

## Evaluation of The Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum Policy at SDN Menteng 02 Pagi

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**Abstract:** On February 11, 2022, the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology launched the Fifteenth Episode of Merdeka Belajar policy: Merdeka Curriculum and Merdeka Teaching Platform online, as an option for learning recovery. The Merdeka Curriculum focuses on student competence & character education, so the Merdeka Curriculum structure consists of two components, namely intracurricular learning and project learning through character education (Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila/P5). This study aims to understand the communication strategies, resources, attitudes of policy implementers and standard operating procedures (SOPs) carried out by policy makers to policy implementers (SDN Menteng 02 Pagi) in transmitting the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum policy. The method chosen uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive evaluative method and refers to the policy from George C. Edwards III. The data collection techniques used are interviews, observation and documentation studies by performing data analysis techniques, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The result of the study is that the policy implemented in the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools aims to provide adequate facilities for innovative learning for students. With this policy, it can encourage the learning process in elementary schools to become more flexible or organized, because the principle of the Merdeka Curriculum itself requires students to master expertise in the fields they want in soft skills and hard skills.

**Keywords:** Evaluation; Implementation; Merdeka Curriculum; Policy; Public School

Indonesia ranked low in the 2018 PISA test results. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) initiated by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is a study to evaluate the education system that is participated by more than 70 countries around the world. Indonesia ranked 72 out of 78 participating countries for math. The results were more or less the same for the science and reading tests. Indonesia's PISA test results also tend to stagnate, with no spike in score improvement (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

Low literacy and numeracy competencies have the potential for poor community sustainability, namely students who lack the ability to understand simple reading and basic mathematics can have difficulty continuing learning materials at the next level of education, low competitiveness and low

literacy understanding also have the potential to be unable to analyze hoax data or news that is not credible. Therefore, it is necessary to implement learning that is more flexible but still efficient and right on target by considering these needs, simplifying the curriculum and utilizing numeracy literacy modules for primary school levels is one of the efforts made by the Government. The program is expected to be used as one of the alternative teaching materials used by students and teachers in learning, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (Center for Educational Assessment of the Education Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Agency of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, 2021).

According to the evaluation results of the Education Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Agency (BSKAP) of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, schools that use the Emergency Curriculum are able to reduce the number of learning losses than schools that use the 2013 Curriculum alone, namely by progressing four to five months of learning, so that in the end the Head of BSKAP Kemendikbudristek, Anindito Utomo, designed the Prototype Curriculum (Kemendikbudristek, 2021). The Prototype Curriculum is a competency-based curriculum by implementing project-based learning. Another challenge that is no less important is changing the mindset of the teacher as the center of the learning process to the student as the center of learning. Students as the center of learning is actually not new in every curriculum, but in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, students are required to be more active through the project-based learning process (Rizki & Fahkrunisa, 2022). Then related to lesson plans (RPP), the use of Merdeka lesson plans does not affect learning activities, this shows that learning activities are of equal value, even though there are many different types of lesson plans. Learning activities are actually greatly influenced by the teacher's ability to organize the class and use learning media, the way the teacher teaches will affect the interactions that occur in the classroom (Munandar et al., 2021).

The description above is reinforced by the results of mini tour observations conducted by researchers in May 2023 in two elementary schools (SD), namely public elementary schools in Menteng District (SDN Menteng 02 and SDN Menteng 03), found advantages and weaknesses in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. These advantages include; teachers and students are given freedom in carrying out learning, teachers are more independent and creative in developing their potential, the presence of P5 activities can develop student character through projects carried out at school. However, in addition to the advantages, there are also shortcomings in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, namely; lack of socialization related to the Merdeka Curriculum, overlapping rules for the transition of students from Early Childhood Education (PAUD) to Elementary School with reading books in the Merdeka Curriculum. In realizing the pleasant transition of PAUD students to elementary school, the government has banned the reading and writing arithmetic test as stated in Government Regulation Number 17 of 2010 concerning Management and Implementation of Education and Permendikbudristek Number 1 of 2021 concerning Acceptance of New Learners (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

