Exploring the effectiveness of the Merdeka curriculum in promoting effective learning practices

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Article Info

ABSTRACT

The urgency of this research stems from the need to adapt educational curricula to the evolving demands of post-pandemic learning environments. This study aims to explore the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Curriculum Merdeka Belajar) at SDN Bolo 01, focusing on how teacher practices support the achievement of effective learning. By generating insights into the operationalization of the curriculum and identifying strategies to overcome implementation challenges, this research seeks to provide practical recommendations for elementary schools transitioning to the Merdeka This qualitative case study was conducted at SDN Bolo 01, Madiun Regency, East Java, Indonesia. Data were collected through interviews with school principals, classroom teachers, students, and parents, as well as observations and focus group discussions. The data were analyzed using an inductive model to generate themes and interpret The results indicate that SDN Bolo 01 has made significant efforts to implement innovative, student-centered learning practices aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum, such as Project-Based Learning accommodating the Pancasila Student Profile. However, challenges were identified, including teachers' limited experience and references, students' difficulty concentrating, parents' struggles in assisting learning at home, and classroom management issues in Islamic Religious Education. Efforts to address these challenges include teacher working group activities, independent training, parent mentoring, extra lessons for students, and coordination among Islamic Religious Education teachers. This study provides an in-depth qualitative exploration of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in a specific elementary school context, focusing on how teacher practices support effective learning. By identifying strategies to overcome implementation challenges, this research offers practical insights for schools transitioning to the Merdeka Curriculum.

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted education systems around the world, forcing schools to shift to remote learning. In Indonesia, prolonged school closures have led to significant loss of learning, no progress on learning especially among primary school students (Engzell et al., 2021; Irfan et al., 2023; Purwadi et al., 2021). In response to this crisis, the Indonesian government introduced Curriculum Merdeka (Curriculum Mandiri) in 2022 as a major initiative to transform the country's education system. The new curriculum aims to give schools and teachers more autonomy in designing learning experiences that meet students' needs and interests,

encourage student-centered and project-based learning, increase students' knowledge of science innovation, child growth and support the academic goals of the Independent Curriculum (Purnomo et al., 2022; Sriandila et al., 2023)

The Merdeka curriculum is important for several reasons. First, it seeks to overcome the limitations of the previous curriculum which was often criticized for being too rigid and focused on rote learning (Hasani et al., 2020; Suprapto et al., 2021). By giving teachers more flexibility in designing learning activities that are in line with student interests and the local context, Curriculum Merdeka aims to make learning more meaningful and interesting. Second, the curriculum emphasizes the development of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration, which are essential for students to thrive in a rapidly changing world (Buitrago-Flórez et al., 2021; Shadiev & Wang, 2022). Third, the autonomy granted to schools based on the Independent Curriculum is expected to foster innovation and responsiveness to local needs, with satisfaction of students' autonomy needs positively predicting growth rates. which ultimately improves the quality and relevance of education (Munby, 2020; Wei et al., 2020)

However, the effective implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the primary school level faces several challenges such as; Conflict of Teachers' Beliefs about Subject Matter Content Knowledge, Curriculum Knowledge, Language of Instruction, and Assessment (Chien, 2023; Kearney et al., 2021). One of the main problems is the readiness of teachers to adopt this new approach and the limited knowledge and skills of teachers, as well as the difficulty of changing habits (Porter et al., 2019; Zucker et al., 2021). Teachers need a deep understanding of the principles of the Independent Curriculum and the ability to adapt learning strategies to the needs and characteristics of each student requires monitoring and adjusting to the individual needs of students (Pejuan & Antonijuan, 2019). Another problem is the development of assessment instruments that can measure the achievement of skill-based competencies, in line with the emphasis of the Merdeka Curriculum on 21st century skills to measure skill-based competencies in the Independent Curriculum feasible (Fatimah & Pahlevi, 2020) to measure student learning outcomes based on knowledge, attitudes, and skills during learning activities (Kasman & Lubis, 2022; Setyarini et al., 2021; Shadri et al., 2023). Through the promotion of creativity, critical thinking, and adaptability, the independent curriculum supports students' preparation for the challenges of an ever-changing world (Nurfadila et al., 2023).

