

Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in Driving Schools

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Abstract: The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SD Negeri 2 Ternate City has been running gradually in grades I, II, IV and V. The objectives of this study are: 1) To determine the implementation of the independent curriculum at the driving school of SD Negeri 2 Ternate City, 2) To determine the readiness of teachers in implementing the independent curriculum at SD Negeri 2 Ternate City. This study uses a qualitative approach method with a descriptive research type. The subjects of the study were the principal, teachers, and students. Data collection was carried out by observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis techniques used were data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. While the validity test of the data was carried out using Triangulation Techniques.

The results of this study are that in SD Negeri 2 Kota Ternate has implemented the curriculum in stages and in this curriculum the teacher is only a motivator for students, after that there are several teacher and school readiness, namely by preparing adequate learning tools in implementing this curriculum, following, preparing Teaching Modules, and attending workshops held by the government. The problems with this curriculum are, lack of human resources, the presence of teachers who are not tech-savvy, lack of teacher readiness, problems in planning, implementing, and assessing learning. One way to overcome these problems is by looking for sources on social media, joining the Learning community, following PMO mentoring, holding tutoring, making important notes, conducting pretests, and attending training related to the Merdeka Curriculum.

The independent learning curriculum at State Elementary School 2, Ternate City involves students in the learning process and gives them the opportunity to determine their learning path. This is done by giving students the freedom to choose the topics they want to learn, the learning methods that are most suitable for them, and to follow programs that suit their interests and needs..

Keywords: Independent Learning; Learning Curriculum; Driving Schools.

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Introduction

The implementation of changes in education policies, including the curriculum, is a learning process that takes time. Therefore, the Government provides opportunities for educators and educational units to implement the Independent Curriculum in accordance with the level of readiness of each school or educational unit. (Ministry of Education and Culture 2022). One of the important elements of this comprehensive approach is the implementation of a training program for teachers, which aims to improve the skills and qualifications of educators in Ternate City.

The purpose of curriculum implementation in driving schools has been implemented optimally and is ongoing, although there are still many shortcomings and obstacles in its implementation. The key to the success of the implementation of the curriculum in driving schools is from the principal and the teachers must have the will to make changes. (Rahayu, et al.2022)

This is expected to contribute to improving the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes. By providing opportunities for continuous professional development, teachers

can keep their knowledge of the latest teaching methodologies and strategies up-to-date, so that they can better engage students and meet their various learning needs. In addition, investment in infrastructure and technological resources also has a crucial role in modernizing the education system in Ternate City. This will enable students to access digital learning tools and resources that can enhance their academic experience as well as prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century workforce.

Some of the challenges faced in the education sector in Ternate City include inadequate school infrastructure, shortage of qualified teachers, limited access to quality education in the region, high bullying rates, and lack of resources for educational programs. These problems hinder the progress and quality of education in Ternate City as a whole. To address these education issues, a comprehensive approach is needed that involves collaboration between governments, local communities, and education stakeholders. Thus, sustainable solutions can be applied to improve the learning environment for students in Ternate City.

In addition, the integration of project-based learning initiatives in the curriculum can provide students with hands-on

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experience that encourages the development of critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and collaboration skills, thereby preparing learners to face challenges in the ever-changing global economy. Furthermore, investments in teacher training programs that focus on integrating technology in the teaching and learning process can empower educators to make effective use of digital tools and platforms, so that they can present engaging and interactive learning materials, according to students' diverse learning styles and abilities.

Based on the description, to ensure a sharper focus on this research, the issue raised is "Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in Ternate City State Elementary Schools." What is the implementation process of the Independent Learning Curriculum at SD Negeri 2 Ternate City? And how are the readiness of the teaching staff in implementing the Independent Curriculum at the State Elementary School 2 Ternate City?

Methodology

This research uses a qualitative approach, which emphasizes the analysis of the thought process inductively and the relationship between observed phenomena, while still being based on scientific logic. The purpose of qualitative research is to develop sensitivity to the problems faced, explain the reality related to the search for *grounded theories*, and deepen the understanding of one or more phenomena being studied. Qualitative research methods are used to uncover problems in the context of organizational life, whether government, private, community, youth, sports, arts, and culture, so that they can be used as a basis for policies that support common welfare. (*Lady N, 2018*)

In this study, the author uses a qualitative research method, which produces descriptive data in the form of written words or observations of observable behavior, as well as descriptions related to field findings according to the problem being researched. This research focuses on the leadership of school principals as leaders of educational institutions. The main focus is on how the leadership of the principal can improve the quality of learning at SD Negeri Ternate City, as well as the obstacles faced in these efforts and the steps taken to improve the quality of learning. The data collection techniques used in this study include observation, interviews, and documentation. Data collection is a very important component of research, as errors in the data collection process can result in difficulties in data analysis.

