

## **Strategy The principal's Leadership Style in Implementing “Merdeka Belajar” in Schools**

**Mastur**

IAI Pangeran Diponegoro Nganjuk, Indonesia  
masturiaipd@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

*Curriculum changes are part of improving the existing education system in Indonesia. Principal leadership has an important role and position in achieving educational goals. This study aims to discuss the principal's leadership style in implementing "merdeka belajar" in schools. This research uses the literature study method, which collects materials from books, journals, articles, and other sources related to the principal's leadership strategy in realizing Independent Learning in schools. The study results show that implementing the independent curriculum makes teachers more professional through various coaching and training. The principal carries out his role as a mediator and motivator for teacher participation in curriculum training. The principal also acts as a participant in regular meetings or discussions. The principal also supervises evaluators in implementing the independent curriculum. The factor faced by school principals is the lack of smoothness of the internet network as a means for teachers to use technology in learning. School principals consider the expected results of the theories in the research in making decisions to answer problems and improve the quality or quality of education by implementing an independent curriculum.*

**Keywords:** Curriculum Implementation, Free Learning Curriculum, Merdeka Belajar

---

### **Article Info**

Received date: 8 April 2023

Revised date: 2 Juni 2023

Accepted date: 27 Juni 2023

### **INTRODUCTION**

Education in Indonesia underwent rapid changes during the Covid-19 pandemic (Fathurrahman et al., 2022). The government and education units are trying their best to prepare the complete learning process for students (Cahyono, 2022). Principals have a strategic role in improving the quality of learning in schools (Isnawan & Sudirman, 2022; Salim et al., 2022). Through his duties as a supervisor and leader in the school, the principal must ensure that students get the best service according to their needs (Pratikno et al., 2022). During the learning recovery period, schools can determine the chosen curriculum. The curriculum options offered by the

government are the complete 2013 curriculum, the emergency curriculum, the simplified 2013 curriculum and the independent curriculum. The curriculum is seen as a goal, context and strategy in learning through a program of developing learning instruments or materials, social interaction and systematic learning techniques within educational institutions (Aryani et al., 2022).

The quality of education in Indonesia is still relatively low compared to other countries in the ASEAN region (Fuadi & Irdalisa, 2021). This is proven by research conducted by the Global Innovation Index in 2018 (Supriatna et al., 2023). The research results show Indonesia is seventh after Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand,

Vietnam, Brunei and the Philippines. This fact makes the Indonesian government continue to strive to build a quality national education system. Good (Hardiansyah, 2022b). Moreover, Indonesia has a vision of becoming the country with the fifth-largest GDP per capita in the world, which will reach USD 23,199 in 2045 (Hardiansyah & Zainuddin, 2022). This achievement will be difficult if the human resources are not supportive, have no skills and are of low quality. In fact, through quality education, human resources can increase the most important and influential virtues or privileges (Hardiansyah, 2022a). Ki Hajar Dewantara, the Father of Indonesian Education, emphasized that education must encourage students' free will to form a free, independent, and hardworking generation to create new habits that are beneficial in society (Fuadi & Irdalisa, 2021). In his view, the Father of Education emphasizes that education is a process for cultivating ethical, intellectual, and physiological abilities. In this regard, the Government of Indonesia is also trying to realize the ideals of education in Indonesia by continuing to improve a set of systems and regulations for its people (Hayudinna, 2022).

Nadiem Anwar Makarim, Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, in his 2019 National Teacher's Day Commemoration speech, conveyed several essential points related to the implementation of education that should be realized. This includes teachers being encouraged to motivate students to discuss, not just listen. Teachers are also expected to be able to provide opportunities for students to share information on material that has been studied from various sources of teaching materials (Aryani et al., 2022). Teachers are also expected to be able to voice ideas for social service activities that include the whole class. Along with that, he also advised educators to be able to detect a student's talent that had not been seen (Tuasikal et al., 2021). Teachers are also expected to be able to

help each other when experiencing difficulties; from what he said in the speech, an educational concept known as Merdeka Learning was born. According to Nadiem, Freedom to Learn is the freedom to think, which essentially happens to the teacher and is transmitted to students (Firmansyah et al., 2023). The Freedom to Learn Policy has four main programs, namely 1) National Standard School Exams, 2) National Examination, 3) Learning Implementation Plan, and 4) Zoning New Student Acceptance Regulations (Aida et al., 2022).

