



TEACHER OBSTACLES IN IMPLEMENTING THE INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM AT SMP 4 MEULABOH

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ABSTRACT

The curriculum is constantly changing according to the needs of society and technological advancements. The purpose of this study was to find obstacles in the implementation of the independent curriculum at SMP 4 Meulaboh and teacher readiness problems based on teacher knowledge and skills. In this study, descriptive analysis methods were used, and data were collected through interviews, documentation, and literature studies to supplement the statements made by interviews. The results showed that SMP 4 Meulaboh still faces challenges in implementing the independent curriculum. This is because they do not receive special training on the independent curriculum, so they do not know how to make subject matter. This research shows that teachers are not ready and are still confused to implement an independent curriculum because they do not understand how to find learning materials or media in the process of teaching and learning activities that are in accordance with the independent curriculum. More senior teachers also face difficulties in finding learning materials or media in the process of teaching and learning activities that are in accordance with the independent curriculum.

Keywords: teacher barriers, implementation of independent curriculum

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements for teaching materials that can be a guide in teaching and learning activities. According to Salabi, (2020) the curriculum is an activity that will be delivered to students under the responsibility of the school. The curriculum is an effort by the school to make students diligent in learning, both in the classroom, on the school grounds, and outside the school (Rahmawati, Diana Yulias, Wening, Aprilia Putri, Sukadari. Rizbudiani, 2023). Therefore, the curriculum has an important role for schools because the curriculum is a guideline for educational achievement and the curriculum certainly has a purpose, which is to help students to prepare themselves to become individuals who have skills, critical and creative reasoning power so that later they can be implemented in the community (Fetra Bonita Sari, Risdha Amini, 2020a).

As a result of the impact of the situation, all activities are carried out at home, including work and education. This learning model requires teachers who have creativity and skills in the use of technology (Intan Syahdillah, 2023). The impact is seen in terms of education, there is learning loss which can be seen in terms of learning activities, in terms of technology, and personal constraints of the students themselves. When viewed from the learning process of students, there is a weakness in understanding the material taught by the teacher. This is caused by several factors, such as insufficient internet access, limited internet quota available, and lack of learning devices that can be used as support in the learning process. In addition, personally, students also experience lack of motivation, difficulty in focusing attention, and face a less conducive learning environment. Therefore, to support learning, teachers must use technology to deliver material to students and teachers can interact to deliver learning material through applications such as whatsapp groups, google meet, classroom, and there are many other platforms. With the aim of communicating learning materials, efforts are made so that students receive maximum learning

The independent curriculum is an option to overcome the lack of learning progress during the pandemic where with this curriculum students are given freedom of learning which from the implementation of teacher and principal learning compiles, implements the learning process and develops the curriculum in schools which by paying attention to the needs of students (Yoseptry et al., 2023) . The independent curriculum is an effort to restore the learning process that was lacking in the past, the independent curriculum was created as a more flexible curriculum framework, with an emphasis on important material and the development of character and competence of students. Through independent learning that prioritizes learning in the form of projects where the essential materials in the independent curriculum can

overcome educational problems that are being experienced today. Through this curriculum change, changes can be implemented that will strengthen teacher independence as a facilitator in the learning process in the classroom. In addition, it will also improve the leadership spirit of students in order to grow and develop through learning that gives rights and abilities to students to determine the course of the learning process, and be responsible for their own personal success.

In implementing an independent curriculum in learning, teachers need to make preparations which include lesson planning, implementation, and evaluation. (Dewi & Astuti, 2022). In this regard, researchers want to discuss teacher preparation in implementing the independent curriculum, the state of the classroom during learning using the independent curriculum, facilities and infrastructure to implement the independent curriculum, factors that support and hinder the implementation of the independent curriculum, and solutions that can be found to overcome obstacles in the implementation of the curriculum. Some research on teacher obstacles in implementing an independent curriculum in schools that have similarities with this research include research (Yosepty et al., 2023). The findings of this study state that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has not reached the expected level of effectiveness such as teacher readiness, support from schools and local governments that have not been optimal. Another relevant research is (Fetra Bonita Sari, Risda Amini, 2020b). The results of the study revealed that teachers still find it difficult to apply technology and also face difficulties in determining the right learning methods and strategies to be applied in the Independent Curriculum. Further research conducted by (Belia et al., 2023) states that teachers still experience limited learning resources which cause mismatch with the needs of many of these students. In addition, limited facilities are also an obstacle in the learning process in the classroom.