Previous studies have explored various aspects of the application of the Merdeka Curriculum(Masruri & Waliah, 2023) examine the planning of curriculum implementation at the high school level, while (Quratul Aini &; Adiyono, 2023)) provides an overview of the application of the independent curriculum in supporting the freedom of creation and learning. (Ruaya et al., 2022)The role of teacher competence is very important in the application of independent curriculum, especially in achieving the expected educational goals and ideals, but not investigating classroom practices. There is still a need for qualitative and in-depth studies that can explain how primary school teachers translate the principles of the Independent Curriculum into their teaching and assessment strategies to achieve effective learning.

The urgency of this research lies in the critical need to develop an independent curriculum capable of addressing post-pandemic educational challenges. In response to the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the government introduced the Merdeka Curriculum to foster educational resilience and adaptability. This research is important to examine as an effort to explore how the Merdeka Curriculum can be effectively applied to support effective learning is critical as Indonesia recovers from the disruption of education caused by the pandemic and prepares its young generation to face the demands of the 21st century. The novelty of this research lies in its deep qualitative exploration of the application of the Independent Curriculum in specific primary schools, focusing on how teacher practice supports effective learning. By generating insights into curriculum operationalization and identifying strategies to address implementation challenges, this research can provide practical recommendations for primary schools.

This research aims to explore how these practices support the achievement of effective learning, defined as learning that engages students, accommodates their diverse needs, and develops their higher-order thinking skills. The contribution of this research can provide information to school leaders and school teachers in about areas of strength and improvement in the application of their curriculum. It can also provide learning for other elementary schools in Indonesia that are transitioning to the Merdeka Curriculum. In addition, this research is a way to reform the broader curriculum for effective learning in the post-pandemic era.

Method

The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type. This research took place at SDN Bolo 01. The reason for choosing this location is based on the initial observations of SDN , School selection is based on Bolo 01 Kare District, Madiun Regency, East Java Province. The reason for choosing the location is based on the analysis of the problem, which is among the 3 best institutions in utilizing the Merdeka teaching platform in Madiun Regency. Related to the background of the place that has been outlined, the case study will focus only on SDN Bolo 01 Kare. Another thing that made the researchers choose SDN Bolo 01 as the background for the study was because SDN Bolo 01 is one of the schools that has a large number of students for the size of the Kare area. In addition, similar research has never been applied in such elementary schools.

Data was collected by selecting all teachers who implemented the Merdeka curriculum in the school, namely grade I-VI teachers. In this study, primary data were obtained from informants based on interviews and observations such as principals, class teachers, students and guardians. Secondary data includes information data and realities that occur in the research field and are relevant to the main data. Before taking data on interview and observation instruments, validation is carried out first to experts, so that valid instruments are obtained according to the researcher's goals. The implementation of the research was carried out in early 2022 and early 2022. To increase the accuracy of the research and the validity of the data, an FGD (Forum group discussion) was conducted to the principal and several students to confirm the research data collected previously.

Once the data is collected, the information is displayed proportionally and analyzed using an inductive model. This model aims to clarify the process of data reduction to create meaning from the basic information that has been collected. These findings are obtained to interpret the raw information. The researchers used structured interviews to follow up on the results and explore the problems (Huberman & Saldana, 2014a). This study used Miles and Huberman's theory in data analysis, which includes three stages. First, data reduction, namely selecting, focusing, and changing data from field notes derived from questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documentation of respondents. A summary of the data is then created to facilitate analysis and next steps. Second, data presentation, where data that has been reduced is displayed in an organized and compressed manner to allow concluding. At this stage, the researcher presents the data according to the order in which it was obtained. Finally, conclusions are drawn after data reduction and presentation, where researchers conclude findings in the field based on the formulation of the research problem (Huberman & Saldana, 2014b) The grid of observation and interview items can be seen in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Research Observation Grid

Indicator	Sub Indicators	Implementation		Information
		Yes	No	
Learning Management	Project-based learning Learning tools available Use of interesting learning media Differentiated learning			
Student Activities	Learners are active throughout the learning process Students listen carefully to learning			
Learning Outcomes	More than 80% of student learning outcomes are complete			
Student Response	Fun learning process There are positive interactions between teachers and students			
Overcoming Obstacles	Participate in KKG activities regularly Attend training on the implementation of the independent curriculum independently			

