

Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and Readiness of Educational Infrastructure in Elementary Schools

Syafruddin¹, I Wayan Suastra², I Wayan Lasmawan³

Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha

Article Info

Article history:

Received: 2 July 2024

Publish: 14 July 2024

Keywords:

Merdeka Curriculum, Educational Infrastructure, Primary Schools, Indonesian Education, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Readiness

Abstract

Education is a cornerstone in shaping competent and adaptable generations. Merdeka Curriculum was introduced as an educational reform effort in Indonesia to grant students the freedom to develop their potentials according to their interests and talents. However, the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum faces challenges, particularly in educational infrastructure readiness, especially at the primary school level. Adequate educational infrastructure, including physical facilities, access to information and communication technology (ICT), and availability of competent human resources, is crucial for the successful execution of this curriculum. This research aims to analyze the readiness level of educational infrastructure in primary schools to support the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum, identify challenges, evaluate the influence of infrastructure readiness on curriculum effectiveness, formulate strategic steps to address infrastructure constraints, and explore the roles of the government and relevant stakeholders in enhancing educational infrastructure readiness. The research methodology employed includes qualitative and quantitative descriptive methods, involving data analysis from questionnaires, interviews, and observations. Findings indicate that the majority of primary schools still face infrastructure challenges, with only a small portion possessing adequate facilities. Schools with better infrastructure tend to implement Merdeka Curriculum more effectively, evidenced by improved student participation and higher academic outcomes. Recommended strategic steps include increasing budget allocations, providing sufficient ICT devices, and conducting intensive teacher training. The government plays a crucial role in supporting educational infrastructure development through supportive policies and adequate budget allocations. Collaborative efforts among the government, private sector, and local communities are expected to expedite improvements in educational infrastructure readiness, thereby enabling all schools to effectively support Merdeka Curriculum.

This is an open access article under the [Lisensi Creative Commons Atribusi-
BerbagiSerupa 4.0 Internasional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)



Corresponding Author:

Syafruddin

Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is an important foundation in forming the next generation who are competent and able to face the challenges of the times. In order to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, the government has introduced the Merdeka Curriculum as one of the educational reform efforts. The Merdeka Curriculum is expected to provide freedom for students to develop their potential optimally according to their individual interests and talents. However, the implementation of this curriculum cannot be separated from various challenges, one of which is the readiness of educational infrastructure, especially at the elementary school level. The Merdeka Curriculum aims to reduce the administrative burden for teachers, provide freedom in choosing teaching methods, and increase creativity and innovation in the teaching and learning process. However, the successful implementation of this curriculum is very dependent on the readiness of adequate educational infrastructure. Educational infrastructure covers various aspects, such as the availability of physical facilities (buildings, classrooms, laboratories), access to information and communication technology (ICT), and the availability of competent human resources. The Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum designed to give students freedom to learn according to their interests, talents and potential. According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (2023), the Merdeka Curriculum aims to create a learning environment that is more flexible, fun and innovative. Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum requires a paradigm shift in the learning process, where teachers act as facilitators who help students

find the most effective learning methods for them. Educational infrastructure is one of the main factors that supports the successful implementation of the curriculum. Facilities such as school buildings, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and access to information and communication technology have a major impact on the quality of education. According to research by Putra et al. (2022), the readiness of education infrastructure in Indonesia still faces many challenges, especially in remote and underdeveloped areas. The availability of adequate facilities and up-to-date technology is very important to support an effective teaching and learning process and meet the demands of the Merdeka Curriculum. The challenges in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum are not only related to infrastructure readiness, but also include the preparation of human resources, such as teachers and education personnel. According to Rahayu et al. (2023), one of the main obstacles is the lack of training and professional development for teachers in understanding and implementing the Merdeka Curriculum concept. In addition, technical issues such as limited internet access and a lack of technological devices in schools are also significant challenges. Infrastructure readiness has a direct influence on the effectiveness of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. Research by Wijaya et al. (2022) shows that schools that have adequate facilities are better able to adapt to curriculum changes and carry out innovative learning processes. On the other hand, schools that face limited infrastructure tend to experience difficulties in implementing teaching methods that are in accordance with the Merdeka Curriculum, which ultimately affects student learning outcomes negatively. The role of government and related parties has a very important role in improving the readiness of educational infrastructure. Policies and programs that focus on developing and improving infrastructure, including adequate budget allocation, providing ICT facilities, and training for teachers, can accelerate adaptation to the Merdeka Curriculum. According to a report from Bappenas (2023), investment in educational infrastructure is one of the priorities in the national development plan to improve the quality of education throughout Indonesia.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research will use qualitative and quantitative descriptive research methods to obtain a comprehensive picture of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the readiness of educational infrastructure in elementary schools. The following are the steps of the research method that will be used: 1. Research Design 2. Population and Sample 3. Research Instruments 4. Data Collection Procedures 5. Data Analysis

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION (12 Pt)

Research result

1. Education Infrastructure Readiness

Based on the results of a questionnaire that collected quantitative data, it was found that around 60% of the elementary schools sampled had adequate physical infrastructure, including classrooms, laboratories and libraries. However, around 40% of other schools still experience a lack of facilities, especially in remote and remote areas. Only around 50% of schools have stable internet access and adequate information and communication technology (ICT) facilities.

