



Implementation of Collaborative Learning Strategies in the Independent Learning Curriculum at Boarding Schools

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Abstrak

Learning with the Free Learning policy at Al Muttaqin Buper Islamic Boarding School aims to enhance graduates' competencies, both in terms of hard skills and soft skills. This, of course, provides relevance to the needs of the modern era. The experimental learning program, which offers a flexible pathway, is expected to serve as a facility for students to develop their potential according to their talents and passions. This research is intended as a manifestation of the Free Learning Curriculum policy by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. Additionally, it addresses the challenges of implementing the curriculum in the era of globalization at Al Muttaqin Buper Islamic Boarding School. The research utilizes a literature and document study approach. Data will be collected through literature sources and document studies, which will be analyzed and presented in the discussion. The analysis of this policy provides opportunities to produce students who can play a role in religion and the nation, contributing to the generation of the nation.

Kata Kunci: *Merdeka belajar, Pondok Pesantren, Pembelajaran*

Abstract

This study aims to determine whether there is a relationship between peer interaction with the assertive behavior of students of SMPN 8 Maja in class VIII of the 2022/2023 academic year. The research method used is a correlational quantitative research method to be able to see the relationship between the x and y variables. The population used in this study was students of class VIII SMPN 8 Maja. The sample used consisted of 31 samples with saturated sampling technique. In testing the hypothesis using parametric data analysis with the Product Moment Correlation method, a Sig value of 0.003 is obtained. Decision making based on product moment correlation test criteria is if the Sig. < 0.05 then correlated. Based on the results of the product moment correlation test, it can be seen that the value of Sig. 0.003 < 0.05 which means that peer interaction variables with assertive behavior variables are correlated. Meanwhile, the Pearson Correlation value was 0.521. With a significance level of 5%. So it can be seen that between peer interaction variables and assertive behavior variables have a moderate positive correlation. So it can be concluded that the higher the peer interaction that students have, the higher their assertive behavior. Vice versa, the lower the peer interaction, the lower the assertive behavior of students.

Keywords: *Assertive Behavior, Peer Interaction, Student*

Introduction

Giving autonomy to the education sector and liberating it from bureaucracy,

as well as providing freedom for students to choose their desired field of study, can undoubtedly create opportunities to nurture high-achieving students who can contribute to the nation. The Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Nadiem Makarim, has expressed the policy titled "Merdeka Belajar" (Free Learning), which aims to enhance the competencies of graduates by equipping them with both relevant hard and soft skills needed to compete in this era of globalization.

Preparing the younger generation as future leaders who excel in terms of competence and character is a dream of the nation. Therefore, the implementation of an experiential learning program through flexible pathways provides students with facilities to develop their potentials, especially in line with their talents and aspirations.

The Merdeka Belajar policy is reflected in the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 3 of 2020 concerning the National Standards for Higher Education. This regulation can be implemented by various parties involved, such as universities and Islamic boarding schools (Pondok Pesantren), that are ready to educate the younger generation with high competence. For the managers of Islamic boarding schools, it is essential to provide facilities and resources for students to obtain education in both religious and general knowledge fields in their chosen boarding schools.

The Merdeka Belajar program aims to provide autonomy to students in acquiring knowledge. According to the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), "Merdeka" has three important meanings:

1. Free from colonialism, slavery and also the aspects that restrain
2. Stand alone or not exposed to demands from anywhere
3. Not bound and also not dependent on other people and freely.

According to Sanjaya (2010), learning is a process that occurs within

individuals, particularly in the mental aspect, which can bring about changes in behavior, as stated by Bashori (2017). Mental activities can occur due to interactions between individuals and their environment, often unconsciously. Learning, in general, brings about changes in individuals through experiences and is not solely determined by physical development or inherent characteristics since birth. Learning is a process of behavioral change related to knowledge, skills, and attitudes that result from practice and experience.

Merdeka Belajar, on the other hand, carries the meaning of providing students with the opportunity to learn freely and comfortably, enabling them to acquire knowledge in a relaxed, joyful, peaceful, and stress-free manner. Merdeka Belajar also takes into account the talents of students without forcing them to acquire knowledge beyond their capabilities.

Assigning burdens to students beyond their capabilities contradicts the essence of Merdeka Belajar. This approach does not allow students to fully express their competencies and skills. When the freedom to learn is fulfilled, independent learning occurs. Therefore, according to Prasetyo et al. (2020), educational institutions, such as Islamic boarding schools or schools, that implement Merdeka Belajar can be referred to as "merdeka" (free) schools. Creating a sense of comfort for students should be realized through all components within the school and community environment. This can encourage the realization of freedom in learning.

According to Setiawan (2016), "merdeka" (freedom) has three important dimensions:

1. Freedom of will, which means suggesting, commanding, and recommending things that are good and acceptable to society.
2. Freedom of thought, which involves expressing thoughts freely, including

prohibiting, withholding, criticizing, and abstaining from evil.

3. Freedom of the soul, which refers to a liberated and fearless soul.

In the context and concept of Merdeka Belajar, it implies that the teaching-learning process should be conducted by fostering the desire and enthusiasm to realize freedom of expression and freedom from fear. By emphasizing the concept of Merdeka Belajar, education can become critical and high-quality. Furthermore, this approach can be transformative, effective, and applicable for students.