The results of the above study are also evidenced by the results of initial interviews conducted by researchers with the Head of the Center for Curriculum and Learning (Drs. Zulfikri Anas M. Ed.) as well as the Coordinator of the Curriculum Developer Substance Group (Dr. Yogi Anggraena, M. Pd.); explained that the current status of the Merdeka Curriculum is in the operational curriculum of the education unit and is being pursued to become a national curriculum in 2024. Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Culture's Center for Curriculum and Learning continues to improve the academic text of the Merdeka Curriculum and continues to conduct various evaluations to improve the quality of the curriculum. This is because it is still at the stage of improving the academic text, the academic guidelines for the Merdeka Curriculum refer to Permendikbudristek No. 262 / M / 2022 regarding changes to the Ministry of Research and Technology's decision No. 56 / M / 2022 concerning guidelines for implementing the curriculum in the context of learning recovery. The Permendikbudristek No. 262 / M / 2022 concerning changes to the Ministry of Research and Technology's decision No. 56 / M / 2022 concerning guidelines for implementing the curriculum in the context of learning recovery contains 7 important points, among others; the structure of the Merdeka Curriculum, learning outcomes, learning and assessment, P5, education unit curriculum, mechanism for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, and evaluation in the education unit implementing the Merdeka Curriculum.

From all the studies that have been presented, it can be concluded that policies that are not carried out optimally can lead to an implementation gap, which can be interpreted as a difference between written policies and practices in the field, so that an evaluation action is needed to see the achievement of the implemented policies. Evaluation is not always carried out at the final stage of the policy process, according to Riayadi (Triyono & Sugito, 2019) evaluation can be carried out when the policy or program is running, the goal is that errors can be found as early as possible and reduce the risk of greater errors. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum policy at the education unit level with the research title Evaluation of the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum Policy at SDN Menteng 02 Pagi.

## **METHOD**

This research was conducted at SD Negeri Menteng 02 Pagi, which is located at Jl. Tegal No. 10, Menteng, Central Jakarta. SD Negeri Menteng 02 Pagi has been accredited A (Superior) with a score of 97 by BAN-SM (BAN-SM Kemendikbudristek, 2022). The school has 19 teachers and 6 educators, with a total of 495 students. SDN Menteng 02 Pagi has implemented Merdeka Curriculum in its learning for the 2022/2023 school year. The research conducted in Januari 2024. There were 8 resource persons in this study, consisting of a primary school supervisor, principal, vice principal for curriculum, vice principal for student affairs, two grade I teachers, one grade II teacher, and one grade IV teacher. The selection of places or determination of data sources is done by purposive sampling. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. In the context of this research, the descriptive method is intended to describe the results of the evaluation of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum

policy. In the research design, researchers used the policy implementation evaluation of George C. Edwards III. This Edwards III model consists of four components, namely: 1) Communication. It is an effort to describe and detail the communication of policymakers related to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum policy clearly and consistently transmitted to education units. 2) Resources. Resources are directed at the resources owned by the education unit to implement the Merdeka Curriculum policy. 3) Disposition / Attitude / Willingness. It is an effort to describe the acceptance or attitude of the education unit in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum policy. 4) Bureaucratic Structure. The bureaucratic structure is directed at detailing the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and fragmentation of the Merdeka Curriculum policy.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **RESULT**

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) launched the Merdeka Curriculum and Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) platform on Merdeka Belajar Episode 15. This platform is an application that can support teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The Merdeka Teaching Platform is a platform for teachers that will develop into a platform that is not only ministerial material and content, but is truly owned by teachers, from teachers, for teachers. The Minister further stated that the Merdeka Mengajar platform will become a teacher's friend in teaching and this platform will also help teachers innovate to create learning according to the challenges of the times. The launch of the Merdeka Mengajar Platform is not only to support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Sekolah Penggerak, but can also be used by all educators and education personnel in educational units that have not yet become Sekolah Penggerak (Sekolah Penggerak). Because the Merdeka Curriculum is the school's choice in implementing the curriculum in the education unit. To access the Merdeka Mengajar Platform, there are two ways that schools can do, namely: 1) Accessing using a browser by entering the page <https://guru.kemdikbud.go.id/> and 2) Accessing using Android can be done by installing the Merdeka Mengajar application on the Playstore. In addition, Merdeka Mengajar encourages teachers to work and share learning methods. The hope is that Merdeka Mengajar will become a reference for teachers to develop teaching practices. This platform has three functions, namely helping teachers to teach, learn, and work. It also includes an assessment toolkit to measure student learning achievements.

