



The Effect of Teacher's Decision in the Learning Process to The Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

Pada tahun 2022, Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi (Kemendikbudristek) telah menerbitkan kurikulum merdeka. Peranan para guru dalam kurikulum tersebut sangat penting, termasuk keputusan yang mereka ambil agar penerapan kurikulum menjadi efektif. Oleh karena itu, dilakukan penelitian dengan menggunakan metode studi literatur untuk mengetahui pengambilan keputusan guru pada proses pembelajaran dalam implementasi kurikulum merdeka. Berdasarkan hasil literatur yang diperoleh, penulis menganalisis hasil sintesis penelitian dari lima artikel terpilih tentang pengambilan keputusan pada kegiatan pembelajaran kurikulum merdeka. Hasil sintesis penelitian tersebut diklasifikasikan dalam empat kategori, yaitu (a) arah kurikulum merdeka terhadap tujuan pembelajaran; (b) proses pembelajaran dalam implementasi kurikulum merdeka; (c) pengambilan keputusan dalam proses pembelajaran; (d) keterkaitan tujuan kurikulum merdeka dan proses pembelajaran dalam pengambilan keputusan guru. Ditemukan bahwa dalam proses pembelajaran, peran guru sangatlah penting agar implementasi terjadi secara efektif. Guru sebagai pemimpin pembelajaran harus dapat mengambil sebuah keputusan terhadap proses pembelajaran yang sesuai dengan tujuan kurikulum.

In 2022, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) published an independent curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka). The role of teachers in the curriculum is very important, including the decisions they make to implement the curriculum. Therefore, research is carried out using literature study methods to find out teacher decision making in the learning process in the implementation of an independent curriculum. Based on the results of the literature obtained, the authors analyze the results of the synthesis of research from five selected articles on decision making on independent curriculum learning activities. The results of the study synthesis are classified in four categories, namely (a) independent curriculum direction towards learning goals; (b) learning process in the implementation of an independent curriculum; (c) decision making in the learning process; (d) linkages of independent curriculum goals and learning processes in teacher decision making. It was found that in the learning process, the role of teachers was very important so that implementation took place effectively. Teachers as learning leaders must be able to make decisions about the learning process that is in line with the objectives of the curriculum.



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INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikbud Ristek) has officially introduced a new national curriculum which is called Merdeka Curriculum (MC) in 2022 as a means to revitalize the education post pandemic. Merdeka Curriculum is an improvement of the 2013 curriculum. This curriculum focused on the freedom of learning, be it the freedom for teachers to prepare their lessons, or the freedom for students to choose what they want to learn, so both of them enjoy the learning process (Arviansyah & Shagena, 2022). Philosophically, Pangestu and Rochmat (2021) this curriculum was based on the founding fathers' ideals, in which freedom of learning is a right to earn knowledge and experience by acknowledging the nature of people. This freedom of learning accentuates education implemented through the planning, execution, and evaluation of education (Direktorat Sekolah Dasar, 2022). This is done in accordance with the times and gives way to ideas that reflect the character of Indonesian people.

Merdeka Curriculum has two structures; the classroom activity (intracurricular) and project-based activity, either it's personal or in a team. Their implementations are given to the school, meaning the teachers are responsible for the success of kurikulum merdeka (Ingias et al., 2022). The success of the Merdeka Curriculum can be viewed from the effectiveness of learning. The continuity of education can be seen from the reaction when the learning process are in progress. The quality of teachers and their students can be used to determine the success of the education process. If the student has the chance to learn by themselves, they can increase their potential and abilities so that the education can be said to be successful.

The effectiveness of learning activities can be influenced by the decisions made by the teacher as a leader in learning activities. Identification of choices, information gathering, and weighting the potential of action are the steps in decision making (Marchau et al., 2019). Through gathering information and weighing options, the decision-making process can assist in making smarter choices. Teachers position learning as the main goal to improve students' achievement. This is one of the most important leadership practices teachers have in making decisions. As the leader in the learning process, a teacher not just must have expertise in their topic to build credibility, but they also must be able to carry out activities that can enhance learning (Constantia et al., 2022).