This study and other studies that have been mentioned have similarities in terms of teacher obstacles in implementing the Independent Curriculum in Schools. However, there are some differences that become the gap analysis between this study and the previous research mentioned. In the first study, although both discussed teacher obstacles in implementing the Independent Curriculum in Schools, namely discussing teacher readiness, school support, supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing the Independent Curriculum, the study did not explain the suggestions and infrastructure in schools, classroom learning when using the Independent Curriculum, and solutions to overcome obstacles in implementing the Independent Curriculum. The second study refers more to how to develop the right strategy to implement the Independent Curriculum in Schools. In the third study, it has similarities in the form of limited references or learning resources, as well as existing facilities and infrastructure in schools to launch poses teaching and learning activities

in schools. This research is important because it can improve the effectiveness of the Independent Curriculum by identifying obstacles faced by teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum. By knowing the obstacles faced by teachers, it is hoped that this research can contribute to supporting the development of a curriculum that can find out information about the obstacles and challenges in implementing the Independent Curriculum. With this research, it is hoped that researchers can contribute to the Education literature to become a reference for future researches.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method to describe what are the obstacles for teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum at SMP 4 Meulaboh. Qualitative research is a type of research based on an inductive approach, where this research is conducted by observing objectively and involves participation in understanding a symptom or social phenomenon (Moleong, 2020). Data collection techniques in this study are interviews, documentation, and literature review on the Independent Curriculum policy as well as interviews with principals and teachers who teach at SMP 4 Meulaboh. The collection of research data was carried out by interviews with teachers and principals who had implemented the independent curriculum, as well as data information found in literature analysis. In-depth interviews are conducted with teachers in order to collect primary research data in interviews assisted by interview guidelines, with which interviews will be more focused (Agustianti et al., 2022). To collect skunder data, researchers took a literature review which was by searching the internet with keywords teacher obstacles in implementing the independent curriculum. After the research data was collected, the data analysis technique applied the Miles and Huberman analysis model, which included three stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions (Huberman & Miles, 2002)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews from this research, it discusses teachers' obstacles in implementing the independent curriculum in schools. Even though the Merdeka Curriculum has only just been implemented at SMP 4 Meulaboh, it has been implemented well. However, there are still shortcomings in that some teachers have not received training regarding the independent curriculum, there are teachers who have not implemented learning in accordance with the learning outcomes, learning objectives, and the flow of learning objectives that already exist in the independent curriculum itself, there are still teachers who have difficulty finding learning references using the independent curriculum (Hehakaya & Pollatu, 2022). Students are still adapting to the independent curriculum because the independent curriculum is still relatively new in schools

(Rosadi & Andriyani, 2020). Thus, teachers must be given training regarding the independent curriculum and students need time to adapt to the independent curriculum because it is still relatively new being implemented in schools. To maximize the potential of an independent curriculum, action needs to be taken to provide clearer guidance in implementing the curriculum and also sufficient support for students in facing curriculum changes.

Based on interviews with teachers, it was stated that Preparation is not much different from previous curricula, it's just that teachers have to study a lot and look for learning resources for this new curriculum. However, there are still teachers who are not ready to implement the independent curriculum because they are still confused about how to create learning modules and teachers still rely on teacher books and student books, because teachers have not been given training regarding the independent curriculum. Teachers must maintain competencies such as Pedagogical Competency, where teachers must master the theories and principles of learning and be able to develop learning that is creative and innovative and relevant to the needs of students. Teachers in the learning process must encourage students to be more active in the classroom, because several subjects such as Education Pancasila, and IPAS apply learning to be more creative so as to encourage students to be more active. The independent curriculum requires teachers to be more creative in creating interesting learning methods, such as making learning videos or interactive games. "This will have a positive impact in increasing students' enthusiasm in the learning process," then the researcher asked again, "What are the supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing the independent curriculum?" the teacher answered: "supporting factors, namely the facilities provided by the government to schools, learning resources that are easy to obtain and access, provide discussion forums for teachers which function as a forum for overcoming problems or obstacles in learning, discussion forums play a role in monitoring progress learning as well as evaluation material to see if there is any improvement from the previous month. The inhibiting factor is that students are still adapting to changes in the curriculum, where previously learning was divided into themes in one theme consisting of several lessons and also because of this independent curriculum, teachers are required to be creative, so there are still teachers who cannot operate technology at this time. because in schools there are many teachers who are elderly. In looking for references for teachers collaborating with other teachers in compiling teaching modules, the researcher asked again about "What solutions can be found to overcome obstacles in implementing the independent curriculum?" teacher's answer: "the solution is to involve teachers to create more creative learning media and adapt students' learning styles, create discussion forums to share knowledge about the independent curriculum and use varied learning approaches, create a more inclusive learning environment and enable students to more active in class.