Schools that will use the Merdeka Curriculum are given the freedom to choose a curriculum, namely independent learning (Mandiri Belajar), independent change (Mandiri Berubah), and independent sharing (Mandiri Berbagi). Independent learning is a school that still uses the 2013 Curriculum but the basic principles of the Merdeka Curriculum have been included. The Merdeka Curriculum is socialized and implemented by schools with the aim of renewing the learning process. To achieve the success of an education system, especially in the learning process in elementary schools

(in classrooms), it is not optimal if the application of the Merdeka Curriculum and its programs is not well understood and comprehensive. Thus, schools are free to choose by considering the characteristics and conditions and readiness of their respective schools, both in terms of human resources and supporting infrastructure. Schools that will later use the Merdeka Curriculum are also carried out in stages. Based on the results of interviews with the deputy principal for curriculum, SDN Menteng 02 has implemented Mandiri Berbagi. In addition, SDN Menteng 02 is also a Sekolah Penggerak, together with SDN Menteng 03, it is a school that is able to refract and initiate the Merdeka Curriculum in Menteng sub-district. SDN 02 Menteng is known to have implemented Mandiri Berbagi, so it requires the creativity and independence of the principal and teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. One of them is by compiling the KOSP / Education Operational Unit Curriculum. Broadly speaking, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is part of the innovation of the pre-existing curriculum, which can be described as follows:

### **Communication in Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at SDN Menteng 02 Pagi**

The policy or regulation regarding the Merdeka Curriculum starts from the Ministry of Education and Research to the Education Quality Assurance Center (BPMP) and also the education office. Furthermore, BPMP and the education office socialize the Merdeka Curriculum policy by inviting all Jakarta area supervisors from all levels of education. Then all of these supervisors disseminate and socialize again to the education units under their guidance. The communication process by socializing the Merdeka Curriculum at the sub-district level, especially in Menteng sub-district, was carried out at SDN Menteng 02 by inviting principals and their deputies as well as operators of each school from public and private schools. The socialization was carried out in the form of providing workshops on making the Education Unit Operational Curriculum (KOSP), the resource persons guided schools to make KOSP.

### **Resources in Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at SDN 02 Menteng**

As the implementer of the Merdeka Curriculum, the principal of SDN Menteng 02 formed a curriculum development team after the formation of KOSP so that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum policy at school runs well. The curriculum development team is chaired by the deputy principal for curriculum, then divided into smaller teams including a special team for socializing activities as a Sekolah Penggerak, a special team for implementing P5 activities, and a special team of coordinators for making questions and grids.

SDN Menteng 02 also uses textbooks based on the Merdeka Curriculum provided by the government. The school ordered textbooks from the book procurement party from March 2022, namely before the 2022/2023 school year began in July. There were no obstacles in procuring this book, the books arrived on time in June 2022. The obstacle complained about by teachers is the content of the textbooks, which is considered to contain too much reading rather than pictures. This may hinder first

grade students who are not yet required to be able to read and write.

In addition, schools also work with learning communities. Learning communities can be formed between teachers in schools, between schools, or between learning communities across regions. presenting resource persons who have implemented the Merdeka Curriculum and then sharing their good practices. After that, other resource support is by presenting a webinar series related to the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum as additional information for education units regarding the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. In addition, the carrying capacity that helps the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at the education unit level is the existence of development partners where the government provides opportunities for people who care about education to become development partners. These development partners can be from organizational institutions, from companies and the industrial world that can independently support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Another support provided by the government to encourage education units to implement the Merdeka Curriculum is to provide a service center or helpdesk that can be accessed by teachers or principals if there are things they want to ask about implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. As additional information, since the launch of the Merdeka Curriculum in February 2022, relatively quite a number of education units have implemented the Merdeka Curriculum.