Students who learn based on the concept of Merdeka Belajar will always have optimism, energy, a forward-looking perspective, and creativity to explore new things. They will be hungry and thirsty for knowledge. According to Herbert (2019), students with such characteristics have a strong desire to read books easily and eagerly, just as they enjoy their meals.

Students are expected to face challenges in the learning process and have the spirit to never give up before trying. They should not solely rely on teachers, parents, or schools with their own systems or rules. With this concept, students are expected to become individuals who bring benefits, influence, and joy.

Method

This research adopts a qualitative approach, where data will be collected through a literature review or literature study method. Data will be gathered by examining literature sources such as articles, documents, and books, which will serve as the data for the research process. Examining online literature sources is one of the methods employed in this study. The collected data will be analyzed and discussed in accordance with the research theme.

The focus of this research will be on the implementation of Merdeka Belajar in the learning process of students in Islamic boarding schools (pondok pesantren). The

primary data used in this study is the curriculum policy regarding Merdeka Belajar issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Meanwhile, secondary data used in this research are obtained from various international and national journal articles, as well as relevant laws and books that support the success of the research.

The data collection technique plays a crucial role in identifying the discourse of the journal articles. There are several stages involved, such as collecting data related to the theme and analyzing the data to draw conclusions about the main issues addressed in the policy. The development of this research can contribute to the creation of students who are capable of competing in the modern world.

Top of Form

Results and Discussion

The implementation of the concept of "Merdeka Belajar" (Freedom to Learn) is in accordance with Regulation No. 3 of 2020, Article 15, Paragraph 1, issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture. This regulation states that within and outside the study programs, various programs can provide convenience to students, especially those in Islamic boarding schools (pondok pesantren), to obtain learning that is aligned with their competencies.

However, the implementation of "Merdeka Belajar" has not been fully realized in both pondok pesantren and Islamic higher education institutions. This is due to the significant financial factors and funding required for its implementation. The high costs involved pose a major obstacle in the implementation process of the program. If an institution is able to implement and allocate sufficient funds, it can certainly achieve satisfactory results.

There are several pondok pesantren and higher education institutions, such as Al Muttaqin Islamic boarding school, that are attempting to apply and implement

these policies. Collaboration mechanisms between pondok pesantren and external study programs, as well as other policies related to the "Merdeka Belajar" program, can be one way to implement it. Appreciation for these efforts presents a unique atmosphere and positive intentions within a bureaucratic system that can be quite challenging.

Al Muttaqin Islamic boarding school itself is not like regular schools with their own learning hours. Pondok pesantren has its own learning system that instills enthusiasm, discipline, and independence in its students, especially in relation to the teaching and learning process. Practically, this disciplined process fosters independent learning within the students.

Independent learning is one of the programs under "Merdeka Belajar" initiated by the government. In this context, "Merdeka Belajar" means that students or santri can engage in learning activities independently without depending on others. This independence in learning is commonly referred to as autodidacticism, where students learn outside the classroom without assistance from others.

The process of "Merdeka Belajar" serves as a motivation for santri to learn freely and independently without relying on others or being self-taught, utilizing resources such as books, notebooks, and assignments. This activity is carried out to achieve learning objectives and acquire knowledge with self-awareness. Santri are aware of what they want to learn and what they want to explore.

Of course, the implementation of the "Merdeka Belajar" program is not arbitrary for santri. There are several criteria that need to be met for independent learning to take place. Santri must demonstrate a responsible attitude in carrying out the program. Additionally, they should be able to schedule their study time and set their learning goals. Santri should also be able to self-evaluate and control the materials they learn in an independent manner.

Some respondents who were asked as the subjects of observation stated that it is expected for santri (students in Islamic boarding schools) to have initiative in learning, to monitor and evaluate their lessons. They should also understand the process of independent learning and the outcomes of their learning. Teaching and learning activities in the pondok pesantren should create an atmosphere of independent learning for the santri, so that the process of "Merdeka Belajar" can be implemented effectively.

From the observations conducted, there are several programs in Al Muttaqin Islamic boarding school that support and correlate with "Merdeka Belajar." These programs promote independent learning and encourage the santri to be disciplined. However, the role of educators should not be neglected. Even though the santri learn independently, there is supervision from teachers outside the classroom. This allows the santri to study at specific times.

During these designated study times, the teachers periodically supervise the santri to ensure their discipline in independent learning. However, the teachers or educators do not interfere too much in the learning process. Their task is to provide supervision so that the santri can continue to learn independently and be disciplined.

The development of educators also plays a crucial role in supporting the "Merdeka Belajar" program. Based on several interviews with respondents, the improvement in the quality of graduates from Al Muttaqin Islamic boarding school is one of the outcomes of the development of educators. It becomes one way to implement the curriculum of the boarding school.

