

The Role of Teacher Leadership in the Independent Curriculum Learning Process

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ABSTRACT

As a leader in education, a teacher must be a leader who is liked, trusted, and able to guide students to grow and develop into humans who are ready to adapt and face challenges. The independent curriculum comes with a student-centered learning system, the teacher is not the only source of knowledge. So, what is the role of teachers in independent curriculum learning? This research aims to describe a literature review regarding the role of teacher leadership in independent curriculum learning. The method used in this research is a qualitative method with a type of literature review which will conduct research by summarizing several materials sourced from journals, books and other sources related to the role of teachers and the independent curriculum in learning in Indonesia. In the learning process, although it is not teacher-centered, the teacher still has control over the course of the learning process. Teachers are responsible for planning instruction including setting goals and objectives, selecting materials and activities and assessing student learning. So, it can be concluded that teachers have an important role in the independent curriculum learning process.

Keyword: *Teacher Leadership; Teacher Leadership Role; Independent Curriculum*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The newest curriculum which is a transformation of the previous curriculum is the Merdeka Curriculum. The independent curriculum or what is usually called independent learning was created by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) through the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology No. 56/M/2020 concerning guidelines for implementing the independent curriculum which contains the independent curriculum in early childhood education, basic education and secondary education. One of the ideas of the independent learning curriculum is project-based learning which is outlined in the Pancasila student profile. Of course, this aims to provide students with a more meaningful learning experience and prepare them for life skills such as problem-solving skills. Because the independent curriculum focuses on adapting the learning process to the needs and characteristics of each student, students clearly have the freedom to develop according to their potential, interests and abilities. Improvements in Indonesia's education system are long overdue, and the Ministry of Education and Culture has taken the first step towards this goal by introducing a self-directed learning policy aimed at shifting the focus from teachers to students.

Qualifications and competencies for educational programs can be outlined in the curriculum, and schools can develop strategies to help students acquire these skills. The involvement of teachers as leaders in the learning process cannot be separated from every change in the curriculum. There is evidence from previous research that teachers are good at providing transformational leadership to motivate students to accept change (Neng Nurwatin, 2022). Academic programs are just one of several services that schools provide to students. A school curriculum that is well designed and managed will increase the school's attractiveness in the eyes of the community and of course produce superior students. The flexibility to translate the curriculum independently before delivering it to students is fundamental to education, and

teachers have this freedom. Teachers are better prepared to meet their students' learning needs when they have a good understanding of the established curriculum.

The role of teachers in implementing the curriculum is very important. According to Pusbangtendik (Pusbangtendik, 2014) The application of teacher leadership in the learning process in the classroom is very important because it can significantly increase student learning success. Additionally, you can create a learning community for your residents and turn your classroom into a learning classroom. Teacher leadership is a form of leadership that relies on collaboration rather than authority. Likewise, teacher leadership is associated with school democratization, teacher learning, and a culture of collaboration in schools (Webber. C. F, 2021). Furthermore, it can also be emphasized that teacher leadership shows transformational leadership qualities and guides teachers in various activities to ensure school development. Teacher leadership is about participating collaboratively and taking the initiative to direct teaching to achieve the school's goals, mission and vision in a reflective manner. Teacher motivation plays an important role in leadership skills. In addition, teacher leadership takes an approach that impacts not only teachers but all educational staff in school development. This turns stagnation into a dynamic process. As a result, this approach fosters collaboration and competence among all educational staff. Teachers can be said to be role models for their students. Therefore, this approach needs to be disseminated so that it has an impact on both teachers and students (Akman, 2021).