Results of interviews with school principals discussing what school support is for implementing the independent curriculum in schools. The following are the results of the question from the interview "How do schools provide support in implementing the independent curriculum?" the teacher answered: "The learning facilities at school have been prepared very well to support the process of teaching and learning activities in class, the school provides teacher books and also student books. The school also holds In House Training (IHT) as training and understanding of the independent curriculum. During IHT, teachers are involved in discussions regarding the independent curriculum. And teachers routinely carry out monthly discussion activities to evaluate the development of the learning process, especially for teachers who are directly involved in teaching. The school also provides support for teachers to undertake training outside of school." then the researcher asked again "Are the facilities and infrastructure sufficient to carry out teaching and learning activities in the independent curriculum in the classroom?" answer from the principal "the school is improving facilities to support the implementation of the independent curriculum. The improvement is that previously there was only one wifi router , now there are two wifi zones in the school. To support learning the school has provided infocus in the classroom. The school provides computer lab and laptop facilities to support the learning process in class."

From this statement, an answer was found to the obstacles faced by teachers in implementing the independent curriculum . Curriculum policies that have been released by the government may not necessarily be implemented well by teachers. Because each teacher's perception and understanding of the curriculum content and process is different, therefore, teachers play an important role in the implementation of a process of teaching and learning activities in the classroom. With this in mind, researchers conducted research with teachers and school principals. The main focus of the interview is to provide the required answers. The interview was given 7 (seven) questions regarding the Independent Curriculum, namely 1. Teacher preparation in implementing the Independent Curriculum, 2. School support in implementing the Independent Curriculum, 3. Facilities and infrastructure to support classroom learning, 4. Classroom learning using the Curriculum Merdeka, 5. Supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in schools, 6. Learning references when using the Merdeka Curriculum, 7. Solutions to overcome obstacles in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The main focus of this research is on the teacher's perspective. The following are the results of interviews with teachers and school principals who explain this.

Preparation Teacher in carry out Independent Curriculum

Teacher preparation to implement the independent curriculum is very important in order to increase their competence in delivering learning that will

later be carried out in the classroom (Dzulhidayat , 2022). Teachers need to study the independent curriculum material in depth, both through independent learning platforms and relevant sources. They must also understand the differences between the independent curriculum and the previous curriculum, and adapt learning methods and strategies accordingly. Apart from that, teachers need to involve themselves in training and collaboration with fellow teachers to share experiences and knowledge. With good preparation, teachers will be ready to face the challenges of implementing the Independent Curriculum and provide a more effective learning experience for students.

Based on interviews conducted, the majority of teachers felt they were not ready to implement the independent curriculum because they did not fully understand how to implement the independent curriculum in the classroom. Because teachers have not been given special training regarding the independent curriculum, even though the driving schools have been given information about the independent curriculum in advance, other schools which are still new feel confused about implementing the independent curriculum in schools. In implementing learning using the independent curriculum for making teaching materials, teachers are still confused and still rely on existing materials in teacher books and existing student books.

Apart from studying material and adapting learning strategies, teacher preparation in implementing an independent curriculum also involves understanding the individual needs and diversity of students. Teachers are able to identify students' learning needs and create an inclusive environment that supports their development. With this, teachers must be able to master the pillars of digital literacy in order to make teachers superior teachers (Ayu Rizki Septiana & Moh. Hanafi, 2022). Therefore, teachers must be able to provide teaching materials that suit students' ability levels and learning styles. Apart from that, teachers also need to prepare relevant evaluation tools to measure student competency achievement in the independent curriculum. By understanding students' individual needs and being able to adapt learning, teachers will be able to create more effective, inclusive and motivating learning experiences for all students in the classroom.