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2018 released Indonesian students in the ranks of the lowest scores on literacy, numerical (mathematic) and science (science) assessments. According to Minister Nadiem, this happened because there was an error in measuring the education system's success in Indonesia. In the National Examination, the emphasis is on memorizing ability, not reasoning ability. In applying for the independent learning program in schools, teachers are required to be able to be fun friends for students. In this way, the teacher is expected to be able to discover the potential possessed by their students, including reasoning abilities (Hardiansyah & Wahdian, 2023). This change in the role of the teacher will undoubtedly change the leadership style of the principal in the school so that teachers can carry out their role while remaining in line with the school's vision and mission. In implementing the independent learning curriculum, the principal functions as an Educator, Manager, Administrator, Supervisor, Leader, Innovator, and Motivator (Hardiansyah & Mulyadi, 2022). In the framework of implementing the independent curriculum, the role of the principal is vital in empowering all school resources for the successful implementation of the independent curriculum (Hardiansyah & AR, 2022). The success factor for implementing the Independent Curriculum is

the school principal's leadership, especially its role in implementing education and supervising (Cahyono, 2022).

Several matters related to the Program activities of the Mobilizing School as a development step of the independent learning curriculum, consisting of five interrelated interventions, including (1) consultative and asymmetric Assistance activities Partnership programs regulated by the Ministry of Education and Culture and local governments, the Ministry of Education and Culture assists in the implementation of Driving School. (2) Provide strengthening of human resources in schools, strengthening for school principals, strengthening of school supervisors, pupils or supervisors, and teachers through intensive training and coaching or mentoring activities, namely one-to-one with trainers from the Ministry of Education and Culture. (3) Learning activities through a new paradigm with the notion of learning that focuses on strengthening competence and developing character according to Pancasila values through activities inside and outside the classroom in a lesson. (4) Data-based planning, namely school-based management, namely planning based on school self-reflection. (5) School Digitalization means using various digital platforms to reduce complexity, increase efficiency, add inspiration, and a customized approach (Lie et al., 2022). SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung is one of the first batches of driving schools to apply the independent learning curriculum. The Mobilization School activities aim to realize the vision of Education in Indonesia in realizing Indonesia to become developed, sovereign, independent, and with a personality to create Pancasila Students (Marliana et al., 2021). Various driving school activities focus on developing student learning outcomes holistically, including competence (literacy and numeracy) and character, starting with superior human resources, namely

principals and teachers (Fathurrahman et al., 2022).

The results of preliminary observations show that in the implementation of the independent learning curriculum at SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung, there are several problems. The problems referred to include (1) the limited competence of teachers related to the implementation of the independent curriculum, (2) the lack of optimal implementation of differentiation learning according to the objectives of the independent curriculum, (3) the lack of use of IT in learning the implementation of the independent curriculum. Research conducted by (Rizal, 2022) explains that the factor for school progress lies in the leadership style of the school principal to make a significant contribution to the school. According to (Hardiansyah, 2022c), the principal's leadership style determine school performance. Therefore school performance is related to the leadership style of the principal. Before conducting this research, researchers look at research related to problems that researchers find in the field and make updates that previous researchers have not researched. Previous research focused on principal school leadership but did not look at school-based management; therefore, the researcher added this component by collecting data through school principals and people involved in the school (Isnawan & Sudirman, 2022). Therefore it is an essential leadership style in schools to develop and maintain existing school-based management.

