

## **TEACHERS PERCEPTION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF *MERDEKA* CURRICULUM AT SMP IT FATHONA OKU BATURAJA AND SMP IT TUNAS CENDIKIA BATURAJA**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this research was to find out how teachers perception of Merdeka curriculum implementation at SMP IT Fathona OKU Baturaja and SMP IT Tunas Cendikia Baturaja. The design of this research is descriptive quantitative research. The technique sampling used in this research is a total sampling. The writer used a questionnaire to collect data. Based on the research results from the data analysis that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the teachers at SMP IT Fathona OKU Baturaja and SMP IT Tunas Cendikia Baturaja has a moderate perception of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The teachers understanding of the the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum stage are good so that they can deepen its implementation, have a good understanding of merdeka belajar, understand there is a reduction in content that is beneficial for both teachers and students, the learning process that adapts to the character and needs of students. The existence of this positive perception is a supporter of successful implementation merdeka belajar curriculum at SMP IT Fathona OKU Baturaja and SMP IT Tunas Cendikia Baturaja. The results of questionnaire showed that teachers at SMP IT Fathona OKU Baturaja and SMP IT Tunas Cendikia Baturaja has a positive perception and good appreciation of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

**Keyword: Teachers, Perception, Implementation, Merdeka Curriculum**

### **Introduction**

According to Saputra and Hadi (2022) the Merdeka Belajar curriculum is a form of improving the 2013 curriculum, of course getting various responses from teachers, students and parents of students. Each agreed and some disagreed with the changes in the curriculum which they felt were too fast to replace the 2013 curriculum. In addition, the readiness of teachers in dealing with curriculum changes is also very necessary to be considered. This is because large numbers of teachers are not ready to accept the new implementation of curriculum yet. The implementation of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum obviously becomes a new challenge for teachers to be able to face and implement it in teaching and learning activities.

In teaching, teacher perception is something that cannot be ignored to achieve appropriate learning goals. In other words, teachers as curriculum implementers have to train on implemented curriculum's principles, implementation approaches, objectives, evaluation and technical competencies (Erturk, 1994; Tasdemir, 2003 cited in Konokman, 2017). In contrast, the perception of the teachers is crucial to be considered in order to achieve those particular terms in teaching-learning process.

The advantages of the Merdeka Curriculum explained by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2021b) focus on essential material and develop student competence in its phases so that students can learn more deeply, meaningfully and fun, no rush. Learning is far more relevant and interactive through project activities providing wider opportunities for students to actively explore actual issues such as environmental, health, and other issues to support character development and competency profiles of Pancasila Students. According to him, the Merdeka curriculum carries the concept of "Freedom to Learn" which is different from the 2013 curriculum Sherly et al., (2020) means giving freedom to schools, teachers and students to be free to innovate, learn independent and creative, where this freedom starts from the teacher as the driving force.

Based on the results of observations by the writer in December 26, 2022, at the home Kemelak of one of the teacher who teaches at SMP IT Fathona Baturaja OKU and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja, stated that Merdeka Belajar Curriculum focuses on essential material and character development of the Pancasila Student Profile. Implementation of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum can be adjusted to the needs and level of readiness of each school. The difference is administrative documents. Curriculum 13 uses lesson plans while Merdeka Belajar Curriculum uses teaching MODULES. The learning system is the same, it's just that the class applies Pancasila values. With reference to learning objectives, learning objectives, and learning outcomes, it is proof that SMP IT Fathona Baturaja OKU and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja has implemented Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. Based on initial observations made by the writer at SMP IT Fathona Baturaja OKU and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja that the existence of an Merdeka Belajar curriculum provides opportunities for students, especially for teachers, to have the freedom to innovate, the freedom to study independently and creatively in order to achieve the expected goals.