Teacher leadership is needed to guide learning progress throughout the self-paced curriculum. As a leader of the learning process, teachers have the ability to guide, encourage and develop students to be involved in learning activities. Even though learning is no longer teacher-centered and teachers are no longer the only source of information, the teacher's role as a leader is still needed to facilitate learning. The requirements for an educator are being able to guide students in every learning process, not discriminating between students, treating all students equally, teaching using various interesting methods, understanding new things, being able to educate students, being able to explore and cultivate potential. , follow the student and understand his personality development. This is because teachers are very close to students and are people who carry out leadership for students at school (Khausar & Riska, 2020). Teacher leadership has a significant influence on the successful implementation of student learning. Therefore, the role of the teacher as the main companion and leader of students in schools must be able to follow changes in education that are supported by technological developments. The role of quality teachers really supports the development of student achievement both academically and non-academically.

Research entitled "The Role of Teacher Leadership in Independent Curriculum Learning" found that teachers always act as guides and educators of student learning and are the ones who determine the success of student learning, especially in the independent curriculum. Students develop their talents and interests according to the skills they have. However, teacher guidance to teach and maintain these skills is still needed in order to work well and bring student success. Although it is no longer emphasized that students must be experts in a scientific field, not being an expert in a scientific field does not eliminate the teacher's role in student learning activities. Thus, teachers are required to have the skills to combine learning activities with unique curriculum-based learning methods to produce a golden generation of students.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used is qualitative research. The qualitative method is a research method based on post-positivism philosophy and is used to study the condition of natural objects. The researcher becomes the main instrument and takes samples of data sources, namely data to be analyzed. We use theoretical research methods to understand and analyze curriculum policy as a whole through a review of literature, policy documents, and the opinions of related experts and practitioners.

The first step in this method is to collect literature and documents related to independent curriculum policies, such as: government regulations, educational guidelines, scientific journals, books and related publications. Next, a detailed review and analysis of the material contained in the literature is carried out, especially regarding concepts, principles, objectives, strategies and implementation of an independent curriculum

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Teacher Leadership

In teaching and learning activities, teachers play an important role so that the knowledge provided can be accepted by existing students (Yestiani & Zahwa, 2020). Because teachers are also educational leaders and student leaders. Learning is an important element for educational institutions. This important element

cannot be separated from the teacher's role in classroom management (Nurhalisah, 2010). Teacher leadership means that teachers are not people who just provide material and give grades. The meaning of teacher leadership is that teachers tend to guide, evaluate and change students' character and abilities to make them better (Khofifah et al., 2020). As someone who is popular and liked by students, the teacher must be able to please students physically. This starts with the way you dress, the way you speak, and your preferred delivery of speech. When studying in class, don't hesitate to praise and reward students to encourage their learning progress until they feel truly valuable and useful to themselves and their friends. As a teacher, you must pay attention to what students want and not be generous with advice (Annisya, 2021).

Teacher leadership is the ability that a teacher has to influence, guide, guide and organize students so that they are willing to do anything to achieve their learning goals and desires (Nurlaela et al., 2021). This ability is expressed as the ability to guide, train, encourage and mobilize students so that they can carry out learning activities effectively. The requirements for a teacher as an educator are to guide students in every learning process, not discriminate between students, treat all students equally, provide education using various interesting methods, and try new things, explore and promote students' possibilities. Pay attention to and understand your students' personality development.

Teacher leadership in the classroom is a figure that is really needed in establishing policies and decisions so that various problems can be resolved even in the most complex situations. What needs to be considered in terms of the components of teacher leadership in the classroom are (a) the process of a series of teacher actions in the classroom learning system. (b) Influence and lead by example. (c) Give orders persuasively and humanely, while maintaining discipline in accordance with applicable regulations. (d) Students will follow instructions in accordance with their respective authorities and responsibilities. (e) exercise power and authority within reasonable limits. (f) Mobilize and direct all students to complete assignments with the aim of increasing cooperation between one student and another (Muhammad, 2017).