Teachers need to do a transition in implementing the vision and goals of kurikulum merdeka. They have to rebuild their teaching method membangun kembali pola pengajaran mereka to suit the philosophy of the Merdeka Curriculum. From planning (syllabus, lesson plan, teaching module, etc) to the learning practices in the class. Nowadays, learning is no longer teacher-centered, but is carried out collaboratively by involving students. In addition, teachers can also take advantage of all available resources, including technology as a learning medium (Suhandi & Robi'ah, 2022). Therefore, teachers are required to be able to make good decisions on the learning process that will be implemented.

Based on the previous research about Merdeka Curriculum, the majority studied the role of teachers and their challenges in implementing the curriculum (Setyaningsih & Wiryanto, 2022; Suhandi & Robi'ah, 2022). To face challenges teachers need to make decisions. Therefore, the purpose of this writing is to determine the right decision making in the learning process within the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The decisions taken will greatly influence the success of achieving the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum which will later affect student development.

METHOD

This study applied a literature review method. The method requires three steps including data collection, reduction, and analysis. Data collection gathers knowledge from several kinds of literature relating to decision-making in education and the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The literature and information presented in this article come from different types of literature namely articles, books, and research publications. The databases where the literatures collected include Scopus, Research gate, and Google Scholar. Then, the literature was reduced based on linkages to the theme of decision-making. After that, from the chosen literature the author

analyzes the decision-making made by the teacher in the implementation of the independent curriculum.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the result of literature research, there are five literature that specifically discuss decision making by teachers. These reports identified the role of teachers in decision making within the learning process of the Merdeka Curriculum and also explained what factors influenced the decision making process.

Table 1. Literature Results

No	Research Title	Author and Year	Research Methods	Result
1.	Effectiveness and Role of Teachers in the Merdeka Curriculum	Arviansyah & Shagena (2022)	Library Research	The higher the effectiveness of learning, the clearer the goals and results to be achieved, but creating an effective learning atmosphere is not easy because the role of teachers is increasingly complex and student responses when learning are important factors in learning.
2.	Concept of Ethical Dilemmas in Decision Making: Literature Review in the Module Guru Penggerak	Kurniawaty & Faiz (2022)	Library Research	In decision making, teachers are expected to be able to think constructively through better stages so that the morals and ethics of the work environment are prioritized in decision making.
3.	Teachers and New Curriculum Challenges: Analysis of the Role of Teachers in New Curriculum Policies	Suhandi & Robi'ah (2022)	Qualitative	The results suggest that new curriculum policies, which impact the role of teachers and question education, are to blame for the change. Teachers are needed to provide some of their own skills to enhance learning with this new curriculum.
4.	How Elementary School Teachers Organized Online Learning During The Covid-19 Pandemic?	Herwin et al (2021)	Qualitative	Findings show that learning online curriculum is simplified by selecting essential competencies that are considered very important to be conveyed to students. The lesson plans are arranged more simply, asynchronous learning relies more on zoom, asynchronous learning aeration is done by google classroom, and the engaging of student understanding is done by providing feedback through the whatsapp application.
5.	Unraveling the Role of Curriculum	Siuty et al (2018)	Qualitative	The findings show that curriculum availability facilitates teacher decision making in terms of individual teaching and increases their self-efficacy, which leads to the conclusion that there is a two-way

No	Research Title	Author and Year	Research Methods	Result
	in Teacher Decision Making			relationship between curriculum and individualization, self-efficacy, and values.

Based on the report that we have found, we analyze the conclusion of five selected research about decision making in the learning process within the Merdeka curriculum. The result of their research can be categorized in four category, which is (a) the direction of Merdeka curriculum towards the goals of learning; (b) the learning process within the implementation of Merdeka curriculum; (c) decision making in learning process; (d) the link between the objectives of Merdeka Curriculum and learning process in decision making by teachers.