Discussion of Research Results

Education is an integral element in the development process. The educational process cannot be separated from development itself, because development aims to develop quality human resources as well as economic sectors, where the two are interrelated and take place simultaneously (*Hamalik, 2015*).

Curriculum changes in Indonesia aim to improve the quality of education and prepare students to face the challenges of the increasingly complex world of work. The purpose of this change is to update teaching methods, adapt subject matter to the times, and improve students' skills to be better prepared for future challenges. In addition, curriculum changes also focus on strengthening students' social skills, creativity, and critical thinking skills in order to compete at the global level.

Independent learning was created to change the concept of learning that was initially based on educators into a student-centered learning system. (*Zahir et al., 2022*) In addition, in 2020, Indonesia experienced the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in learning being carried out remotely. As a result, learning materials are not absorbed well and parents feel overwhelmed to face learning that is very different from the past. In addition, the existence of the pandemic also causes a learning gap that causes student circumstances, family conditions, and also economic conditions to be other factors causing the learning gap during the COVID-19 pandemic (*Andriana et al., 2023*). Therefore, another reason for the emergence of the Independent Learning Curriculum is to restore learning that was previously not optimal, with a sharper design and easier to implement (*Nurzila, 2022*).

Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the Driving School of SD Negeri 2 Ternate City

Research on the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City, researchers found a number of data through observation, interviews, and documentation. The description of the findings in this study will be described as follows. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City, the researcher conducted interviews with school principals, homeroom teachers, and subject teachers. From the results of the interview with the principal, the following information was obtained:

"The concept of implementing the Independent Learning Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City is a very good step to be implemented. This concept allows learning not only to take place in the classroom, but also to encourage collaboration, exploration, and creation. In this case, teachers serve as motivators, facilitators, and mediators, so that students can develop their talents and interests. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City began in 2022 gradually, with an initial focus on grades I, II, IV, and V, which have been running well. In the coming semester, the implementation will be continued to classes III and VI. Although the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is still relatively new, schools need preparations such as training and seminars. We hope that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Ternate City State Elementary School 2 can change the character of future generations." (*Rahayu, Principal December 2023*)

Based on the results of the interview above, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City has been running in accordance with the learning process which is not only limited to the classroom, but also outside the school, so that it can increase student independence. Teachers act as motivators and facilitators, encouraging students to collaborate and develop creativity in learning. In addition, the process of extracurricular activities also shows interaction between teachers and students that supports active and collaborative learning. In the context of online learning, students and teachers engage in learning through digital platforms, which expand access and support distance learning. The process of developing students' creativity is also seen through art, music, or drama activities, which provide opportunities for them to express themselves artistically.

The Independent Curriculum includes several changes, one of which is the elimination of the terms "Core Competencies" and "Basic Competencies" as competencies that students must have after participating in the learning process. The independent

curriculum uses learning outcomes (CP) which is a set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes built through a continuous process to create complete competencies (Nurchayono & Putra, 2022; Ramadhan et al, 2024)

Furthermore, a similar question regarding the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City was also asked to Mrs. Osin. The results of the interview showed: "The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Elementary School 2 Ternate City requires adaptation to the characteristics of the school environment and project-based learning that is tailored to the needs of students. The school implements its own curriculum well, which allows for student-centered learning and encourages children to be more active. In addition, there is a new policy to reduce the burden on educational institutions to encourage students to develop innovative and creative thinking. This curriculum provides ample space for teachers to develop quality learning to produce an educated generation." (*Osin Teacher Grade IV December 2023*)

Mrs. (Sarnita) added, "The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City is good, but teachers still need to understand the concept of an independent curriculum in order to provide facilitators for prospective teachers. Further guidance from related parties is still needed to understand the independent curriculum. Another change is the integration of science and social studies subjects into science subjects (Natural and Social Sciences). English is also an optional subject, and competency subjects are replaced with art subjects, while PPKn subjects are changed to Pancasila Education subjects." (*Mrs. Sarnita Teacher of Grade III December 13, 2023*)

According to Faiz, the Independent Curriculum that emphasizes the learning process on meeting the needs and characteristics of students will certainly provide flexibility for students to continue to develop according to their potential, interests, and talents (Faiz et al., 2022). Based on the results of interviews with the three teachers, the researcher concluded that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City has gone well, despite several obstacles faced by teachers. Continuous guidance from facilitators is needed, as teachers still do not fully understand the Independent Curriculum. Teachers also try to adapt the project to the learning needs and characteristics of the school environment. The exhibition for the project to be held at the end of the semester aims to see the formation of the character of the students themselves. The researcher concluded that students felt a significant change in their learning patterns by using the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City. They become more active in learning, enthusiastic in expressing opinions, and interacting with each other in groups and very expressive in carrying out projects to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students.