Based on the problems that have been described, the role of the principal is vital. Efforts that can be made are regular supervision and holding regular meetings to discuss the findings as a form of coaching and improving the implementation of the independent curriculum. In addition, teacher training can be carried out online and face-to-face, as well as peer tutoring training. Researchers want to examine the principal's leadership style in

implementing the independent learning curriculum with existing problems and obstacles. This research is related to implementing the independent curriculum in driving schools. This research is expected to be a policy reference in educational institutions in terms of implementing an independent curriculum so that it is achieved according to the school's vision and mission. The role of the principal is vital in guiding the process of learning the independent curriculum referring to the profile of Pancasila students aiming to produce graduates who are competent and uphold character values. A teacher's challenge in implementing an independent curriculum in a driving school, for example, is that the teacher must take the time to build creative, innovative and challenging learning every day. Involving teachers in the curriculum development process is essential to align curriculum content with the needs of students in the classroom.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The research conducted in this study uses the Literature Study method. Literature Study is a study used to collect data or information through literary sources, such as books, journals, articles, and other sources related to the topic of study (Supriati et al., 2022). The literature study systematically and in an organized manner the concepts found in the issue of school principal leadership in realizing the Freedom to Learn program. Literature on this topic was obtained from various sources, including books, journals, articles, and other references. This article discusses the principal's leadership style strategy in implementing "merdeka belajar" in schools that implement independent learning in the learning process at school.

## RESULT

### Leadership in Supervision in schools

Leadership is a process to influence individuals and groups to work together to

achieve predetermined goals. Leadership is an effort to influence a person or group toward achieving a goal in a specific situation. Leadership is needed so that the purposes of the institution can be achieved (M. Mastur et al., 2022). Institutions or organizations such as schools can stand in the right direction if there is a leader. Leadership in education has at least two keys, namely, leadership as a science and the art in leading individuals or groups. Second, leadership can influence and move others to achieve common (A. I. Mastur & Bambang Budi Wiyono, 2022). A leader will carry out the leadership process in different ways. As stated by (M. Mastur, 2023a) that leadership starts with giving influence to others. The giving of this influence is carried out differently to produce different levels of leadership according to the conditions of the subordinates they lead. This is in line with (Salim et al., 2022) that the democratic leadership style is a way for leaders to involve their members in making decisions, solving a problem by deliberation, being willing to listen to opinions and respecting every potential that its members have to achieve a goal. Meanwhile, the democratic leadership style is the ability to influence other people to cooperate in achieving the goals set through various activities that will be carried out jointly between leaders and subordinates (Aryani et al., 2022).

The principal is a supervisor and leader to continue making changes in the school's innovation (Firmansyah et al., 2023). The principal is a supervisor; of course, he must be competent to arrange programs in the supervision of learning and can be an improvement from the supervision results. Learning supervision is a motivation or encouragement given by supervisors, namely school leaders as supervisors, for educators and staff to improve and enhance the atmosphere of learning activities, including providing stimulus, coordinating and guiding so that learning objectives are achieved efficiently and

effectively (Prakoso et al., 2021). Supervision in education is divided into 2 types of supervision: academic and administrative. Supervision of the academic field carried out by the principal is a mentoring activity intended to improve personal conditions and create a better educational atmosphere to achieve learning goals. Administrative supervision is its application focused on teacher teaching performance (teacher-centred), which includes aspects of teacher teaching abilities, including skills in controlling educational planning, teaching skills, lesson modules, and personal social or communication in relationships with students (Supriatna et al., 2023).

Principals with a democratic leadership style tend to be open, giving opportunities to education staff to play an active role in planning, making decisions, and assessing the performance of school principals. A democratic school principal guides and directs, and assists education staff (Aida et al., 2022). The principal at SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung makes plans with the teachers regarding the independent learning program, calculates the budget that must be prepared, and discusses with each other if there are obstacles to implementing independent play in the classroom. The principal of the school has carried out his role well. Principals motivate teachers and provide training to support teacher knowledge and skills through workshops, seminars, and online training. Meanwhile, the principal at Islamic Kindergarten 01 Kauman provides positive examples or role models, provides rewards for teachers who excel, does not put too much pressure on teachers, provides opportunities and support for teachers to develop their potential, and facilitates teachers in implementing the independent learning program. (Hardiansyah & Zainuddin, 2022) states that the principal has the role of educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator.