Implementing an independent curriculum also involves collaboration and cooperation with relevant stakeholders , such as school principals, supervisors and fellow teachers. Through discussion forums, meetings or training, teachers can share experiences, knowledge and best practices in facing challenges in implementing an independent curriculum. This collaboration allows teachers to support each other, provide feedback, and enrich their understanding of the independent curriculum. In addition, teachers' active involvement in professional communities can also increase awareness of the latest developments in education and relevant teaching strategies. With this

training and collaboration , teachers can strengthen their competence and increase the effectiveness of implementing the independent curriculum in schools.

Support school in implement Curriculum Independent

School support in implementing the Independent Curriculum plays a crucial role in the success of the learning process. Schools need to provide adequate resources, both physical and technological, to support teachers in teaching in accordance with the concepts and principles of the Independent Curriculum. In addition, it is important for schools to provide opportunities for teachers to take part in training and professional development related to this curriculum. Managerial and supervisory support by school principals and supervisors is essential in ensuring effective curriculum implementation. Apart from that, collaboration between teachers in schools to share experiences and best practices is also a valuable form of support. With comprehensive support from the school, teachers will feel supported and motivated to implement the Independent Curriculum better, thereby having a positive impact on students' learning and development.

Apart from that, school support for implementing the Independent Curriculum also involves the role of the school principal in creating a conducive environment and supporting learning innovation. School principals need to ensure that the vision and goals of the Merdeka Curriculum are integrated with the overall school vision. They can encourage and inspire teachers to develop learning approaches that are creative, collaborative, and oriented towards student activity.

Based on the results of interviews with the school principal, the learning facilities at the school have been prepared very well. The school has provided independent curriculum books for teachers, including teacher books and student books. At the beginning of the learning year, the school also holds In House Training (IHT), which is a meeting for all teachers and education staff at the school, which aims to provide understanding and training about the independent curriculum. During IHT, teachers are involved in discussions regarding various aspects of the independent curriculum, including determining Learning Outcomes (CP), Learning Objectives (TP), and Learning Objective Flow (ATP).

Apart from that, teachers also routinely hold discussion activities every month to evaluate the development of the learning process related to the independent curriculum, especially for teachers who are directly involved in teaching the independent curriculum. Schools also provide other facilities to support teacher development, such as giving them the opportunity to take part

in training outside of school to develop cognitive skills, knowledge and competencies related to the independent curriculum. Through this process, it is hoped that teachers can act as transmitters of information about the independent curriculum to other fellow teachers, so that they can understand the latest developments in the implementation of the independent curriculum.

Overall, school support to implement the Independent Curriculum is the key to achieving success in holistic and inclusive education (Rahayu et al. , 2022). Through comprehensive support, both from resources, managerial and school leadership, teachers can implement the Independent Curriculum more effectively and creatively. This will have a positive impact on students' learning experience, increasing their motivation, skills and understanding. Apart from that, school support also creates an environment that builds collaboration and professional development between teachers. Thus, through strong school support, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum can achieve optimal results, bringing positive changes in education and helping students to become empowered individuals and ready to face an increasingly complex future.

Means And Infrastructure For support classroom learning

Adequate facilities and infrastructure are very important in supporting learning in the classroom (Malua et al. , 2022). A comfortable and well-organized classroom creates a conducive environment for students to learn. Apart from that, the existence of supporting equipment and facilities such as projectors, interactive whiteboards, computers and the internet can increase student interactivity and activeness in the learning process. Additional resources such as a complete library, laboratory and computer lab also provide opportunities for students to develop their interests and talents in various fields. With adequate facilities and infrastructure, teachers can create learning experiences that are interesting, varied and relevant to students' needs, thereby helping them achieve their maximum learning potential.