There are several factors that can influence teacher leadership, namely:

1. Internal factors

As an individual, a leader has unique characteristics that differentiate him from other people. This uniqueness will certainly influence his views and leadership style. There are innate qualities that define leaders as individuals, such as personal courage, integrity, empathy, and wisdom. However, some personalities emerge from their abilities through the process of maturation and education. This is an internal factor because if the process he goes through goes well, then the process will have an impact on him.

2. External factors

External factors, according to the Hersey and Blanchard formula, are innate and situational factors. These factors of course determine how leaders organize and influence. If the subordinate is a student, then the leader applies a leadership pattern that suits the student's personality. Another external factor is situational factors, namely this situation is related to aspects of time, location, goals and organizational characteristics (Febrianto, 2021).

B. Independent Curriculum

The Merdeka Curriculum has involved various reforms in the curriculum context, such as an emphasis on active, project-based and learner-centered learning (Ananta & Sumintono, 2020). The Merdeka Curriculum bases its approach on an educational paradigm that is more contextual, inclusive and learner-centered (Agustina, 2018). This approach emphasizes learning that responds to students' individual needs and potential, while providing space for students' creativity and active participation in the learning process. An independent curriculum is an educational policy that aims to give schools and teachers the freedom to develop a curriculum that is tailored to student needs and the local context. According to (Novak, 2020), the Independent Curriculum emphasizes a responsive, inclusive and student-centered learning approach. This curriculum is designed to help students develop 21st century competencies such as problem solving, creativity, communication and collaboration. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum involves various interrelated components. According to Haryanto, E. (2019), the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum is very dependent on the active role of teachers as learning facilitators who are able to facilitate students in developing skills, knowledge and attitudes. Apart from that, (Widodo et al., 2021) stated that the Driving School program is also an important part of implementing the Independent Curriculum. This program aims to become a model or center of excellence in implementing the Independent Curriculum and providing inspiration and guidance to other schools.

In terms of curriculum structure, the Merdeka Curriculum has a tendency to integrate various subjects and combine interdisciplinary learning. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2020), this curriculum structure is designed to provide flexibility for schools in determining learning content

relevant and appropriate to student needs. The role of teachers in the preparation and implementation of the Independent Curriculum is very important in achieving the policy objectives. Teachers

act as agents of change who are actively involved in designing and implementing a curriculum that is responsive to student needs. According to Haryanto (2019), teachers have a central role in adapting the Merdeka Curriculum to their local context, selecting and developing relevant learning materials, and designing learning strategies that suit student needs. A study conducted by (Wibowo et al., 2020) shows that teachers also play a role as drivers of change in implementing the Independent Curriculum. Teachers need to acquire new knowledge and skills, and have the ability to collaborate with fellow teachers in designing and implementing learning that is oriented towards developing student competencies.

In implementing the Independent Curriculum, we are faced with supporting factors and obstacles that can influence the success of its implementation. Several supporting factors that can facilitate the implementation of the Independent Curriculum include:

1. Policy Support

Political support from the government and related ministries in implementing an independent curriculum can be an important supporting factor. This includes appropriate resource allocation, teacher training and professional development, as well as ongoing monitoring and evaluation (Kemdikbud, 2020).

2. Teacher Readiness

Teachers who have the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are in accordance with the Independent Curriculum approach will be better able to implement the curriculum. Research by Rofiah et al. (2020) found that teacher readiness in understanding and implementing the Independent Curriculum effectively can be a major supporting factor.

However, in implementing the Independent Curriculum there are also several obstacle factors that can influence its implementation, including:

1. Limited Resources

Limited resources such as textbooks, learning devices and physical facilities can be obstacles in implementing the Independent Curriculum. Research by Purnomo et al (2021) shows that a lack of access to the necessary resources can limit teachers in preparing and implementing learning according to the desired curriculum.

2. Lack of Understanding and Support from Stakeholders

Lack of understanding and support from various parties such as school principals, parents and the community can be an obstacle in implementing the Independent Curriculum. Research by Setiawan (2021) found that a lack of understanding and awareness of the aims and benefits of the Merdeka Curriculum can hinder its acceptance and implementation. Stakeholders who play a role in implementing the independent curriculum include the community and parents. The involvement and role of the community is very important in supporting the implementation of the Independent Curriculum policy.