The management carried out by the principal in implementing independent learning is by inviting foundations, teachers and parents to play an active role in the success of the independent learning program in schools. Collaboration between parents and teachers can help facilitate the learning process for children (Pratikno et al., 2022). In addition, school principals and teachers also plan and prepare annual, semester, weekly and daily lesson plans. This aligns with (Cahyono, 2022) that effective management is a factor in achieving good management. This management includes planning, organizing, leading, controlling, and using resources to achieve predetermined goals. In implementing independent learning in schools, a school principal must be able to independently lead and manage educator resources so that they are creative and innovative in managing classes and learning (Lie et al., 2022). The two school principals accompanied, provided facilities and set an example for teachers to self-development through training (M. Mastur, 2023b).

Educators and teachers must develop interesting, challenging, critical, creative, collaborative, and innovative learning models (Marliana et al., 2021). Teachers at both schools prepared play activities according to children's needs, including making guava juice, painting with banana fronds, and making batik. Principals and teachers of the two schools have understood independent learning, where children are free to choose play activities according to children's interests without coercion but still pay attention to the rules given by the teacher. This aligns with Handayani, S. W., & Handayani, S. D. (2019) that independent learning means children can play according to their interests, explore, solve problems, try to do something, and conduct experimental tests. (Ahid & Sufirmansyah, 2022) also added that children are free to play comfortably, calmly, and happily without coercion, which still pays attention to children's

talents and interests. However, there are several obstacles to implementing independent play in both schools, including limited facilities and infrastructure, costs, and teacher knowledge in implementing independent learning. Even though they have received various training or education and training programs, teachers at both schools need help implementing them.

The independent learning curriculum has an important role because it is a learning process that refers to the needs of students. The independent learning curriculum policy was initiated due to the co-19 pandemic in Indonesia. The education manager, namely the school principal, faces a big challenge in understanding the implementation of the independent learning curriculum in schools. Implementation of distance education, schools also need to adapt to curriculum changes. According to Government Regulation Number 57 of 2021 concerning National Education Standards article 38 paragraph 2 it is described in curriculum development in schools as contained in paragraph 1 tried with the principle of diversification by the Education Unit, regional capabilities, and students (Tuasikal et al., 2021). Changes must adjust to the readiness of the education unit. So that education unit managers feel free of policies governing independent learning. The national education system explains that the curriculum is raised based on the diversification contained in academic units. This means that schools have a very large space to plan the learning process in their schools.

Therefore, the principal and his team have the authority to develop a curriculum according to the expertise of the school. Educating students is a responsibility for an educator that cannot be postponed. Students are the nation's generation who will face changes in science, technology, and globalization anytime. The birth of an independent learning curriculum answered the need for an adaptive curriculum.

Curriculum that can be carried out according to school expertise and reflection.

### **The role of the Principal in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Schools**

The transformation of education in Indonesia starts with learning independence. The Ministry of Education and Culture has issued Circular Number 1 of 2020 concerning the Freedom of Learning Policy in Determining Student Graduation and Admission of New Students for the 2020/2021 Academic Year. The policy for determining student graduation is episode 1, which marks the beginning of implementing the independent learning policy. The essence of the independent learning curriculum is to create a student-centred learning process. Launching these independent learning curriculum policies coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. Education managers, especially school principals, face extraordinary challenges in understanding the implementation of this independent learning. Besides implementing distance learning, schools need to adapt to curriculum changes.

The principal can be defined as a functional teacher who is given the task of knowing the school where the teaching and learning process is held or the place where interactions are formed between the teacher giving the lesson and the students receiving the lesson. Lead means moving, focusing, guiding, protecting, fostering, sharing, and others. The intention to lead is leadership, namely the ability to mobilize internal and external resources to achieve school goals to the fullest (Hayudinna, 2022). The researcher concludes from expert opinion that the principal means a profession like a teacher, but has the additional task of being a leader in an educational institution or school, tasked with providing direction and encouragement to teachers, staff, and students as well as the components that exist within the institution. To realize the goals according to the institution he leads.

