of Education and Culture page accessed on September 18, 2022, the achievement of these different competencies resulted in Indonesia experiencing learning loss or commonly referred to as learning lag (Junior High School Admin, 2022). This learning loss causes the students, especially at the elementary school level, to get difficulties in the field of literacy and numeracy.

Based on these problems, then the idea emerged to create independent learning for both students and teachers as well as a step in restoring learning in Indonesia which experienced learning loss after the Covid-19 pandemic. Reporting from the Ministry of Education and Culture page accessed on September 24, 2022, the idea is the Free Learning Policy program carried out by the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim (Junior High School Admin, 2022). *Merdeka Belajar* is a program carried out by Nadiem Makarim to restore the national education system by the law that gives freedom to the schools, teachers, and students to be able to learn independently, creatively, and innovatively (Sherly, et al. 2020: 3). The implementation of the Independent Learning Policy program is the launch of the Independent Curriculum as a curriculum option in educational units that have been implemented in the new academic year 2022/2023 which in the first year is implemented in grades I and IV at the elementary school level. The *Merdeka* Curriculum is a curriculum that contains diverse learning and is focused on essential content which is hoped that the students can have more time to understand concepts and strengthen their learning competencies (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Reporting from the Ministry of Education and Culture page on October 16, 2022, the Independent Curriculum is officially implemented at the early childhood education level, elementary school education, and secondary education level in the new academic year 2022/2023 with three choices, namely independent learning, independent change, and independent sharing (Junior High School Admin, 2022). This *Merdeka* curriculum adopts one of the teachings of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, namely the Principle of Independence. The principle of independence means that humans have the freedom given by God Almighty to manage their own lives but still obey the rules in society (Trisharsiwi, et al. 2016). So, it is hoped that with the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, students can develop their potential but still not forget their duties as a student.

This is to the objectives of the Independent Curriculum, reported from the merdeka.com page accessed on October 15, 2022 The Independent Curriculum has the goal of creating fun education, catching up with education, and developing the potential of students (Nugraha, 2022). There are several policies carried out by the Independent Curriculum including *AKM* and

UN substitute character surveys, National Assessment instead of USBN, brief RPP, and zoning PPDB (Marisa, 2020). The implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum which refers to policies is implemented not simultaneously and massively, which gives schools more flexibility in implementing the curriculum. The results of data collection on school readiness in implementing the Independent Curriculum (IKM) conducted by the Ministry of Culture, Research, and Technology (2022), show that many public and private schools are ready and registered to implement IKM with the independent learning category as many as 35,334 schools, in the independent category the total number of schools registered is 59,429 schools, various independent categories are 3,607 who will start implementing in the 2022/2023 school year from PAUD, SD/MI, SMP, and SMA levels. At the level of early elementary school, it is carried out in grades 1 and grade 4. Since the implementation is new, the preparation for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, of course, schools and teachers must prepare well (Rahmadayanti, 2022).

Based on these policies, the teachers must have good readiness so that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum takes place properly and optimally. Readiness is a competency that should be possessed by educators (teachers) so that the teachers are ready to do something, especially ready to do learning (Abdul Majid in Putri & Nurhastuti, 2021). The teachers who have good readiness will be able to carry out good teaching and learning activities because they have good knowledge and skills. So, in any situation and condition, they will always be ready to provide learning.

Research that has discussed the portrait of an independent curriculum, a form of independent learning in elementary schools has never been reported before. Generally, many studies conducted discussing the Independent Curriculum are still focused on the university level. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum in elementary schools itself is still limited to driving schools as conveyed by Syafi'i, (2021), Rahayu et al., (2022), and Angga et al., (2022) explained that the implementation in several driving schools went well at first but required further understanding to implementers, especially teachers and explained by Evy Ramadina, (2021) the role of principals in designing curriculum development in elementary schools. Based on the results of observations and interviews that have been conducted at SDN Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul related to the implementation of learning in the *Merdeka* Curriculum, the data was found that in terms of infrastructure facilities, especially in the distribution of textbooks based on the Independent Curriculum which is not evenly distributed so that the number is still very minimum. Then, in terms of the students, there are still some students who have basic reading, writing, and numeracy skills are still low, especially in grade IV. Then, in terms of teachers, there are still teachers who have not been able to accommodate all the characteristics of students in the classroom. The implementation of learning at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul which is not yet fully project-based, and the use of *Merdeka* Curriculum teaching modules that have not been fully used. This research is important for school principals, teachers, and other parties in teacher readiness in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum needs to be studied further so that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum continues to increase from year to year.