Table 2. Research Interview Grid Guidelines

Indicator	Question
Independent Curriculum Planning	1. How is the independent learning curriculum implemented at SDN Bolo 01?
	2. What forms of planning are prepared in the Merdeka Belajar curriculum?
	3. What are the solutions to overcome difficulties in compiling and developing learning tools?
Implementation of Curriculum Implementation	4. What learning methods are used in learning?
	5. What kind of learning approach is used in implementing the independent learning curriculum?
	6. What learning media and resources are used to support learning in implementing the independent learning curriculum?
	7. Are the facilities and infrastructure for the success of the independent curriculum in schools fulfilled?
	8. What are your difficulties or obstacles when carrying out learning according to the independent curriculum?
	9. What solutions do you use to overcome difficulties or obstacles in implementing or implementing the independent learning curriculum?
Evaluation of the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum	10. What is the form of assessment instrument in the independent learning curriculum?
	11. What is the form of assessment instrument in the independent learning curriculum?out assessments in the independent curriculum?
	12. What are the solutions made by mothers in overcoming difficulties or obstacles in conducting assessments?

Results and Discussions

Based on data collection from both primary and secondary data that have previously been studied and analyzed, the researcher presents the results of the study in several sub-chapters as follows.

Implementation of An Independent Curriculum in Supporting Learning Success
SDN Bolo 01 has adopted the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum gradually since the 2022/2023 academic year. In the 2023/2024 school year, the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is implemented in grades I, II, IV, and V, while grades III and VI still use the 2013 Curriculum. Although the Independent Curriculum has been implemented for almost two years, there are still some obstacles in its implementation. Teachers need further guidance and learning to adapt to this new curriculum. Before implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, teachers develop learning tools such as Learning Outcomes (CP), teaching modules, Learning Objectives Flow (ATP), and assessment tools. However, due to the lack of socialization from the education office, teachers have difficulty in preparing learning tools. To overcome this, they discussed with colleagues in the KKG routine forum and attended independent training.

This was corroborated by the results of interviews delivered by the principal Mr. D and class I teacher Mrs. D as follows:

"Here, the Merdeka Curriculum is introduced gradually since the 2022/2023 school year, starting with grades I and IV. Meanwhile, grades II, III, V, and VI still use the 2013 Curriculum. In the 2023/2024 school year, the use of the Merdeka Curriculum has been expanded to grades I, II, IV, and V, while grades III and VI still use the 2013 Curriculum. Even though the Merdeka Curriculum has been implemented for almost two years, there are still some obstacles in its implementation, therefore we need further guidance and learning because this is a new thing and requires adaptation. In addition, the Merdeka Curriculum also involves the Pancasila

Student Profile project which is carried out usually at the end of each semester. We also held meetings with teachers from other schools or the Teacher Working Group (KKG) to get more information about the Independent Curriculum.

"At SDN Bolo 01, which has implemented an independent curriculum for grades 1, 2, 4 and 5. This independent curriculum focuses on this essential material so that students have a lot of time to study contextually. For planning that must be prepared in this independent learning curriculum, among others, the first is CP, teaching modules, ATP, prosem and prota. In addition to the completeness of learning tools, it is necessary to determine what theme will be used in the Pancasila Student Profile this semester. Because in the independent curriculum there are P5 activities which are usually degree activities resulting from student projects. So it is necessary to arrange first at the beginning of the semester what theme will be used."

Mrs. D also added in her interview, that:

"Usually, if I have difficulties, I will study together in KKG activities and look for references on the internet and then develop according to their respective circumstances in the agency."