The role of the principal at SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung in developing the independent learning curriculum as a first-generation driving school includes efforts made by the principal to direct the school community to have the same perception of the essence of the independent learning curriculum and to create or foster collaboration between school members and work together from the school with external parties (Hardiansyah et al., 2022). However, with the implementation of the independent learning curriculum, there needs to be more wealth in understanding the independent learning curriculum, especially related to lesson planning, namely determining TP, ATP, and doing learning modules. This is very important for an educator to understand to achieve competencies that students in learning outcomes must master. Based on the observations, other problems also arise, namely the need for understanding the implementation of the learning curriculum, especially the application of strengthening Pancasila student profiles and the lack of optimal application of differentiation learning in the classroom due to the variety of characters and each teacher's understanding of the profile of strengthening Pancasila students and learning differentiation that must be applied in the classroom. This problem was seen after the principal carried out his role as a supervisor who had been scheduled, especially the implementation of special supervision for grade 10, which had implemented the independent learning curriculum. Of course, in line with what was conveyed by (Hayudinna, 2022), supervisors' main roles are coordinators, consultants, group leaders and evaluators.

Based on the results of interviews with the principal at SMK 1, Rejotangan Tulungagung as the developer of the Merdeka Learning curriculum. School leaders participate in many activities to support the independent learning program and to better understand the characteristics and development of the

independent learning curriculum. The driving school has a goal, namely a program to realize the vision of Indonesian Education so that it is more advanced, sovereign, independent, and has the personality of creating Pancasila Students. To facilitate the implementation of the evaluation, the following CIPP observation sheet for driving schools has been adjusted using the Context, Input, Process and Product evaluation model (Salim et al., 2022). Therefore, the various activities attended by school principals included: (1) Workshop activities 0 (29 and 30 November 2021) on expectations of concerns and driving school strategies. (2) The first workshop activities (14-15 December 2021) regarding data collection strategies to improve the quality of learning. (3) Third Workshop activities (19-20 February 2022) on social and emotional learning that honours children's rights. (4) Fourth Workshop Activity (16-17 March 2022) on asset mapping to design a pro-student school vision and mission. (5) The activities of the fifth workshop (12-13 April 2022) design a vision, mission, and program according to the needs and characteristics of students. (6) Activities of the sixth workshop (15-16 May 2022) Mapping and analysis of stakeholders who support school programs. Workshop activities are continuing until May. Workshop activities have been attended 7 times to increase competence related to the independent learning curriculum. The other activities carried out by the principal with the independent curriculum development team are (1) Learning Committee Training Activities monthly with field teachers, supervisors and school principals. (2) Coaching activities once a month. (3) PMO (Program Management Office) activities with LPMP once a month. (4) School-level PMO activities, namely coordination and evaluation of independent curriculum learning activities between teachers and supervisors.

From the interviews that the researchers conducted, many supporting activities were

carried out to increase understanding of the implementation of the independent curriculum in schools, especially from forming a curriculum development team to learning evaluation. This is in line with the Principal's duties as a resource person, namely, the Principal is required to know and understand teaching problems; the Principal is also a consultant, namely being able to help teachers do better and manage the learning process (Hardiansyah, 2022b). Various activities The benefits of being a driving school batch first are that the Principal and educators receive training and assistance while participating in the driving school program (Workshop, IHT, and Coaching), second that educators can make learning devices and modules according to the guidelines or independent curriculum guidelines, thirdly the Manager education units can combine the Mobilization School e-Raport for grades 10 and 11 and the 2013 K e-Raport, get a Performance Boss (Isnawan & Sudirman, 2022).