Method

The data in this study were processed using descriptive qualitative methods. Where qualitative research aims to understand a phenomenon that occurs in research subjects, it can be behavior, views, motivations, and actions holistically by describing them in words by utilizing

various natural methods (Moleong, 2018: 6). While descriptive research is a method to describe the condition of a variable, symptom or state that is real (Arikunto, 2016: 234). The research was conducted at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul. The subjects of the study were grade I teachers, grade IV teachers, and principals of SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul obtained by purposive sampling techniques or determining informant sources based on the goals to be achieved (Yusuf, 2014: 369). The data collection techniques used are interviews, observation, and documentation. To test the validity of data using triangulation techniques both from source, technique, and time (Sugiyono, 2019: 368). The focus of research in this study is the analysis of teacher readiness in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul which focuses on the competence of pedagogic teachers in facing the four policies in the Independent Curriculum. The data obtained were then analyzed using the Miles & Huberman data analysis method with an interactive model pursued through data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion activities (Sugiyono, 2019).

Results and Discussion

Data obtained from the interview, observation, and documentation process include 1) teacher readiness in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul; 2) supporting factors in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul; 3) obstacles faced by teachers in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul. Each finding will be outlined and discussed as follows:

Teacher readiness in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul

The readiness of teachers in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul shows that teachers are not fully prepared to implement the Independent Curriculum obtained based on four indicators or four Independent Curriculum policies, namely *AKM* and *UN* substitute character survey, National Assessment to replace *USBN*, brief *RPP*, and zoning *PPDB* (Afista, et al. 2020: 55). Of the four policies, new teachers understand that *RPP* is concise because the training or training attended by new teachers conveys policies in learning. The teacher admitted that he did not know the Independent Curriculum policy related to *AKM* and the *UN* substitute character survey and the *USBN* substitute National Assessment because the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru was only implemented in grades I and IV while the implementation of *UN* and *USBN* was carried out by grade VI students. So teachers do not know how technical the implementation of *UN* and *USBN* at SDN Serut Baru is. Then regarding the zoning *PPDB* policy regarding changes in student quotas, it has not been fully understood by the teachers because so far the acceptance of new students at SDN Serut Baru has always not met the quota due to the lack of students. So that any number of students and wherever they come from will be accepted as long as the quota is still there. This teacher readiness is by the study of research results (Ihsan, 2022: 43) that the highest level of teacher readiness in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is in the brief *RPP* which is intended to facilitate teacher preparation before teaching.

Based on pedagogic competence, the teachers have now adopted teaching modules obtained from the independent teaching platform (*PMM*) which are then used as a reference

in designing learning in the Independent Curriculum. The teacher design learning by teaching modules both gradually and thoroughly because the principle of implementing the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru is carried out in a flowing manner according to the capacity of teachers, schools, and students. The teachers can understand the characteristics of the students well when they try to involve all students in learning which is expected that the students can play an active role in every learning. In the implementation of evaluation and assessment, the teachers have used formative and summative assessments. The implementation of formative assessments (daily tests) is carried out every certain period, for example once a week or every two weeks. This form of formative assessment is usually in the form of printouts that are distributed to the students to test their understanding of the material being studied. Summative assessment is carried out in the middle and the end of the semester while its implementation is carried out simultaneously.

Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru are carried out through discussion, joint learning, and sharing opinions between teachers so that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum becomes even better. When the students encounter a problem, the teacher will directly communicate the problem with the principal so that the problem can be solved through joint discussion. When faced with something new, the teachers and principals will learn together, for example, when registering for an independent teaching platform (*PMM*) account, the teachers will learn the independent teaching platform together so that there are no misperceptions among teachers.

Supporting factors in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul

The supporting factor in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul is a clear regulation from the government regarding the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. One of the regulations regarding the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is contained in *Kepmendikbudristek* Num. 56 of 2022 concerning guidelines for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in the context of learning recovery, which in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum can be reviewed through 3 paths, namely independent learning, independent change, and independent sharing. This is in line with the readiness of SDN Serut Baru in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum which is currently at an independent stage of change, which means the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru uses learning tools provided by the government. Second, there are facilities from the Ministry of Education and Culture, namely the existence of the Independent Teaching Platform (*PMM*). *Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM)* is an online community containing teachers from all over Indonesia that teachers can use to share learning tools.