"If there are difficulties, usually ask questions or study together in class KKG activities, ask colleagues and consult with the principal"

"We learn and carry out additional activities such as KKG, MGMP, and peer consultation as well as we also look for references on social media. In addition, it is also necessary to attend independent training to better understand the Independent Curriculum"

In its implementation, SDN Bolo 01 implements Project-Based Learning that accommodates the Pancasila Student Profile. In the first semester, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika themed projects were carried out, such as pasting pictures of Indonesian diversity, making photo frames from cardboard, collages of traditional houses from straws, making posters, calligraphy, and regional dance performances. While in the second semester, the theme of Entrepreneurship was applied through a project to grow vegetables and hold a market day. The learning carried out by teachers has varied using a variety of media, methods, and approaches. This triggers a positive response from learners. Although learner-centered learning is still difficult to fully implement, teachers try to facilitate learning so that it can be realized. This was corroborated by interviews by Mrs. D, A and student A said that:

"The implementation of the independent curriculum in the learning process uses a differentiation approach, while the special feature of this curriculum to show firmly the position to differentiation is to group student learning outcomes based on child growth phases."

"Ideal learning should be learner-centered, but it is still very difficult to implement that approach. So I myself combine learner-centered learning with teachers who must be more active in facilitating learning so that it can be realized. The facilities in question are the selection of learning methods, learning media and learning resources used. For the media itself, still use image media, teaching aids (KIT), Learning Videos and power points. While learning resources only use relevant books such as package books, companion modules, and sometimes use information from the internet"

This opinion is in line with the submission of student A, where student A conveys that:

"The teacher uses alternating methods in each subject. During science lessons, my teacher used LCD, once watched how to make instant noodles using the teacher's mother's laptop, used the quizizz application to do questions. I really like the learning that my teacher mother did, because it was fun."

The findings show that teachers still have difficulties in compiling assessment instruments and assessment reports due to differences in the formats used. However, broadly speaking, the improvement in student assessment results can be felt by students and parents. This is evidenced by the results of the evaluation, it is known that there is an increase in student learning outcomes after the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. As well as relevant to the results of interviews with students C and Mrs. D as follows

"Yes, the results are quite satisfactory, there is also an improvement from when the children were in kindergarten yesterday"

"Yes, thank God there is an increase or change"

Meanwhile, the researcher also conducted an interview with Dely's mother, in the interview she said that:

"The forms of assessment instruments that I often use are the first observation, the second is an oral test or a written test, and then the project assessment. The difficulties faced when conducting assessments are the results of assessment and preparation of learning outcome reports."

"The difficulty is when processing assessment results and compiling learning outcome reports. Because the format of the report is different, so it is still often confused in compiling it."

In addition , in the application of the Independent Learning Curriculum, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning has also undergone adjustments. PAI teachers strive to integrate Islamic values in the learning process, such as starting and ending lessons with prayer, emphasizing noble morals, and connecting learning materials with Islamic teachings. In addition, religious activities such as congregational prayers, habituation of reading the Quran, and commemoration of Islamic holidays are still carried out to strengthen the understanding and practice of Islamic teachings in students However, from the observations made, it was found that there were problems in classroom management in PAI learning. Lack of coordination between teachers results in the division of schedules with other classes having difficulty in managing classes effectively. This situation causes disruptions in the learning process, such as lack of focus of students and inefficient use of learning time.

Lack of coordination between PAI teachers and schools in preparing lesson schedules. As a result, PAI teachers have to teach several classes at the same time, so that the attention and management of the class becomes divided. This has an impact on the quality of PAI learning which is less than optimal. In addition, limited classrooms and PAI learning support facilities also make classroom management difficult. PAI teachers must share classrooms with other subjects, so that spatial arrangement and use of learning media are limited. This condition further adds to the challenge for PAI teachers in creating a conducive and interesting learning atmosphere for students.

Overall, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01 shows a significant effort from the school and teachers in implementing innovative and student-centered learning. Although there are still obstacles, such as lack of socialization and difficulties in the preparation of learning tools, teachers continue to strive to improve the quality of learning through discussion, training, and the use of varied methods. The results of these efforts can be seen from the improvement of student learning outcomes and the positive response given. With continuous commitment and effort, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01 is expected to be more effective in achieving the expected learning objectives.

Problems in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum
In the implementation of the Free Learning Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01, there are several problems faced by teachers, students, and parents. This problem arises as a consequence of the implementation of a new curriculum system that requires adaptation and adjustment from various parties involved. For teachers, the main challenge faced is limited experience and references related to the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. As a new curriculum, teachers need time to understand and master the concepts contained in it. Ibu Oktriana, a class teacher, stated that limited references and uneven access to learning were obstacles in implementing this curriculum. In addition, time management is also a challenge, especially when teachers are faced with materials that are quite broad and heavy.