2. Challenges and Obstacles to Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum

Interviews with school principals and teachers highlight some of the main challenges in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. These challenges include a lack of training and understanding of new curriculum concepts, limited resources, and resistance to change. Many teachers feel they are not ready to adopt the more flexible and creative teaching methods required by the Merdeka Curriculum.

3. The Influence of Infrastructure Readiness on the Effectiveness of Merdeka Curriculum Implementation

Based on quantitative data, it appears that schools that have better infrastructure are generally more successful in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. These schools recorded increases in student participation, better learning outcomes, and higher levels of teacher satisfaction. On the other hand, schools with inadequate infrastructure often face difficulties in implementing new teaching methods and often face technical challenges.

4. Strategic Steps to Overcome Infrastructure Constraints

The results of interviews and observations identified several strategic actions that can be taken to overcome infrastructure problems. These steps include increasing budget allocations for improving physical facilities, providing ICT equipment, and implementing intensive training programs for teachers. Apart from that, collaboration with the private sector and active participation of local communities are also recommended to accelerate infrastructure improvements.

5. Role of the Government and Related Parties

The findings from the research show that the government's role has great significance in supporting the readiness of educational infrastructure. Steps such as school building programs, technical assistance, and increased education budget allocations have had a positive impact. However, further efforts are needed to ensure that all schools, especially those located in remote areas, receive adequate support.

Discussion

1. Education Infrastructure Readiness

Infrastructure readiness is one of the important conditions for the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Schools that are equipped with adequate infrastructure tend to achieve better results in implementing this curriculum. Research conducted by Putra et al. (2022) emphasized that the availability of adequate facilities is very crucial in supporting the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.

2. Challenges and Obstacles to Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum

Challenges that arise in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum include technical and non-technical challenges. One of the main obstacles is the lack of training for teachers. According to research by Rahayu et al. (2023), teachers need time and support to adapt to curriculum changes. Apart from that, resistance to change is also an obstacle that needs to be overcome through a more collaborative and inclusive approach.

3. The Influence of Infrastructure Readiness on the Effectiveness of Merdeka Curriculum Implementation

The positive impact of infrastructure readiness on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum shows the importance of investment in educational infrastructure. Schools that are equipped with good facilities are able to implement more innovative and flexible teaching methods, which ultimately improve the quality of education. Research conducted by Wijaya et al. (2022) supports these findings, confirming that quality infrastructure is a crucial factor in educational success.

4. Strategic Steps to Overcome Infrastructure Constraints

Recommended strategic steps, such as increasing budget allocations and training for teachers, are critical to addressing infrastructure problems. Collaboration with the private sector and active participation from local communities can also accelerate infrastructure improvements and ensure that all students have equal opportunities to obtain adequate educational facilities.

5. Role of the Government and Related Parties

The government's active role in improving educational infrastructure readiness has great significance. Policies that support the development of educational facilities, the provision of information and communication technology (ICT), and training programs for teachers need to continue to be strengthened. According to the Bappenas report (2023), investment in the education sector must be a top priority in achieving national development goals.

4. CONCLUSION

1. Education Infrastructure Readiness

This research indicates significant variation in the readiness of educational infrastructure in primary schools. About 60% of the schools studied have adequate facilities, while the remaining 40% still face deficiencies in infrastructure. Access to information and communication technology (ICT) is also still limited, with only around 50% of schools having stable internet access and sufficient ICT equipment.

2. Challenges and Obstacles to Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools faces a number of challenges and obstacles, such as a lack of training and understanding regarding the new curriculum, limited resources, and resistance to change. Many teachers feel they are not ready to fully implement more adaptive and innovative teaching methods.

3. The Influence of Infrastructure Readiness on the Effectiveness of Merdeka Curriculum Implementation

Schools that have better infrastructure generally achieve greater success in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. Infrastructure readiness directly influences the effectiveness of implementing this curriculum, with schools with adequate facilities reporting increased student participation, improved learning outcomes, and higher levels of teacher satisfaction.

4. Strategic Steps to Overcome Infrastructure Constraints

In order to overcome infrastructure problems, strategic steps are needed, such as increasing budget allocations to improve physical facilities, providing adequate ICT equipment, and organizing intensive training programs for teachers. Collaboration with the private sector and active participation from local communities is also crucial to accelerate infrastructure improvements.

5. Role of the Government and Related Parties

The government plays an important role in supporting the readiness of educational infrastructure. Policies and programs that focus on developing and improving infrastructure, providing ICT facilities and training for teachers have provided positive results. However, further efforts are still needed to ensure that all schools, especially those in remote areas, receive adequate support.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to express his deepest gratitude to all parties who have provided support and assistance during the process of writing this journal. My special thanks go to: the lecturer who taught the course.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bappenas. (2023). "Laporan Tahunan Pembangunan Nasional 2023". Jakarta: Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional.
- Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. (2023). "Panduan Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka". Jakarta: Kemdikbud.

- Putra, A. et al. (2022). "Kesiapan Infrastruktur Pendidikan di Indonesia: Tantangan dan Peluang". *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 10(1), 23-35.
- Rahayu, T., et al. (2023). "Hambatan Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka di Sekolah Dasar: Studi Kasus di Jawa Barat". *Jurnal Pengembangan Pendidikan*, 15(2), 56-68.
- Wijaya, H., et al. (2022). "Pengaruh Infrastruktur Pendidikan terhadap Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka". *Jurnal Inovasi*