Many activities that school principals participate in to improve their competence have yet to significantly affect teachers' understanding of the implementation of independent curriculum learning. The very visible thing is the need for more understanding of the formulation of ATP and the making of teaching modules. The results of interviews with class teachers showed their need for more understanding about implementing the Pancasila student strengthening profile (P5) and the creation of project modules. Their lack of understanding is the need for more literature or guidance. Researchers understand that the reality is that the independent curriculum set could be better at the beginning of implementation because it is still new and is the first generation of SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung to implement the independent curriculum. It is also evident that there have been many changes or improvements to tools related to planning, implementation of learning,

and reporting of learning outcomes in the form of report cards that still need to be available from the Ministry of Education and Culture. Based on the problems in SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung related to implementing the independent curriculum. The action taken by the school principal is to carry out his role as a motivator and reporter of renewal, meaning that he is never satisfied and continues to make improvements so that teachers can also make improvements. What interests researchers is that the principal conducts training by inviting resource persons.

In addition, the principal also holds regular discussions regarding issues related to the formulation of TP, ATP, and the creation of teaching modules. This intensive activity is carried out by arranging a special schedule for making TP, ATP, and teaching modules. In-House Training (IHT) activity discusses preparing independent curriculum learning tools through planning, implementation, and evaluation. Then what was seen by the researchers was that the principal also invited expert trainers to increase teacher knowledge, and teachers of SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung carried out regular peer tutor training activities. From the observed results, these activities produced good results. Teachers can understand the formulation of TP and ATP correctly and make teaching modules.

Based on the observation, the principal of SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung also conducts coaching through scheduled peer teaching (peer tutor) activities to see how far each teacher understands and applies differentiation learning. This is done routinely, and even researchers observe that the principal always supervises this matter up to the evaluation given by the teacher in applying the concept of differentiation in the classroom. It is known that differentiation learning is learning to give students freedom by learning readiness, interests, and student learning profiles. Differentiation learning does not only focus on



learning products but also needs to pay attention to processes and content or materials. With this peer teaching activity, teachers share experiences. This is also evidenced by the results of an interview with one of the teachers implementing the independent curriculum at SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung, who felt that problems regarding the implementation of the independent curriculum were quickly resolved because the principal always reflected on and evaluated these activities. Discussion activities and sharing of material on the independent curriculum are scheduled and studied by teachers as material for evaluating the lessons carried out. This activity gives each teacher many strategies for implementing differentiation learning; this can be seen when teachers implement the independent curriculum after this activity is held.

The results of an interview with the deputy principal said that the principal plays an active role in implementing the curriculum to answer existing problems related to implementing the independent curriculum. All activities related to implementing the independent learning curriculum have been scheduled in advance. There are many directives from the principal regarding the independent learning curriculum so that the independent curriculum can be carried out effectively and efficiently by the independent curriculum policy. Based on the results of interviews with class teachers and field teachers, the school principal regularly monitors learning in class and outside the classroom. Supervision is carried out on a scheduled or even a sudden basis. This is with the aim of not finding fault but how to find solutions so that the objectives of the independent curriculum carry out learning. The planning that is formulated must be in line with its implementation. The teacher's style and thinking can change and be fun and student-centred.

The principal also provides training to teachers on the use of technology. With the hope that the use of technology will bring learning more fun and adaptive. To increase teachers' creativity at SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung, the school principal always includes teachers in every training held at the city and provincial levels. This is done as a form of effort to increase teacher competence and professionalism as an educator (Rizal, 2022). In addition, there is an increase in teacher knowledge about the independent curriculum, namely by empowering teachers to become a resource for other teachers; teachers are more creative in making them by combining teaching modules in the Merdeka Teaching Platform adapted to conditions at SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung, teachers can study school e-reports activator and can make extracurricular report cards and projects to independently strengthen the profile of Pancasila students even though there is no report application available from the government, and Al Azhar Islamic Elementary School has carried out socialization to students and parents of grades 1 to grade 6, this is in line with what was conveyed according to (Firmansyah et al., 2023).