Ibu A, a grade II teacher, added that the diverse characteristics of students and limitations in understanding the initial knowledge possessed by students are other problems faced. Teachers must be able to adjust learning methods to the diversity of characteristics and initial abilities of students so that learning can take place effectively. From the observations, it can be seen that teachers still often use image media and book sources in conducting learning. The use of digital media is still quite rarely used, both due to limited facilities and lack of skilled teachers in using information technology. For students, the problem faced is difficulty in concentrating during classroom learning. Some students complain that the classroom atmosphere is noisy and full of distractions, making it difficult for them to listen to the teacher's explanation properly. In addition, there are still students who are not fluent in reading, so they have difficulty in following the learning that takes place.

Parents of students also face their own challenges in accompanying their children to learn at home. Parents of students A and B revealed that they had difficulty in explaining the subject matter that students were learning at school. The difference between the lessons they received in the past and those taught today is an obstacle in providing effective learning assistance. The problems faced by teachers, students, and parents in the implementation of the Free Learning Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01 show the need for collaborative and synergistic efforts from various parties. Teachers need to continue to improve their competence and creativity in designing effective and fun learning, taking into account the characteristics and needs of students. Schools need to provide adequate facilities and infrastructure, and encourage the use of information technology in learning.

Students need to be actively involved in the learning process, by creating a conducive classroom atmosphere and encouraging their active participation. Parents also need to be intensively involved in the education process of their children, by providing effective learning assistance and good communication with the school. With collaborative and synergistic efforts from various parties, the problems faced in the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01 can be overcome gradually. This will support the achievement of effective and quality learning, in accordance with the goals and spirit of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum itself.

Efforts to overcome problems in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum
When implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, every teacher, student, and parent faces a number of obstacles in its implementation. The efforts taken to deal with this challenge are as follows:

Participating in the activities of the Teacher Working Group (KKG)
Teachers at SDN Bolo 01 regularly hold meetings with the Teacher Working Group (KKG) to discuss and resolve various problems that arise related to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, as well as other problems they face. In interviews, Ibu Estriana (class V teacher) and Ibu Oktriana (class IV homeroom teacher) stated that if there are difficulties, they usually study together in KKG activities, ask colleagues, consult with the principal, and look for references on social media.

Attend self-training
The teachers also took the initiative to attend independent training to improve their understanding and skills in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. Mrs. Estriana mentioned that the solution she used was to learn to better understand each student, consult with colleagues, explore knowledge through the internet, and attend independent training.

Provide assistance to parents when accompanying students to study at home
Parents face challenges in accompanying their children to study at home. Based on the results of interviews with parents of students D and E, they still need direction from teachers when they experience difficulties. Parents try to direct and invite children to learn every day, help find explanations of material that is poorly understood, allow children to study in groups, and consult with teachers. Therefore, there is a need for assistance from the school to parents.

Engaging additional tutoring students
Realizing the limited ability to assist children in learning, some parents include their children in additional tutoring. Student F's parents stated that they told the child to read and learn the material from the companion module that had been provided, as well as to include the tutoring. This shows the support of parents to improve students' understanding of learning.

Coordination of Islamic Religious Education teachers
Good coordination between PAI teachers, schools, and class teachers is needed in preparing learning schedules. Proper scheduling and considering the availability of classrooms and supporting facilities can help create a more conducive learning environment. In addition, PAI teachers need to improve classroom management skills and use more creative and flexible learning strategies to adapt to existing conditions. With synergistic improvement efforts from various parties, it is hoped that schedule problems and teachers' inability to manage classes in PAI learning can be overcome. This will support the creation of PAI learning that is more effective, interesting, and able to instill Islamic values optimally in students within the framework of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum.

The efforts made by teachers, students, and parents in overcoming the problems of implementing the Free Learning Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01 show the commitment and cooperation of various parties. By supporting each other and finding solutions together, it is hoped that learning can run more effectively and the goals of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum can be achieved well. The implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01 is a very important step in improving the quality of education in the school. Although there are still some obstacles in its implementation, such as lack of socialization from the education office and teachers' difficulties in developing learning tools, schools and teachers continue to strive to overcome these problems. This shows the strong commitment of SDN Bolo 01 to make the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum a success.