### **Disposition / Attitude of Implementers in Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at SDN Menteng 02 Pagi**

Disposition or resource availability is indicated by the attitude of the policy implementer, namely SDN Menteng 02 Pagi and also the support given to schools in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. SDN Menteng 02 Pagi is also a Sekolah Penggerak that can serve as a role model in terms of the principal's managerial side, the quality of teachers, and the quality of students in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The existence of a driving teacher at SDN Menteng 02 Pagi is expected to be a future educational leader who is able to bring the birth of a superior Indonesian generation. The advantages of SDN Menteng 02 Pagi becoming a Sekolah Penggerak are improving the quality of learning outcomes within 3 years, increasing the competence of principals and teachers, accelerating school digitalization, the opportunity to become a catalyst for change for other education units, accelerating the achievement of the Pancasila student profile, receiving intensive assistance, and obtaining additional budget in the form of performance (BOS Kinerja) SDN Menteng 02 Pagi is a pioneer of Sekolah Penggerak in the Menteng District area in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, therefore in its implementation it must be an example for other schools.

### **Bureaucratic Structure in Implementing Merdeka Curriculum at SDN Menteng 02 Pagi**

In the research conducted at SDN Menteng 02 Pagi, the bureaucratic structure is shown by the existence of a Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) as an internal demand for the implementation of

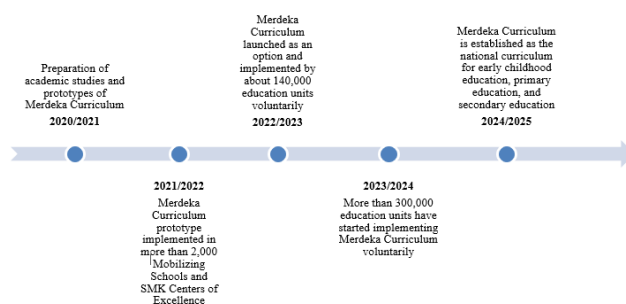
the Merdeka Curriculum policy and also good communication and cooperation between the implementing units of the Merdeka Curriculum policy. The Merdeka Curriculum policy is regulated based on Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Number 262 / M / 2022 concerning changes to the decision of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology number 56 / M / 2022 concerning guidelines for implementing the curriculum in the context of learning recovery. The policy outlines the Merdeka Curriculum in early childhood education, basic education, and secondary education.

From the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 262 / M / 2022, there is a policy that explains the guidelines for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, which first explains the structure of the Merdeka Curriculum, because this research takes place in elementary schools, researchers take reference only to the elaboration of policies that review the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at the elementary school level. The Merdeka Curriculum Policy was approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology in February 2022. SDN Menteng 02 Pagi itself has implemented this policy in July 2022 for the 2022/2023 school year by applying to grade I and grade IV, until now entering the 2023/2024 school year it has been applied to grades I, II, IV, V.

## DISCUSSION

The following are the policy stages of the Merdeka Curriculum, that the Merdeka Curriculum was compiled since 2020, which was then implemented and evaluated in stages since 2021 (see picture 1). Schools can start implementing the new curriculum gradually according to the readiness of each school. If a school is not ready to implement the Merdeka Curriculum, it can continue using the 2013 curriculum and the emergency curriculum until the school is ready. The Ministry of Education and Culture gives the authority to choose the curriculum to the principals and teachers in each school.

There are four important factors that according to Edwards III theory are very influential in the process of implementing a policy. The four factors referred to are: communication, resources, disposition and bureaucratic structure (Hayat, 2018). Communication is an important variable that is very influential in the process of implementing a policy. No matter how good the quality of a policy product is, it will be ineffective when it cannot be communicated optimally.