Based on the background of the researchers above, it couldmbe concluded that the title of this research is "Teachers Perception of the Implementation of *Merdeka* Curriculum at SMP IT Fathona Baturaja OKU and SMP IT Tunas Cendikia Baturaja"

## **Methodology**

The design of this research is descriptive quantitative research. Descriptive study is defined as a study method that describes the characteristic of the population or phenomenon that is being studied (Hardani et al., 2020). In this study, the population consisted of all teachers at SMP IT Fathona and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja OKU. According to (Sugiyono, 2007: 124), total sampling

is a data collection technique in which the number of samples is the same as the number of population because the number of teachers at SMP IT Fathona and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja OKU is 21 students and the number is less than 100, the researcher chose all populations to be the sample this research. Therefore, researcher used total sampling to collect sample data.

To obtain the data needed in this study, the researcher uses data collection methods that is using Questionnaire, in this research researcher choose ranking scale including: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree(DA), and Strongly Disagree (SDA) to be filled in on questionnaire.

The researcher worked based on following indicators from Hadiansah (2022) in their research perception of merdeka curriculum, that consisted of six indicators, namely: (1) Launch of Merdeka Curriculum, (2) Primacy of Merdeka Curriculum, (3) Principles of design and Mechanism Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum (IKM), (4) Direction of Change in Merdeka Curriculum, (5) The Structure and Framework of Merdeka Curriculum, (6) Fulfillment of Workload and Arrangement of Teacher Linearity. And for the research used questionnaire to determine the teachers perception of the implementation Merdeka curriculum. To measure the validity of the questionnaire instrument in this study. The writer validated the instrument to the lecturer as a validator.

For analysis the research, the researcher used likert scale. According to Nemoto (2014) Likert scale is a psychometric scale that has multiple categories from which respondents choose to indicate their opinions, attitudes, or feelings about a particular issue. Four points are desirable for young respondents and for respondents with low motivation to complete the questionnaire because 4 point scales are easy to understand and they require less effort to answer. Its can see in the table bellow :

**Table 1**  
**Scale of Questionnaire**

No	Likert Scale	Caregory
1	1	Strongly Disagree
2	2	Disagree
3	3	Agree
4	4	Strongly Agree

*Source: Nemoto (2014)*

The formula for finding the percentage of questionnaire results with formula according to Sugiyono (2016) :

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100$$

P = percentage

F = frequency of each questionnaire answer

N = number of respondents

The results

This formulation will be carried out in steps based on the opinion of Sugiyono (2020: 19), namely as follows.

1) The percentages for scores or questionnaire criteria items

$$\frac{f \times \text{Skor}}{\text{Sampel} \times \text{Skor}} \times 100\%$$

2) Total score of each item

$$\frac{\text{Total Frequency}}{\text{Sample} \times \text{Score}} \times 100\%$$

To determine the percentage in the Implementation of Merdeka curriculum, the researcher used percentage calculations. These criteria can be seen in the following table.

**Tabel 2**  
**Implementation Category**

Interval	Scale		Category
	1-4	D-4	
86-100	4	4	Very good
76-85	3	3	Good
56-74	2	2	Fair
10-55	1	1	Enough

(Nurgiyantoro, 2016:253)

## Finding And Discussion

### A. Research Finding

The results of questionnaire showed that teachers at SMP IT Fathona Baturaja and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja has a positive perception and good appreciation of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The teachers understanding of the the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum stage are very good so that they can deepen its implementation, have a good understanding of independent learning, understand there is a reduction in content that is beneficial for both teachers and students, the learning process that adapts to the character and needs of students. The existence of this positive perception is a supporter of successful implementation merdeka belajar curriculum at SMP IT Fathona Baturaja and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja.

The percentage is obtained by adding up the percentage scores for Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree answers then dividing the maximum score ( $21 \times 4 = 84$ ) and then multiplying by 100%.