The Direction of Merdeka Curriculum Towards The Goals of Learning

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology has developed a new learning program or curriculum called “Merdeka Belajar”. Initially, it was implemented by the PT Cikal Educational transformation through the Merdeka Curriculum (also called “developing student’s interest and talent” curriculum) at the root is a relatively new innovation to bring excellent human resource with student character development based on Pancasila in all elementary, secondary and higher education units (Maulida, 2022). When talking about the Merdeka Curriculum, we have to understand its basic framework and structure. The direction of changes include (1) a more adaptive structure that contains the amount of teaching hour per year; (2) focused on the essential knowledge; (3) gives freedom to teachers to choose the best teaching method based on the need and characteristic of their students; and (4) a system that offers various resource for teachers to encourage them to keep developing their best teaching method and practice (Retnaningsih & Khairiyah, 2022). We can think of Merdeka Curriculum as a curriculum with various intracurricular activities, in which the contents are adjusted to give time for the students to understand the main idea and develop their skills. With its focus on elementary knowledge, character development, and student's capability, this curriculum is also intended to help children develop their hobbies and skills from an early age. This curriculum has been tested in 2.500 pioneer schools, and has been introduced to other schools since.

The objective of the MC is to fix education problems by giving flexibility to the teachers to make quality teaching materials that suit the students’ needs and their learning environment. This curriculum aims to develop the students’ potential and competencies. It develops learning habits, one of which is the learning process that is directed and designed to be interactive in the form of “doing” things. These types of lessons garner the student’s interest and can be used to develop themes that grow in the society. (Indarta et al., 2022). This curriculum is designed to take Indonesian education to greater heights, on par to those of developed nations, where students are allowed to choose anything they want to learn. students can learn individually, with groups, finish a practice, or make a product so that the learning that students want is achieved. And of course the teacher is also involved in directing learning activities.

The Learning Process within The Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum

Based on others’ previous research, the teachers have said that the implementation of the curriculum will continue to be the basis to reach the goals of education even when there is significant situational change (Suhandi & Robi’ah, 2022). This result shows that teachers still need training and guidance on how to implement the Merdeka curriculum in the class. Based on the analysis of the knowledge on how to use the curriculum in e-learning, we found three subthemes: by implementing the national curriculum, by implementing the emergency curriculum, and by implementing the Merdeka curriculum (Herwin *et al.*, 2021). It can be explained that learning through the curriculum is one way to solve problems so that at this time the Merdeka curriculum is the solution for the future.

In this curriculum, teachers apply it using simplification of learning competency by themselves based on the student’s needs and the environment (Herwin et al., 2021). In which the teacher's job is to direct the habits and interests of students. Then students get orders to practice, moving on to more

difficult tasks after easier tasks. It will help the student to study the syllabus as more assignments are completed. Simple rules for more difficult tasks can be found via locale mapping. According to the Directorate of Junior High Schools (2022), there are seven stages of planning in the Merdeka curriculum:

1. Analyzing Learning outcomes (Capaian Pembelajaran or CP) to compile learning objectives and flow of learning objectives
Learning outcomes is the competency that is expected to be achieved by students at the developmental stage of each subject in a basic education unit such as early childhood education, elementary education, and secondary education. Learning outcomes cover a wide range of skills and sets of material organized in a comprehensive narrative format. These learning outcomes have been adjusted for the level of development of students in each age group.
2. Planning and performing diagnostic assessments
Diagnostic assessment aims to identify students' competencies, strengths, and weaknesses. Teachers use the results as a reference when planning learning according to student learning needs. Family background, willingness to learn, motivation to learn, student interests and other information under certain conditions can be used as material for lesson planning.
3. Develop teachinging modules
Developing teaching materials in the form of modules aims to develop teaching tools as a guide for educators in carrying out learning. In developing teaching modules it must be relevant, interesting, substantial, and challenging.
4. Aligning learning with the level and characteristics of student achievement
Student-centered learning is a new paradigm in learning. The learning is aligned with the characteristics and ability level of students.
5. Planning, implementation and processing of formative and summative assessments
The first guiding principle is that evaluation should be an important component of learning because it encourages learning and offers detailed feedback. Second, the method and timing of the evaluation are left to the individual and prepared and carried out in parallel with the assessment work. Third, the evaluation is carried out fairly, proportionally, legally and reliably. There are four direct and useful evaluations on student achievement and learning progress. Students, instructors, teachers, and parents all use assessment findings as a last resort.
6. Learning progress reports
The process of learning progress is a collaboration between parents, students, and teachers. Learning progress reports are a useful method for communicating learning outcomes comprehensively and can be understood by all parties.
7. Assessment and evaluation of learning
Educators reflect and assess learning in each learning module. Then, the teacher notes things that are in accordance with the goals and things that need to be fixed.

The stages of learning a merdeka curriculum make it easy for teachers to prepare teaching materials in their classrooms. Starting from planning, the process, then the assessment needs to be recorded. The existence of an independent curriculum makes it easy for teachers to explore student innovation, creativity, and achievements according to the interests of the talents they pursue. The steps for implementing this merdeka curriculum are not raw. Each school and/or community can develop stages of implementation according to their individual circumstances and characteristics.

Decision Making in Learning Process

Every individual should aspire to be intelligent and intelligent people are undoubtedly involved in a continuous learning process. Learning itself is a process of training and learning that takes place in the development of intelligence. Learning is a process that involves students interacting with teachers and learning materials in a learning environment. During this interaction, knowledge is acquired, skills are mastered, and habits (character) are formed. In addition, positive values are formed which lead to behavior change (Djamaluddin & Wardana, 2019; Olson, 2015). As a result,

the learning process is one that teachers are designed to cultivate innovative thinking that can improve students' ability to handle new information and their thinking skills.

Teachers are learning leaders who support student growth and development comprehensively, actively, and purposefully by training other educators to practice the learning that students have received (Haerullah & Hasan, 2017). Teachers are the ones who benefit the most from the learning process in the classroom, as well as the most powerful, influential, and decision-making. This is because a teacher must be able to have authoritative, charismatic, and attractive characteristics. Therefore, students can see teachers as their second parents when they are in school (Ningsih, 2019). The teacher is also someone who must be admired and imitated so that to be an effective teacher must be able to make wise choices. The relationship is under the scope of the school, especially as a learning leader both inside and outside the classroom. As a result, teachers become more adept at making choices, which frees their students.

Decision making as an appropriate learning leader, especially decision making based on ethics, in accordance with the vision and mission in favor of students, positive culture, and values that are considered important in an institution, so that the fundamental principles that are referred to will be clear and the creation of a positive, conducive, safe and comfortable environment and students' talents and potential can be optimally realized. Ki Hajar Dewantara's view of the *triloka pratap* is used as a guide in making decisions by teachers as learning leaders (Putro, 2022). The first *pratap*, "Ing Ngarsa Sung Tulada" (in front of setting an example) will make teachers wise in making decisions so that the decision can be an example for school residents. The second *pratap*, "Ing Madya Mangun Karsa" (in the midst of building a will) will make teachers make decisions that are able to motivate and encourage all school residents to improve their self-competence and work creatively and innovatively. The third *pratap*, "Tut Wuri Handayani" (from behind supporting) will make teachers make decisions that are able to encourage all school residents to develop and move forward.

The capacity of teachers to control and realize socio-emotional factors can influence decision making. Being able to control feelings will help teachers better understand themselves and the world around them. Avoid rash behavior by being able to control positive feelings, rash behavior is when the teacher acts without first considering the consequences. Having self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and interpersonal skills are important factors that must be considered when managing positive feelings (Glorius, 2015). The likelihood of teachers being able to make wise choices is very high if the teacher is fully responsible for handling these feelings. This is due to the teacher who is already adept at managing his emotions, must make decisions carefully, examine the available options, and how to make mistakes to a minimum.