**Picture 1. The Policy Stages of the Merdeka Curriculum**

Source: (Kemendikbudristek, 2024)

Communication in the perspective of Edwards III's theoretical study is communication that occurs between policy formulators and field implementers to be forwarded to the target. Communication is understood as an interrelation and interaction between policy formulation actors and policy implementation actors, as well as policy implementation actors and target groups. Based on the results of the analysis of research findings, the researcher analyzes the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum policy implemented at SDN Menteng 02 Pagi, including:

### **Communication carried out by policy makers in transmitting Merdeka Curriculum policy implementation to education units (SDN Menteng 02 Pagi)**

The content of the communication at least contains the substance as well as the objectives of the policy that has been made. Therefore, implementers are expected to have a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of a policy to be implemented. This is to avoid information distortion, which in turn can have an impact on the emergence of various less cooperative responses (even frontal rejection) from target groups (Rusnita, 2017). There are three indicators that can be used as parameters in assessing the success of communication. The three indicators in Edward III's theory are discussed as: Transmission, Clarity and Consistency (Lukitasari et al., 2017).

The occurrence of the information transfer process from the policy formulator to the policy implementer, as well as between the policy implementer and the target group must be ensured to run well in order to fulfill the transmission indicator on the communication variable. To realize this ideal, it requires the involvement of three transmission elements, including: Communicators, Communicants and Media (Anhar, 2018). Communication in the view of Edwards III theory is also strongly influenced by the consistency indicator. In this context, consistency is understood as a suitability, continuity and harmony of information delivery in any situation and condition. Communication consistency in relation to the process of implementing a policy is very important in order to maintain the unanimity of perceptions of the implementers. With the maintenance of these perceptions, it is hoped that the implementers will be able to achieve the target objectives of a policy.

From the results of the analysis, it was found that when implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, communication is needed from the supervisor as the one who provides socialization related to the Merdeka Curriculum to the education unit by conducting interviews with School Supervisors in Menteng District. The presence of regulations regarding the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum begins with a direction from the Ministry of Education and Culture to the Education Quality Assurance Center (BPMP) and the education office. Furthermore, BPMP and the education office socialized the Merdeka Curriculum policy by inviting all Jakarta area supervisors from all levels of education. The communication process by socializing the Merdeka Curriculum at the sub-district level, especially in Menteng sub-district, was carried out at SDN Menteng 02 Jakarta by inviting principals and their

deputies as well as operators of each school from public and private schools. Socialization was carried out in early June 2022 for three days.

Merdeka Curriculum is socialized and implemented by schools with the aim of renewing the learning process. Based on the results of interviews with the vice principal for curriculum, SDN Menteng 02 Pagi has implemented Mandiri Berbagi and is a Sekolah Penggerak that initiated the Merdeka Curriculum in other elementary schools in the Menteng sub-district area. SDN Menteng 02 Pagi is known to have implemented Mandiri Berbagi, so it requires the creativity and independence of the principal and teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum by compiling the KOSP/ Education Unit Operational Curriculum.

The communication process that occurs at the formulator level (government) to the implementer (principal) occurs in several ways, including: virtually through government webinars, digitally through PMM (Merdeka Mengajar Platform) and offline guidance through the MKKS (Principal Work Conference) forum but with a school representative system. In this context, communication has relatively many limitations, both in terms of information delivery (transmission), information clarity (clarity) and information continuity (consistency). This condition finally encouraged the institution to study the Merdeka Curriculum policy independently by presenting competent resource persons. As for the second, namely communication at the policy implementer level (principal) to the target target group (teachers). Communication in this area is well implemented so that it is said to have reached the transmission indicator. At a practical level, the communication process is pursued in several ways, including: through meeting activities, through routine Saturday meeting activities, by forming a “small team” as communicators, and through workshop activities by presenting resource persons. Through these various efforts, the communication process can be conveyed in detail (clarity) and continuously (consistency).

### **Resources involved in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum policy at SDN Menteng 02 Pagi**

Resources from the perspective of Edwards III theory play a crucial role in relation to the policy implementation process. Even though the communication process has been running effectively, the policy implementation process will have great potential for failure if it is not supported by the existence of adequate resources. This is what makes the resource variable occupy the second priority scale after the communication variable. The resources needed to support the success of a policy implementation process, among others, consist of: Staff, Information, authority and facilities (Akib & Tarigan, 2008).