The development of teachers' abilities and competencies is an essential part of supporting the achievements and improvement of the quality of Al Muttaqin Islamic boarding school. The goal of this development is to benefit the educators in implementing and integrating the

curriculum to enhance teaching skills. This allows for the implementation of new methods and strategies that align with the "Merdeka Belajar" program.

Educators, especially teachers, have autonomy in the classroom and play a role in reforming behaviors within the class. This is done in order to develop the talents, skills, and competencies of the santri. Teachers determine the change in behavior of the santri or students and also serve as role models in presenting perfect competencies.

These educators have a crucial role in preparing human resources in the nation's development. Teachers have the ability to prepare learning materials for their students, making them key figures in nation-building. With a developed nation, a bright future can be achieved. Therefore, educators must fulfill their functions properly.

Improving the quality of teachers' performance in implementing teaching activities in schools is related to their roles and functions in the "Merdeka Belajar" program, which can enhance the skills of educators and students. This improvement in abilities is a step towards supporting the implementation of learning activities in schools, where teachers need to follow academic potential and enhance their skills and motivation in delivering curriculum-based learning materials.

The understanding of teachers regarding the "Merdeka Belajar" program is an effort in the application and evaluation process for the santri. Implementation should be carried out as a means to achieve educational goals, especially in the learning objectives pursued in the pesantren. This can provide effectiveness and efficiency in achieving the intended learning outcomes in the Islamic boarding school.

Implementing the "Merdeka Belajar" program at the pesantren level is indeed a part of the education quality improvement program that aims to effectively and efficiently manage the implementation.

The implementation is expected to realize educational quality supported by fundamental changes in the management process of the pesantren or school. This implementation also provides knowledge about the role of teachers in the execution and planning, as well as the development of learning activities in the Islamic boarding school or school.

Teachers serve as educators who possess competencies in pedagogy and personality development. They should also have competencies in social and professional realms. These competencies can be analyzed and derived based on the essence of teachers, which consist of feelings, efforts, and ideas that are synonymous with professional competencies. The main factor is closely related to social competency.

The teaching and learning process in the pesantren is different from the general education system. This process is designed to develop the competencies of the santri. All the potential possessed by the santri can grow larger and be freed from fear, anxiety, and tension. To create such a learning environment, various measures can be taken, such as ensuring health aspects in the classroom together and in independent study spaces.

A pleasant learning process can occur through varied instructional management. By prioritizing relevant teaching models and methods, teachers can stimulate the learning motivation of the students in implementing the "Merdeka Belajar" program. This is in line with Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005, which states that the learning process in educational institutions should be conducted inspiringly, interactively, and with challenges to motivate the santri.

Santri or students are expected to actively participate and provide space for initiatives, creativity, and independence in line with their interests, talents, and psychological and physical development. This indicates that the teaching and learning process built by educators follows

a comprehensive learning stage to develop and create well-rounded santri.

Now, how can independent learning or "Merdeka Belajar" be implemented successfully? Assessment of learning outcomes plays a crucial role. In achieving the learning objectives, assessment is a planned activity to evaluate the extent of progress made by the santri in independent learning.

Assessment of learning outcomes serves as a consideration or valuation based on specific criteria. The purpose of assessment is to provide feedback to the santri and to evaluate the effectiveness of their independent learning process. Educators need to understand several types of assessment within the context of "Merdeka Belajar":

1. Normative assessment

This assessment is usually conducted at the end of the learning program to evaluate the extent of success in the independent learning process by the santri.

2. Summative assessment

This assessment is conducted at the end of a unit or period, such as the end of a semester or academic year. It aims to evaluate the outcomes achieved by the santri in their independent or "Merdeka Belajar" learning process. However, this assessment focuses on the products or results of the learning rather than the process itself.

3. Diagnostic assessment

The purpose of diagnostic assessment is to identify weaknesses and determine the causes behind them. It is carried out as part of guidance and remedial teaching if students' grades decline or if they experience difficulties.

4. Selective assessment

This assessment is used for selection purposes to determine the next steps after completing the education program at the pesantren.

5. Placement assessment

This assessment aims to determine the prerequisite skills required for

independent learning programs and classroom learning. It emphasizes students' readiness to face the independent learning process.

These assessment stages provide an understanding of the santri's comprehension of the materials covered during the independent learning process. Teachers can conduct various activities to assess the santri's progress, such as:

Asking questions: Engaging the santri through questions is a form of assessment that allows educators to gauge the extent of the santri's learning progress.

Reviewing the independent learning process: If the santri is unable to answer questions, the independent learning process needs to be reviewed until they understand the material.

Assigning tasks: To enhance the santri's understanding of the material, tasks related to the learned material can be assigned as part of the independent learning process.

By employing these assessment activities, educators can evaluate and support the santri's learning progress within the framework of "Merdeka Belajar".

Conclusion

The responsibility of all systems and components in Al Muttaqin Islamic Boarding School in the process of independent learning has a crucial role in developing the students' learning abilities. Self-directed learning within the students themselves can encourage learners to have discipline in their studies. This can help develop the competencies and skills of the students. Al Muttaqin Islamic Boarding School supports the promotion of self-directed learning in the Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn) program initiated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbud) as a way to build competencies among students, from school to university level, in Indonesia.

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