C. The Role of Teacher Leadership in the Independent Curriculum

Even though the learning process is not teacher-centered, the teacher still has control over the course of the learning process. Teachers are responsible for planning lessons, including setting goals, selecting materials and activities, and assessing student learning. It can be concluded that teachers play an important role in the curriculum independent learning process. Because teachers play a leadership role in the educational process, teachers must have their own attitudes and personalities according to their respective life backgrounds. This personality can influence your leadership style when carrying out teaching responsibilities in the classroom. His attitude and behavior are very important because his students and the community model his behavior. As educators, teachers are expected to speak their words with sincerity and kindness, and the teacher's role towards students is very important among other roles (Pratiwi et al., 2021). The role of teachers in this context then gives rise to various teacher leadership styles.

Sriyono, (1992) specifically explains the relationship between teachers and students as a leadership context that gives rise to the type or leadership style of a teacher in leading his students. The types of teachers as leaders include:

1. Authoritarian Teacher

The type of teacher who tends to emphasize student effort and control. This means that all students are included in the framework of the goal plan created. Student dynamics tend to embrace and emphasize passivity. Students only act based on the teacher's instructions and guidance without being consulted or discussing what is appropriate for them. This type of leadership has many weaknesses, including causing apathy, heavy student dependence on the teacher, and awkward cooperation between students. Many teachers act authoritarily to achieve learning goals without considering aspects of the learning and development of the students they teach. Teachers only focus on themselves and their goals.

2. Free Teacher

The free type of teacher, in this case the teacher, is hesitant in providing instruction to students in the sense that they are free to learn to achieve what they have learned. Students tend to have relationships with friends who are more understanding and unsure of their own actions, so they constantly question their teachers. The weakness of this type is that students who do not socialize find it difficult to form groups, because students choose to form close relationships. This type provides freedom in the learning process because there are no special rules in carrying out the learning process.

3. Democratic Teacher

This type makes the teacher the leader of the group study as a learning companion. The coaching process is carried out intensively by providing guidance and supervision to students. In addition, students are given the opportunity to modify the teacher's delivery through brainstorming to create a harmonious learning atmosphere. This type tends to bring up many positive things, such as: Fostering a friendly, creative, open and cooperative attitude in learning. Learning activities become more enjoyable when all students work together to create an appropriate learning atmosphere.

Based on the description of the teacher's role, it shows that the teacher will carry out duties as a teacher and educator, as an administrator, class manager and counselor for other teachers. Sardirman (2014) explains several teacher roles, including the following:

1. The role of teachers as teachers and educators is to convey ideas about science and information and convey values in life. Teachers play an important role in students' life skills and attitudes.
2. The role of the teacher as a manager is to plan the entire process of learning activities, design evaluations of student learning outcomes, and determine the achievement of learning objectives.
3. The role of the teacher as a class leader means that the teacher must be able to lead the class and guide learning with students. Teachers also act as a source of inspiration in the form of motivation.
4. The teacher's role as a guide provides orientation. To support student learning activities effectively, teachers must be able to recognize students' personal problems and solve them.

4. CONCLUSION

The need for a teacher's leadership role in implementing the learning process in an independent curriculum is very urgent. Student-centered learning does not mean that the role of the teacher is no longer needed, but only that the role of the teacher, which was previously the only source of knowledge, has now become one of the sources of knowledge. Teachers who initially only taught theoretical knowledge have now become teachers who can help students improve their attitudes and skills. Therefore, teachers play an important role in the student learning process. However, to fulfill this role, teachers need a leadership spirit to successfully navigate the learning process. Teachers as leaders have roles as teachers and educators, administrators, class managers, and advisors to other teachers.

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