#### a. Stage The launch of Merdeka Curriculum

- 1) In the first statement the teachers who answered Strongly Agree were 9 teachers (90%), Agree were 9 teachers (90%), Disagree were 2 teachers (20%) , and as many as 1 teachers (10%) answered never. So the total percentage is  $68/84 \times 100\% = 80,95\%$ .
- 2) In the second statement, teachers who answered Strongly Agree were 10 teachers (100%), Agree were 10 teachers (100%), Disagree were 1 teachers (10%), and as many 0 teachers (%) answered never. So the total percentage is  $72/84 \times 100\% = 85,71\%$ .
- 3) In the third statement, teachers who answered Strongly Agree were 10 teachers (10%), Agree were 7 teachers (70%), Disagree were 2 teachers (20%) , and 2 teacher (20%) answered never. So the total percentage is  $67/84 \times 100\% = 79,76\%$ .

#### b. The Primacy Stage of the Merdeka Curriculum

- 4) In the teacher's statement "The learning system becomes more indepth, meaningful, not rushed and more fun", the teacher who answers Strongly Agree is 12 teachers (120%), Agree is 5 teachers (50%), Disagree is 2 teachers (20%), and those who answered never as many as 2 teachers (20%). So the total percentage is  $69/84 \times 100\% = 82,14\%$ .
- 5) In the teacher's statement "Teachers can teach according to the stages of achievement and development of students", the teacher who answers Strongly Agree is 11 teachers (110%), Agree is 9 teachers (90%), Disagree is 1 teachers (10%), and those who answered never as many as 0 teachers (0%). So the total percentage is  $74/84 \times 100\% = 86,90\%$ .
- 6) In the statement "Project-based learning provides broad opportunities for students to actively explore learning issues, the teacher who answers Strongly Agree is 12 teachers (120%), Agree is 6 teachers (60%), Disagree is 3 teachers (30%), and those who answered never were as many as 0 teachers

(%). So the total percentage is  $72/84 \times 100\% = 85,71\%$ .

**c. Stage Design Principles and Implementation Mechanisms of Merdeka Curriculum**

- 7) In the teacher's statement "Strengthen the independence of educators as controllers in the learning process", the teacher who answered Strongly Agree was 10 teachers (100%), Agree was 8 teachers (80%), Disagree was 2 teachers (20%), and 1 teachers (10%) answered never. So the total percentage is  $69/80 \times 100\% = 82,14\%$ .
- 8) In the teacher's statement "Letting go of control standards that are too binding and demand a homogeneous learning process in all educational units in Indonesia", the teacher who answered Strongly Agree was 11 teachers (110%), Agree was 9 teachers (90%), Disagree was 1 teachers (10%), and as many as 0 teachers (%) answered never. So the total percentage is  $73/84 \times 100\% = 86,90\%$ .
- 9) In the teacher's statement "Strengthen student agency or the rights and abilities of students to determine their learning process according to their abilities", teachers who answered Strongly Agree were 13 teachers (130%), Agree were 5 teachers (50%), Disagree were 3 teachers (30%), and as many as 0 teachers (%) answered never. So the total percentage is  $73/84 \times 100\% = 86,90\%$ .

**d. Stage of the Direction of Change in Merdeka Curriculum**

- 10) In the teacher's statement "Learning outside of project-based subjects Strengthening Pancasila Student Profiles", teachers who answered Strongly Agree were 12 teachers (120%), Agree were 7 teachers (70%), Disagree were 2 teachers (20%), and those who answered never were as many as 0 teachers (%). So the total percentage is  $73/84 \times 100\% = 86,90\%$ .
- 11) In the teacher's statement "Focus on competencies and essential materials", teachers who answer Strongly Agree are 9 teachers (90%), Agree are 9 teachers (90%), Disagree are 2 people teacher (20%), and 1 teachers (10%) answered never. So the total percentage is  $68/84 \times 100\% = 80,95\%$ .