Adequate facilities and infrastructure also enable teachers to implement innovative and technology-based learning approaches. With access to technological devices such as laptops, tablets, or other mobile devices , teachers can enrich learning with digital resources, educational applications, and interactive media. For example, the use of multimedia in presentations or computer simulations in scientific experiments can increase the attractiveness of learning and deepen understanding of concepts effectively. Apart from that, facilities such as laboratories or computer labs which are equipped with special equipment also enable students to carry out experiments, practices , or creative projects that can increase their understanding in certain fields.

Thus, adequate facilities and infrastructure not only create a conducive environment, but also expand learning opportunities that are varied and in line

with technological developments and the needs of today's students. Based on the results of the interview, suggestions and infrastructure at the school are quite available because at this school there were even though it was initially at SMPN 4 Meulaboh . For routers there is only one wifi , but because of the independent curriculum, 2 routers have been added to this school. The facilities for the internet are quite smooth because there are 2 wifi zones throughout the school. Apart from that, focus is also available for teachers who want their learning to use learning videos, so you can use it. convey it by using focus in the classroom, the school has also prepared teachers' books and students' books for learning process activities, even a computer lab and laptops have been provided by the school so the facilities are complete at SMPN 4 Meulaboh.

In order to create optimal learning, it is important for educational institutions to ensure the availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure (Rohiyatun , 2019). Adequate facilities and infrastructure, such as comfortable classrooms, supporting equipment and facilities, as well as relevant technology, can provide a conducive environment for students to learn and develop. Apart from that, adequate facilities and infrastructure also enable teachers to implement innovative and technology-based learning approaches, increasing student interactivity and involvement in the learning process. Thus, through the support of adequate facilities and infrastructure, educational institutions can create learning experiences that are interesting, effective and appropriate to students' needs, helping them achieve optimal learning potential and be ready to face future challenges.

Learning in class with use Curriculum Independent

Learning using the Merdeka Curriculum brings significant changes in learning approaches and methodologies. The Merdeka Curriculum gives teachers the freedom to develop learning strategies that are more flexible, interactive and student-centered. Teachers can apply innovative methods such as project-based learning, collaboration between students, and problem solving, which encourage active involvement of students in the learning process, which means that the independent curriculum provides flexibility for teachers to develop their teaching modules (Fitriyah & Wardani, 2022) . With this, the Merdeka Curriculum also focuses on character development, 21st century skills, and the implementation of relevant life values in the context of daily learning. In a way that is more comprehensive and responsive to students' needs, the Independent Curriculum provides a learning experience that is more interesting, relevant, and provides opportunities for students to optimize their potential.

The results of interviews with teachers, because the Independent Curriculum has only just been implemented in schools, teachers are also

required to be more creative in developing teaching materials that will be used to convey material to students. With creative teachers, students will also be active in the learning process, especially in subjects such as Pancasila education and English. Learning in this subject encourages students to be more active in class, by doing more practice than just theory in class. Sometimes, students are invited by teachers to explore learning outside the classroom, such as in science subjects, where students are more active in searching for and identifying parts of plants outside the classroom, such as leaves, stems and roots. In the Independent Curriculum, students are more active in the learning process activities. Apart from that, teachers are also more active, especially in learning Pancasila education, where teacher books do not provide specific material. Therefore, teachers are required to create their own learning media, such as learning videos or games using platforms such as Quizizz , which encourage students to actively participate and respond to questions created by the teacher.

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum also provides space for teachers and students to carry out learning outside conventional classroom boundaries. In subjects such as social studies, students are invited to carry out field observations, visits to museums, or direct interactions with the community to gain a deeper understanding of the material being studied. Teachers as learning facilitators create learning experiences that are centered on real life, so that students can relate learning to relevant contexts in everyday life. Apart from that, the project method is also used in the Merdeka Curriculum, where students are given the opportunity to develop independent projects based on their own interests, such as creating research, works of art, or solving problems in the community. Thus, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum provides an opportunity for teachers and students to move from learning that only focuses on the classroom, go beyond the boundaries of the room, and explore learning actively in real-world contexts.