As part of the resource variable, the presence of adequate staff is important. The concept of adequate staffing is adequate in terms of quantity and quality. Resources can also be in the form of the availability of various relevant and appropriate data as a representation of the existence of information resources. Resources in the form of accurate information are provided to accommodate needs related to the decision-making process. In addition, resources in the form of authority are also needed, which means the provision of proper authority for policy implementation actors in accordance with

proportional distribution. The existence of sufficient authority in the implementing actors plays a major role in relation to the implementation of their duties and responsibilities in the field (Akib & Tarigan, 2008).

The readiness of SDN Menteng 02 Pagi's school resources and infrastructure plays a very important role in supporting the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum. A careful analysis of these aspects of readiness can help schools to identify shortcomings and take the necessary remedial steps. With adequate readiness, schools can provide a learning environment that allows teachers and students to optimize the freedom and flexibility offered by Merdeka Curriculum.

### **Acceptance or attitude of policy implementers (SDN Menteng 02 Pagi) in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum policy**

There are two strategies that can be used to strive for success in relation to disposition. The first strategy is carried out by structuring the organizational structure, while the second can be pursued through an incentive arrangement strategy. Structuring the organizational structure is done by appointing and appointing staff who have the capabilities as needed, but still considering the dedication factor. The strategy of setting incentives can be done by providing certain additional benefits for implementers. With these additional benefits, it is hoped that it can motivate implementers to “deign” to move in the expected direction (Widiawati et al., 2021). Based on the results of the interview, SDN Menteng 02 Pagi was selected as an exemplary Sekolah Penggerak (Sekolah Penggerak) in Menteng sub-district in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum.

The principal of SDN Menteng 02 Pagi encourages teachers to form learning communities so that they can share their experiences from workshops and self-learning with their peers. In addition, there is also a community school where SDN Menteng 02 Pagi is the coordinating school for five schools consisting of both public and private schools. A community school is a collection of several schools that have the same goals, have a program of activities that are discussed together for mutual progress. The community schools that are under the auspices of SDN Menteng 02 Pagi are SDN Cikini 02, SD Taman Siswa, SDS Advent, SDI Al-Badar and SD Lembaga Putra Kita), these schools are schools that are in close proximity to SDN Menteng 02 Pagi.

The principal of SDN Menteng 02 Pagi also has a flagship program, namely environmental care activities. By utilizing the land at school, the principal tries to invite both teachers and students to take care of the existing environment, by planting vegetables, managing compost and also caring for fruit plants. The products of this program can later be shared with community schools. In addition, the principal also seeks community participation in this case in the form of support from the school committee, parents and the surrounding community. One of the results obtained from this community participation is the restoration of the school library.

The implementation of Merdeka Curriculum for assessment with independent learning has

positive and negative implications. The positive impact is that students and teachers are not forced to follow the material provided and achieve the passing grade, while the negative impact is that students are reluctant to compete. The challenge for teachers in implementing an Merdeka Curriculum in a Sekolah Penggerak is that teachers need to dedicate time every day to prepare creative, innovative and useful learning. A good strategy from the principal is needed to get teachers on board, as this is not an easy task (Kinesti et al., 2021). For senior teachers, special guidance is needed to get them to move.

One of the features of the Merdeka Curriculum is the cultivation of character education through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project or P5 for short. P5 is cross-disciplinary learning to observe and think about solving problems in the surrounding environment, where this learning is project-based (PBL) which is integrated into school subjects (Nisa, 2022). Based on the results of the research, where the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SDN 02 Menteng applies P5 integrated in each subject. One of the themes taken is 'Sustainable Lifestyle', the theme is in line with the principal's program in environmental care activities. The students were introduced to various types of plants, from ornamental plants to medicinal plants. The project carried out was ecoprinting, which is the use of plants at school as natural dyes. As the big event, SDN Menteng 02 Pagi conducted a Market Day activity, where students could showcase and even sell their work.