**e. Structure and Framework of Merdeka Curriculum**

- 12) In the statement "The curriculum structure and learning principles set by the government are very general and abstract so that educational units have a lot of flexibility to develop them", the teacher who answers Strongly Agree is 13 teachers (130%), Agree is 8 teachers (80%). So the total percentage is  $76/84 \times 100\% = 90,48\%$ .
- 13) In the teacher's statement "The curriculum framework set by the government is minimal and more guiding than regulating precisely", the teacher who answered Strongly Agree was 11 teachers (110%), Agree was 8 teachers (80%), Disagree was 2 teachers (20%), and those who answered never were as many as 0 teachers (%). So the total percentage is  $72/84 \times 100\% = 85,71\%$ .

**f. Fulfillment of Teacher Workload and Linearity Arrangement**

- 14) In the teacher's statement "Plan, implement and assess the results of learning or mentoring", teachers who answered Strongly Agree were 9 teachers (90%), Agree were 10 teachers (100%), Disagree as many as 2 teachers (20%). So the total percentage is  $70/84 \times 100\% = 83,33\%$ .

15) In the teacher's statement "Guiding/training students, carrying out additional tasks and carrying out main tasks", the teacher who answered Strongly Agree was 11 teachers (110%), Agree was 8 teachers (80%), Disagree was 2 teachers (20%). So the total percentage is  $72/84 \times 100\% = 85,71\%$ .

**Table 3**  
**The Distribution of Questionnaire' Result of Teachers perception of Merdeka Curriculum Implementation at SMP IT Fathona OKU and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja**

Indicators	Total Score	Percentage	Category
Launch of Merdeka Curriculum	69	82,14	Good
The Primacy of Merdeka Curriculum	71,33	84,92	Good
Principles of Design and Implementation Mechanism of Merdeka Curriculum	71,67	85,52	Good
Direction of Change in the Merdeka Curriculum	70,50	83,93	Good
Structure and Framework of the Merdeka Curriculum	74	88,1	Very Good
Fulfillment of Teacher Workload and Linearity Arrangement	71	84,52	Good
Total	427,5	509,13	Good
Mean	71,25	84,85	

## B. Discussion

Teachers must understand the significance of the merdeka belajar curriculum which is the first thing that must be done so that the implementation can run smoothly and respond to changes in the curriculum in a professional manner and is part of the teacher's pedagogical abilities. As stated by Anggila (2022) one of the teacher's pedagogical abilities that must be mastered is understanding the curriculum, with a new curriculum, teachers need to learn and adapt (Anggila, 2022). Curriculum change in its implementation is not easy, it requires understanding and readiness. This can be obtained through socialization and the process it goes through.

The results of questionnaire showed that teachers at SMP IT Fathona Baturaja and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja has a positive perception and good appreciation of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The teachers' understanding of the the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum stage are very good so that they can deepen its

implementation, have a good understanding of independent learning, understand there is a reduction in content that is beneficial for both teachers and students, the learning process that adapts to the character and needs of students. The existence of this positive perception is a supporter of successful implementation merdeka belajar curriculum at SMP IT Fathona Baturaja and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja. The result of this study is inline with Hadiansah (2022) study, where the teachers' perception of Merdeka Curriculum which were indicated of 6 parts namely launch of merdeka curriculum, the primacy of merdeka curriculum, principles of design and implementation mechanism of merdeka curriculum, direction of change in the merdeka curriculum, structure and framework of the merdeka curriculum, fulfillment of teacher workload and linearity arrangement was moderate.

### Conclusion

Based on the research results from the data analysis that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the teachers at SMP IT Fathona Baturaja and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja has a moderate perception of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The teachers' understanding of the the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum stage are good so that they can deepen its implementation, have a good understanding of independent learning, understand there is a reduction in content that is beneficial for both teachers and students, the learning process that adapts to the character and needs of students. The existence of this positive perception is a supporter of successful implementation merdeka belajar curriculum at SMP IT Fathona Baturaja and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja. The results of questionnaire showed that teachers at SMP IT Fathona Baturaja and SMP IT Tuncen Baturaja has a moderate perception of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

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