In the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum , interview with the teacher showing that teacher role and involvement active student become key important in more learning _ interactive and meaningful . Participant educate become more engaged and enthusiastic in the learning process when teachers create new ideas and create learning media . Outside learning _ class , like observation field , visit to the museum, and interaction with society , giving experience direct connection _ learning with the real world . Through method project , participants educate can develop creativity , skills solution problems , and interests they Alone . By overall , implementation Merdeka Curriculum brings change positive in classroom learning , enriching _ experience Study participant educate , and improve teacher competence in create environment stimulative and meaningful learning exists Independent Curriculum , learning become more relevant , targeted , and delivering chance for participant educate For grow and thrive in a way holistic in accordance with each other's potential

Supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing the Independent Curriculum in schools

Supporting and inhibiting factors in the Merdeka Curriculum have a significant role in its successful implementation. Supporting factors include the availability of adequate resources, such as facilities and infrastructure that support interactive and technology-based learning. Strong managerial support from principals and supervisors is also an important factor to create a conducive environment for teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. In addition, good collaboration and communication between teachers, students, and education stakeholders can also be a supporting factor in overcoming challenges and improving the quality of implementation of the Independent Curriculum. However, there are also inhibiting factors that can hinder the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in schools. Teachers' lack of knowledge and understanding of the concepts and principles of the Independent Curriculum can be a major obstacle. The lack of adequate training and assistance for teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum can also be an obstacle in the learning process (Izza et al., 2023). In addition, limited access to technology and lack of support from related parties, both in terms of policy and financing, can be obstacles in implementing the Independent Curriculum effectively.

Based on interviews about supporting and inhibiting factors related to the independent curriculum in schools, for supporting factors, schools conduct a discussion forum which is carried out every month, later teachers who implement the independent curriculum, both class teachers, and subject teachers convey problems or obstacles such as using the independent curriculum, do not understand about P5, whether P5 is included with subjects or not. In the discussion forum, the problem will be discussed whether it is solved or not. So the function in this discussion forum is to solve a problem whether there is a problem every month in learning or not. For example, there are no problems in learning, it means that the teacher conveys his learning whether it has increased from the previous month or not. The obstacle factor is that students are still in the adjustment stage in using the independent curriculum in the classroom because students also use the 2013 curriculum where all subjects are combined into one theme, with the independent curriculum being the gem of the lesson so that students are still adjusting.

To overcome inhibiting factors, there needs to be continuous efforts in increasing students' understanding of the Independent Curriculum through differentiated learning. Therefore, close cooperation between schools, government, and communities is also needed in providing the resources needed, both infrastructure and policies that support the implementation of the Independent Curriculum (2022). By strengthening supporting factors and

overcoming inhibiting factors, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in schools can run more effectively and successfully in achieving quality education goals that are relevant to the needs of students.

Learning resources when using the Merdeka Curriculum

References for learning when using the Merdeka Curriculum are important in developing effective approaches and strategies. Teachers need to refer to reliable and relevant sources, such as the Merdeka Curriculum guidebooks published by the government or official educational sources. Additionally, collaboration with fellow teachers, exchange of experiences, and participation in training or workshops related to the Merdeka Curriculum are valuable references. By referring to appropriate learning references (Lince, 2022), teachers can develop lesson plans that align with the principles and goals of the Merdeka Curriculum, providing a more meaningful and effective learning experience for students.

The results of the study obtained information that teachers still find it difficult to find material or media in the Independent Curriculum. Although the Ministry of Education and Culture for Research and Technology has provided an independent learning platform. Teachers are still adjusting to find references to learning materials that will be conveyed to students. So with this, teachers need to make more active efforts in finding learning references that are in accordance with the Independent Curriculum. Teachers can access a variety of educational resources, such as up-to-date textbooks, scientific journals, articles, and verified learning materials. In addition, collaboration with other teachers, both in schools and in the educational community, can be a means to share references, teaching strategies, and experiences in implementing the Independent Curriculum (Insyirah & El-yunusi, 2023). In addition, teachers can also use social media, discussion forums, or online education groups as a forum to get references and discuss experiences in teaching with Curriculum Merdeka. With active efforts in finding the right learning references, teachers can overcome difficulties in finding material or media that are in accordance with the Independent Curriculum, thereby improving the quality of learning and learning experience of students.