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **Conclusion**

The role of the principal in developing the Freedom to Learn curriculum at SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung is very active for the leadership role that has been carried out, namely as a facilitator and motivator for teachers in providing access to education and training in the Merdeka curriculum. The principal, as a supervisor, intensively participates actively in fostering teacher competence. In the monitoring and evaluation aspect, the school principal holds regular meetings or discussions to discover the obstacles and inhibiting factors to seek

solutions and provide direction. Inhibiting factors in implementing the independent learning curriculum were quickly overcome, and school principals sought solutions by participating in various kinds of external and internal training and empowering learning colleagues from learning problems related to technology. The efforts of the principal in the implementation of the independent curriculum that have been carried out have had a major impact on solving problems related to the implementation of the independent curriculum. This shows that what is done by the principal of SMK 1 Rejotangan Tulungagung can be used as a reference for policy changes towards implementing the independent curriculum. Barriers to teachers who are less than optimal in using technology in learning and internet networks that are not strong must be sought because they affect the learning process of the independent curriculum. Internet facilities are one of the important things in the application of learning in the independent learning curriculum as digital media have appeal and make learning more enjoyable.

### Recommendation

Research on the leadership style of school principals in implementing the independent curriculum will continue because the independent curriculum in non-PK schools or driving schools has only been running for 1 semester. Curriculum 2013, so that this research will continue with the implementation of the independent curriculum for up to 1 cycle of students from grades X to XII or graduate from school.

### REFERENCES

- Ahid, N., & Sufirmansyah, S. (2022). The Implementation of Merdeka Belajar Policy in East Java. *Didaktika Religia*, 10(1), 149–168.
- Aida, N., Nurhasanah, A., & Suryani, H. (2022). *An analysis on the implementation of the merdeka belajar curriculum by the english teacher at tenth grade at smkn 1 jambi city*. UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi.
- Aryani, R., Purnamawati, S. N., & Kurniawan, E. (2022). Merdeka Belajar Curriculum Implementation in Inclusive Schools. *Ta'dib: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 27(2), 109–120.
- Cahyono, T. (2022). Management Of Guidance And Counseling Services In The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. *Bisma The Journal of Counseling*, 6(2).
- Fathurrahman, F., Muhyi, A., Arifin, B., & Huda, M. (2022). The influence of school management on the implementation of the " merdeka belajar" curriculum. *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 6(4), 1274–1286.
- Firmansyah, C., Ubaidillah, U., & Busriyanti, B. (2023). Design of The "Merdeka Belajar" Program for Students of High School Education. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 4(1), 38–48.
- Fuadi, T. M., & Irdalisa, I. (2021). Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka: Application in Education Faculty. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 13(3), 2747–2756.
- Hardiansyah, F. (2022a). Snowball Throwing: A Method To Uplift Elementary School Students' Responsibility on Environment. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 14(3), 3853–3864. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i3.1966>
- Hardiansyah, F. (2022b). The Implementation of School-Based Management in Improving Quality of Education in Primary School. *Kelola: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 9(2), 148–162. <https://doi.org/10.24246/j.jk.2022.v9.i2.p148-162>