### **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and fragmentation (division of responsibilities) of the Merdeka Curriculum policy implemented by the policy implementer (SDN Menteng 02 Pagi)**

In the 2022/2023 academic year, the Indonesian government implemented the Merdeka Curriculum, which is a refinement of the previous curriculum, namely the 2013 curriculum. This is because the implementation of the 2013 curriculum has several weaknesses. The weaknesses in the implementation of the 2013 curriculum according to the results of the study are that teachers have difficulty in preparing thematic integrative lesson plans, implementing scientific learning-based learning, and learning assessment (Wahyuni & Berliani, 2019). Furthermore, the results of research by Maladerita, et al also explain that teachers need extra energy and thought in implementing the 2013 curriculum. The biggest difficulty experienced by teachers is in the student assessment process, namely the many elements of assessment for students (Maladerita et al., 2021). Therefore, there is a need to improve the 2013 curriculum through the Merdeka Curriculum.

The Merdeka Curriculum is a thought to form the best future generation by exploring the potential of teachers and students in making innovations to improve the quality of learning. In accordance with the Ministry of Education and Culture's policy, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum provides flexibility to education units in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The Merdeka Curriculum can be interpreted as a curriculum with diverse intracurricular learning so that students' concept deepening is more optimal and can maximize competence (Barlian et al., 2022). This Merdeka Curriculum is unique, especially in the implementation of learning, which is called independent learning (Marlina, 2022). Independent learning is defined as a fun learning process. This means that independent learning

is freedom to think, work, and respond to changes that occur (Nasution, 2022).

In supporting the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, one way is to regulate the division of responsibilities between the center, regions, and education units. The responsibilities of the education unit, in this case elementary schools, are; 1) Develop and determine the Education Unit Curriculum based on the basic curriculum framework and curriculum structure determined by the Ministry, 2) Provide special needs program services in accordance with the conditions of Learners with special needs for schools that organize special needs program services, 3) Reflect, evaluate and improve the implementation of the Education Unit Curriculum to improve the quality of learning, 4) Actively participate in learning communities in Education Units and / or between Education Units.

Thus, fragmentation becomes a division of responsibility for a policy area among widely dispersed organizational units. Fragmentation of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation policy needs to pay attention to the nature of the policy to be implemented, and the distribution of responsibility to all policy implementers, by dividing the authority in implementing the established policy. MoEC wants to emphasize that education units have the authority and responsibility to develop the curriculum according to the needs and context of each school.

Based on the overall research results, it can be concluded that SDN Menteng 02 Pagi has implemented the Merdeka Curriculum optimally. This is evident in the fact that SDN Menteng 02 Pagi was chosen as a pioneer school in initiating a Sekolah Penggerak in other schools around the area. A Sekolah Penggerak is a school that has a principal who can not only manage the operations of a school, but can also understand the student learning process and become a mentor for teachers in the school. Sekolah Penggerak have teachers who are in favor of children. It has teachers who understand that every child is different and has different ways of teaching. The characteristics of a Sekolah Penggerak are that the community around the school supports the education process in the classroom.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on all stages of the research that has been carried out, this research can be concluded as follows: First, the communication of policy makers regarding the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum policy is clearly and consistently transmitted to the education unit as evidenced by the communication from the supervisor to the education unit starting from the Ministry of Education and Research to the education office and also the BPMP (Education Quality Assurance Center) in the form of training in making the Education Unit Operational Curriculum (KOSP). Second, the availability of educators and teaching staff is sufficient to support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in schools, both principals and teachers continue to strive to improve their competence and performance through the use of the Merdeka Teaching Platform (PMM). Third, the disposition of acceptance or the attitude of the education unit in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum policy, namely by becoming a

role model in terms of the managerial side of the principal, the quality of teachers, the quality of students in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. Fourth, the bureaucratic structure, Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and fragmentation of the Merdeka Curriculum policy are shown by At SDN Menteng 02, teachers who are in one study group and are also in one phase work together in determining the flow of learning objectives. The implementation of P5 activities at SDN Menteng 02 is carried out separately from intracurricular activities, so the activities are not associated with intracurricular subject matter. P5 activities are carried out once a week for three lessons or known as “Panen Karya” according to the chosen theme

## SUGGESTION

This research is expected to provide an overview of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in education units. In addition, this research is expected to be a reference in developing a model for evaluating the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum policy in other education units.

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