The third is about adequate learning infrastructure. This learning infrastructure includes textbooks as learning resources and proper classrooms. The procurement of textbooks according to the Independent Curriculum, especially for grades I and IV, is almost evenly distributed. For class I, the textbooks are complete. The students have brought their textbooks. Since religious textbooks do not yet exist, the students use *LKS* for learning. Then, for grade IV, the textbooks are also complete. Since Javanese textbooks are not yet available so, in the learning process the students use the previous year's textbooks. The condition of classrooms is comfortable enough to be used for learning, there are tables and chairs according to the number of students, good lighting with the help of lights, and the presence of fans that make

students comfortable learning in class. The presentation related to the supporting factors and implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru is in line with the results of a research study (Munthe, 2020: 277) that learning facilities and resources will affect the success or failure of the implementation of a curriculum. Therefore, learning facilities and resources must be adequate so that the learning process runs effectively.

Obstacles faced by teachers in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul

From the interviews, the researchers found three kinds of obstacles faced by teachers in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul, the first is that the teachers do not understand the Independent Curriculum as a whole. Many policies carried out by the Independent Curriculum cause the teachers not to be able to understand the Independent Curriculum as a whole. In addition, the teachers have only learned independently through the Merdeka Mengajar Platform (PMM) and online training provided by the central government's schedule collided with the teaching schedule so teachers skipped the training. Moreover, the training attended by the teacher is related to policies in the learning process only. The obstacles felt by teachers are to the results of research studies (Dewi and Astuti, 2022: 35) that some teachers feel that they are not ready to implement the Independent Curriculum because the teachers do not understand thoroughly about the curriculum. The lack of understanding of teachers is because the training held has not been prepared properly so it seems perfunctory.

Second, the *Pancasila* student profile project and differentiated learning have not been carried out. The *Pancasila* student profile project that has not been able to be carried out has also become an obstacle in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum because one of the characteristics of Independent Curriculum learning is the existence of a project to strengthen the *Pancasila* student profile which aims to strengthen efforts to achieve the competence and character of students by the *Pancasila* student profile and also as a forum for developing the students' potential. Unfortunately, in practice, SDN Serut Baru has not been able to carry out the project because the implementation of the *Pancasila* student profile project requires funds so that the activity can be carried out which until now there have been no funds specifically allocated for the implementation of the *Pancasila* student profile project. In addition, the *Pancasila* student profile project to be carried out requires students who understand and master the material, have courage, and are active in learning. In addition to the *Pancasila* student profile project, differentiated learning has not been able to be carried out at SDN Serut Baru because there is no accompanying teacher in the classroom. The hope is that if there are 2 teachers in one class, differentiated learning will be carried out with 1 teacher in front and 1 teacher accompanying students behind. This is to the study of research results (Nurchayono and Putra, 2022: 382) that difficulties in implementing differentiated learning are not only caused by teachers' understanding and skills that have not been maximized but also caused by the heterogeneity of students.

The third is about inadequate school facilities. SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul does not yet have a proper library and laboratory. The strategy carried out to deal with these obstacles is to relearn related to the Independent Curriculum, especially policies in learning because many policies are carried out by the Independent Curriculum, especially policies

related to learning. In addition, another strategy is to implement the Independent Curriculum in a flowing manner by the capacity of teachers, students, and schools.

Conclusion

The readiness of teachers in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul shows that teachers are not fully prepared to implement the Independent Curriculum (*IKM*), especially in the face of the Independent Curriculum policy (*AKM* and *UN* substitute character survey, National Assessment instead of *USBN*, brief *RPP* and zoning *PPDB*). From the pedagogic side, the teachers can understand the characteristics of students well, the implementation of learning has been guided by teaching modules, and the implementation of teacher evaluation and assessment using formative and summative assessments. In the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut, supporting factors are the clear government policies and regulations on the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, school readiness at that time in the phase of independent change, for textbooks, an even internet network, the existence of an independent learning platform (*PMM*), appropriate classrooms, student activities and independent training followed by teachers. The obstacles faced by teachers in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Serut Baru Gedangsari Gunungkidul are that teachers do not understand the Independent Curriculum as a whole, the *Pancasila* student profile project and differentiated learning have not been implemented, and school facilities are inadequate. The strategy for dealing with these obstacles is to continue to study policies in the Independent Curriculum and implement the Independent Curriculum according to the capacity of teachers, students, and schools. Strategies to overcome these obstacles by continuing to study the Independent Curriculum and implementing the Independent Curriculum according to the capacity of teachers, students, and schools. What is needed to implement an independent curriculum needs support from various parties, so that the objectives of this Independent Curriculum can be achieved properly and realized at all levels in elementary schools.

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