- Hardiansyah, F. (2022c). the Implementation of Tolerance Character Education Through Social Science Learning in Elementary School. *AULADUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Islam*, 9(2), 168–180. <https://doi.org/10.24252/auladuna.v9i2.a5.2022>
- Hardiansyah, F., & AR, M. M. (2022). Enhancing Students' Learning Motivation through Changing Seats in Primary School. *Mimbar Sekolah Dasar*, 9(1), 253–268. <https://doi.org/10.53400/mimbar-sd.v9i1.43002>
- Hardiansyah, F., Muhammad Misbahudholam, A. R., & Hidayatillah, Y. (2022). IPAS Learning Assessment To Measure Science Process Skill In Elementary School. *International Journal of Elementary Education*, 6(4), 612–623. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.23887/ijee.v6i4.54217>
- Hardiansyah, F., & Mulyadi. (2022). Improve Science Learning Outcomes for Elementary School Students Through The Development of Flipbook Media . *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan IPA*, 8(6 SE-Articles &quot;Regular Issue&quot;), 3069–3077. <https://doi.org/10.29303/jppipa.v8i6.2413>
- Hardiansyah, F., & Wahdian, A. (2023). Improving Science Learning Outcomes Through the Development of the Magic Card Box Learning Media. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 15(1), 823–833.
- Hardiansyah, F., & Zainuddin, Z. (2022). The Influence of Principal's Motivation, Communication, and Parental Participation on Elementary School Teachers' Performance. *Al Ibtida: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru MI*, 9(2), 319. <https://doi.org/10.24235/al.ibtida.snj.v9i2.9936>
- Hayudinna, H. G. (2022). Implementation of merdeka belajar at SD Islam Al-azhar 60 Pekalongan. *Proceeding International Conference on Islam and Education (ICONIE)*, 2(1).
- Isnawan, M. G., & Sudirman, S. (2022). Principal competency model development: Phenomenological design with coaching techniques in Sekolah Penggerak. *Tarbawi: Jurnal Keilmuan Manajemen Pendidikan*, 8(01), 59–68.
- Lie, D., Nainggolan, L. E., & Nainggolan, N. T. (2022). Improving Literacy And Numeracy Of Students In Elementary And Junior High School Through Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM). *International Journal Of Community Service*, 2(3), 325–329.
- Marliana, N. L., Suntari, Y., Utami, S. R., & Oktaviani, R. (2021). Improving The Competency of Elementary's Teachers at Cileungsi in Preparing Merdeka Belajar Lesson Plan (RPP) Based on Characters and 21st Century Skills. *Jurnal Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Madani (JPMM)*, 5(1), 87–106.
- Mastur, A. I., & Bambang Budi Wiyono, B. (2022). Management And Empowerment Of Center Of Community Learning Activity As An Alternative Education Model In Indonesia. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 539–551.
- Mastur, M. (2023a). Blended Learning Strategy as A Means of Optimizing Learning. *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 5(1), 182–192.
- Mastur, M. (2023b). Library Management Strategy to Strengthen Literacy Culture

- in Elementary Schools. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 7(1), 964–974.
- Mastur, M., Soim, S., Haryanti, N., & Gufron, M. (2022). The Influence of transformational leadership and organizational culture on job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in Islamic educational institutions. *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 6(3), 948–961.
- Prakoso, B. H., Ramdani, Z., & Rahmah, B. (2021). Teacher's perception on merdeka belajar policy. *Indonesian Journal of Educational Assessment*, 3(2), 44–58.
- Pratikno, Y., Hermawan, E., & Arifin, A. L. (2022). Human Resource 'Kurikulum Merdeka' from Design to Implementation in the School: What Worked and What not in Indonesian Education. *Jurnal Iqra': Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan*, 7(1), 326–343.
- Rizal, Y. (2022). Revitalization of Manajemen Peningkatan Mutu Berbasis Madrasah (MPMBM) in Realizing Merdeka Belajar in Madrasah. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10(02).
- Salim, A., Rochmadi, T., Kurniasari, Y., Sujono, R. I., Fajri, R. N., Kusumawardani, N., Wahyudi, A., & Mustakim, M. (2022). Lecturers' and Students' Responses toward the Implementation of the Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) Program at Alma Ata University. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 14(3), 3793–3806.
- Supriati, R., Dewi, E. R., Supriyanti, D., & Azizah, N. (2022). Implementation Framework for Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) in Higher Education Academic Activities. *IAIC Transactions on Sustainable Digital Innovation (ITSDI)*, 3(2), 150–161.
- Supriatna, D., Nadirah, S., Rahman, A., Aina, M., & Saefudin, A. (2023). Implementation of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in Elementary Schools: How is Teachers' Perception? *International Journal of Education, Vocational and Social Science*, 2(02), 30–40.
- Tuasikal, A. R. S., Hartoto, S., Prakoso, B. B., Kartiko, D. C., & Hariyanto, A. (2021). The analysis on teaching skills and learning effectiveness of internship students. *Jurnal Cakrawala Pendidikan*, 40(3), 650–658.