In addition to finding appropriate learning references, teachers also need to continue to develop digital skills and information literacy. In the digital era, there are many resources and online platforms that can support learning with the Merdeka Curriculum. Teachers need to take advantage of the independent learning platform provided by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, as well as explore other relevant online resources. By having the ability to access, evaluate, and use digital resources effectively, teachers can find quality learning resources that are appropriate to the needs of their classrooms. In addition, teachers can also develop interactive learning media

using technology, such as learning videos, digital presentations, or game-based learning platforms. By mastering digital skills and information technology literacy (Yuliana et al., 2023). Therefore, teachers can expand the choice of learning references that they can convey to students more creatively and relevantly. With continuous efforts in finding learning references and developing digital skills, teachers can overcome challenges in finding materials or media that are in accordance with the Independent Curriculum (Insyirah & El-yunusi, 2023). This will help them create a learning experience that is more varied, engaging, and meets the needs of students. In addition, this effort will also improve teacher competence in delivering material with an innovative, collaborative approach, and in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum.

Solutions to overcome obstacles in implementing the Independent Curriculum

Solutions in implementing the Independent Curriculum need to be pursued so that the learning process can run more effectively. First, it is necessary to increase teacher understanding and competence related to the Independent Curriculum through training, workshops, and professional development programs regularly. Teachers need to gain a deep understanding of the concepts, principles, and learning methodologies contained in the Merdeka Curriculum. Second, there needs to be close support and cooperation between schools, government, and the education community in providing adequate resources, such as facilities and infrastructure, technology, and relevant learning materials.

This collaboration will enrich the learning resources available to teachers and provide opportunities to share experiences and best practices (Greenhow & Galvin, 2020). Third, it is important to strengthen communication and coordination between teachers, students, parents, and other relevant parties. With good communication, input and feedback from all parties can be accommodated, so that the learning process can continue to be improved and adjusted to the needs of students. With continuous efforts in implementing these solutions, it is hoped that obstacles in implementing the Independent Curriculum can be overcome effectively, and the implementation of the Independent Curriculum can run more successfully and be beneficial for the development of Education.

In facing the challenges of implementing an independent curriculum, it is important for educational institutions to adopt innovative and creative approaches to the needs of learners. Providing training to teachers is an important step in implementing an independent curriculum (Salabi, 2020). The training covers the use of technology in learning, project-based learning approaches, and alternative assessments that reflect the diverse abilities of

learners. In addition, the support of school principals and active collaboration with parents are also considered as important factors in strengthening the implementation of an independent curriculum that is oriented towards students.

In addition, it is also important to encourage collaboration between teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum. By working together and supporting each other between teachers, they can share experiences, strategies, and effective learning resources. This can be done through discussion sessions, regular meetings, or even the formation of work teams to develop and share teaching materials (Nur Efendi & Muh Ibnu Sholeh, 2023). In addition, the collaborative approach also involves coordination with teachers of other subjects to integrate learning that provides experiential information from both material and learning resources during the process of teaching and learning activities.

With the development of interesting and relevant learning materials and resources for learners. Interesting learning materials and resources can increase the interest and motivation of students in the learning process (Tatsa Galuh Pradani, 2022). In the independent curriculum, teachers must focus on developing teaching materials that are diverse and in accordance with the daily lives of students (Insyirah & El-yunusi, 2023). The use of educational technology can also be a means to present learning materials in a more interesting and interactive way. By strengthening the development of materials and learning resources for the teaching and learning process, thus creating a more meaningful and effective learning environment. The limitation of this study is that the study was only conducted in one school so that the generalization of the results was limited to a wider population, the researcher did not compare the implementation of the independent curriculum with other schools that may apply different curricula, this study only focused on the perspectives of grade II teachers and principals who were only in one school that did not distinguish from other schools.

CONCLUSION

The results showed that SMP 4 Meulaboh has tried to implement the Independent Curriculum well. However, the Merdeka Curriculum requires additional learning because it is still new. Although there are still some challenges, including teachers who are not ready to implement the Merdeka Curriculum due to lack of training that addresses it. As a result, teachers are still confused about how to make teaching materials and still rely on teacher and student books without developing more flexible teaching materials. In addition, teachers are still adjusting in the learning process because of the difficulty in finding the right learning material and media. Therefore, cooperation between schools, other schools, and local education offices is

needed to collaborate in increasing the knowledge and understanding of teachers in schools, as well as ensuring the teaching and learning process in the classroom is in accordance with the objectives of the Independent Curriculum.

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