Therefore no decision can fully consider the interests of all parties, the decision making process requires attitudes and beliefs to deal with the impact and meaning of the choices taken (Marchau et al., 2019). However, decisions are always made taking into account the goals and affiliations of students. According to research findings by Broughton et al (2022) and Siuty et al (2018), in providing socioemotional, integrated, and differentiated learning, teachers must also have coaching skills. This training skill trains teachers in the decision making process. The importance of the training approach is given by the teacher because the teacher as a coach digs into the potential of students by asking provocative questions so that students can find the potential that is buried in themselves to solve their own problems.

According to the findings of previous studies, mentoring can help make decisions that will result in the formation of a good, healthy, safe and pleasant atmosphere that will affect student learning. In a *merdeka* curriculum program, teacher instruction focuses more on inspiring students to build and create using what they have learned. The task of building (productivity) can encourage students to be busy, develop their own knowledge, reflect on what they have learned, and complement new concepts and ideas with their own perspectives to improve their intelligence.

The Link Between The Objectives of Merdeka Curriculum and Learning Process in Decision Making by Teachers

Curriculum is an important and strategic component in the world of education. The vision, mission, and instructional goals of an educational institution are described in the curriculum. In

addition, the curriculum is a content of core values that transform learners to achieve educational goals (Khoirurrijal et al., 2022). To keep up with the progress of science and technology and culture that continues to develop, the curriculum needs to be continuously improved. Thus, one of the countries that adopted curriculum improvements is Indonesia. Merdeka curriculum developed as part of the new curriculum is a refinement of the 2013 curriculum.

Enabling students to design high-quality learning that meets their needs and the demands of the learning environment is one of the goals of the independent curriculum (Kemdikbud, 2021). This is a challenge for teachers and students to achieve learning objectives. In the classroom, teachers as learning leaders can make decisions about learning in accordance with curriculum objectives. Decision-making is a cognitive process that directs human thinking and action (Johnson Jr & Kruse, 2012). Teachers must be wise in making decisions by paying attention to all aspects and values of the school so that it can be used as a reference or example for all school residents. This is in line with the motto "Ing Ngarso Sung Tulodho", which means a leader must be able to set an example.

Teachers must have courage and confidence when making choices to deal with the impact of decisions. Taking managed risks by introducing new teaching-learning strategies that have a research basis or participating in new systems in educational organizations supports change and the possibility of new paradigms or adaptations for individuals as well as the whole (Campos-García & Zúñiga-Vicente, 2022). When the teacher ethically as a learning leader steps up and takes risks, there will definitely be some mistakes. However, mistakes can also be a learning experience for teachers in improving the learning process.

As explained earlier that decision making is a cognitive process, in making decisions it is necessary to understand cognitive procedures to understand, process, sort, and categorize new information (Siuty et al., 2018). As learning leaders, teachers must have strong decision-making abilities. Decision making based on moral principles that are in line with the vision and mission of educational institutions that are beneficial to students, as well as a culture that supports learning and values that are valued there will help students to maximize their abilities and potential and build a Pancasila student profile in line with the objectives of the independent curriculum.

CONCLUSION

MC as a new curriculum is an effort to direct Indonesian education in a better direction by freeing students to choose what they want to learn. The role of teachers is very important in their application to ensure successful implementation. Teachers who function as learning leaders must be able to decide on the best way to guide student learning while keeping in mind the curriculum's goals. Teachers must have emotional self-control, be brave and confident in acting, and be able to face the impact of decisions taken. Mistakes can occur, but teachers can also benefit from mistakes to improve the education process. Decision-making based on moral principles that are in line with the vision and mission of educational institutions that benefit students, as well as the culture that supports learning and values valued there, will help students to maximize their abilities and potential and build profiles of students who are Pancasila in line with the goals of an merdeka curriculum.

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