In addition, the researcher's observation data, State Elementary School 2 Ternate City implements the Independent Curriculum gradually, especially in grades I, II, IV, and V. Although the introduction of the Independent Curriculum is still new, the learning process is not limited to the classroom, so that children can increase their creativity, develop talents, and interest in learning. This shows that the implementation of the curriculum is well carried out and adjusted to the characteristics of the school environment. Students are also satisfied with the unique curriculum and get new learning materials that can develop their creativity. This curriculum prioritizes discussion and group learning, so that

students can make friends and learn together, and appreciate the opportunity to discuss openly.

The researcher also found that the State Elementary School 2 Ternate City has implemented six Pancasila profiles and project-based learning as part of the Independent Learning Curriculum. From these observations, it can be seen that teachers implement project-based learning where students in grades I, II, IV, and V work on various projects. Teachers also implement the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project which is included in the teaching module. This independent curriculum has the same characteristics as the previous curriculum, namely important teaching materials, a wealth of available materials, and an emphasis on flexibility for teachers and students. In addition, according to the researcher's observations, in grades I and IV, thematic learning is no longer used, but has shifted to subject-based learning, and in grade IV there are science and social studies subjects.

In this curriculum, there is a project that is held one hour before the end of the lesson, and at the end of the semester, there will be an exhibition for the project. State Elementary School 2 Ternate City has conducted an exhibition/bazaar with different project themes, for example for class I with the theme Sustainable Lifestyle, where students make recycled works from plastic waste, while class IV chooses the theme of Entrepreneurship by making traditional snacks.

Teachers' Readiness in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Driving Schools at SD Negeri 2 Ternate City

In implementing the Independent Curriculum, both schools, school leaders, and teachers need to make several preparations. The researcher interviewed principals, classroom teachers, and subject teachers. Several preparations have been made for the implementation of this curriculum, including: To implement the Independent Curriculum, there is an urgent need to develop facilities and infrastructure. The researcher asks, how do teachers prepare to implement the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City? The results of the interview with the principal are as follows:

One of the things that needs to be prepared to support the readiness of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is facilities and infrastructure, because this is very important for the learning process. The learning process based on the Independent Curriculum, especially in grades I, II, IV, and V, is carried out with gradual changes starting from simple things. The goal is to make it easier to adapt the curriculum for both teachers and students. The school also prepares facilities and infrastructure, which are sufficient for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, although it is not optimal." (*Mrs. Askia December 2023*)

There are three stages in learning, namely learning planning, learning implementation, and learning evaluation. The challenges faced by teachers at the planning stage are obstacles in determining learning strategies and models, difficulties in reducing learning outcomes to learning objectives, and not understanding the format in detail in making learning modules. (*September, 2023*)

Based on the results of interviews and observations conducted by researchers with the principal, the school has prepared facilities and infrastructure to support teachers in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City. To prepare teachers in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, there is a learning community that

discusses various aspects related to the curriculum. The researcher asked, how are teachers ready to implement the Independent Curriculum at State Elementary School 2 Ternate City? "Every week, we hold a learning community to discuss what is done in the Independent Curriculum, as well as the obstacles faced by teachers in the implementation of this curriculum. The existence of a learning community is very helpful in the readiness of the Independent Curriculum." (Mrs. Santi, teacher of the December 2023 Class)

In addition, according to the Vice President of Curriculum, "We have a learning community to help solve problems related to teaching tools in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. In addition, we can discuss and share experiences with each other to solve problems of difficulties in planning learning tools and their implementation in the classroom." (Mr. Ismail, December 2023)

Based on the results of interviews and researchers' observations, teachers have indeed prepared teaching modules that are tailored to the needs of the school, as well as interesting learning methods and learning evaluations to achieve the set goals. This Independent Curriculum is designed by paying attention to relevant competency standards and the needs of students. In designing the Independent Curriculum, it is important to consider the latest developments in the field of education and technology so that the learning program remains relevant and sustainable.

The involvement of education and technology experts in the curriculum design process is also important to ensure that independent curricula are not only theoretically relevant, but also practical and provide tangible benefits for learners in the face of future challenges. In addition, periodic surveys and evaluations of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum are needed to ensure its effectiveness in achieving the learning goals that have been set. Data collection and analysis of evaluation results can also provide valuable insights to continue to improve the Merdeka curriculum in accordance with the latest developments in education and the needs of students.

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