One of the advantages of implementing the Independent Learning Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01 is the existence of Project-Based Learning that accommodates the Pancasila Student Profile. Through implemented projects, such as Bhinneka Tunggal Ika and Entrepreneurship themed projects, learners can develop their competencies and character holistically (Ruaya et al., 2022; Supinah et al., 2023; Susanti et al., 2023). Project-based learning also allows learners to learn actively, collaboratively, and contextually, increasing awareness, reflexivity, and critical spirit, thus facilitating deeper learning so that they can relate learning material to real

situations around them (Birdman et al., 2022; De La Torre-Neches et al., 2020; Ghosheh Wahbeh et al., 2021; Zarouk et al., 2020). However, in the implementation of this project-based learning, teachers also face challenges in managing time and organizing learning activities. Teachers need to ensure that the projects implemented can achieve the expected learning objectives, as well as provide meaningful learning experiences for students. Therefore, Teachers can improve their skills in designing and managing project-based learning by choosing from a set of optimized learning alternatives such as reflective learning, blended learning, gamification (Alromaih et al., 2022; Hursen, 2021; Pons-Valladares et al., 2022).

Another problem faced in the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01 is the difficulty of students in concentrating during classroom learning. This can be caused by various factors, such as a less conducive classroom atmosphere, less interesting learning methods, or diverse initial abilities of students. To address these issues, teachers need to create a more inclusive and child-friendly learning environment, and use more varied and innovative learning approaches, such as cooperative learning, problem-based learning, or game-based learning so as to increase student academic engagement (Princess Zarla J. Raguindin et al., 2021; Ugalde et al., 2021)

In addition, the involvement of parents in supporting the learning process of their children is also an important factor in the successful implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. Parents need to understand the goals and principles of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, and play an active role in accompanying and facilitating their children's learning at home. However, differences in education levels and learning experiences between parents and their children can be an obstacle in providing effective learning assistance. Therefore, education and assistance from the school to parents are needed, so that they can carry out their roles more optimally. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, the application of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum also needs to pay attention to the characteristics and special needs of these subjects.

The integration of Islamic values in the learning process and the implementation of religious activities is a positive effort to strengthen the understanding and practice of Islamic teachings in students. However, lack of coordination in determining schedules and limited facilities in PAI learning can hinder learning effectiveness. Therefore, there is a need for good synergy and coordination between PAI teachers, schools, and class teachers in managing PAI learning, as well as optimizing the use of available resources. This is corroborated by research from (García-Martínez et al., 2020; Muckenthaler et al., 2020) that collaborating teachers experience benefits such as professional development, reduced workload, and increased student focus.

The efforts made by various parties in overcoming the problems of implementing the Free Learning Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01, such as Teacher Working Group (KKG) activities, independent training, parent assistance, additional tutoring, and PAI teacher coordination, show a positive spirit and cooperation. However, these efforts need to be consistent and sustainable, and involve support from other stakeholders, such as education offices, academics, or partner institutions. Thus, the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01 can run more optimally and have a positive impact on improving the quality of learning and student outcomes.

Future research suggests conducting a broader study involving more elementary schools that implement the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, so that a more comprehensive picture of its implementation, problems, and efforts to solve it can be obtained. Further research is also needed to assess the long-term impact of the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum on student outcomes, both in terms of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. With commitment and cooperation from various parties, as well as support from relevant research results, it is hoped that the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in elementary schools can be more effective in achieving the expected learning goals, namely producing Pancasila students who have faith, piety, noble character, global diversity, mutual cooperation, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity.

Conclusions

Based on the results of research and discussion on the implementation of the Free Learning Curriculum at SDN Bolo 01, it can be concluded that the school has shown a strong commitment in implementing this new curriculum, although it still faces several obstacles. The implementation of Project-Based Learning that accommodates the Pancasila Student Profile is one of the advantages in the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in this school, which has the potential to develop the competence and character of students holistically. However, problems such as limited teacher experience and references, difficulty of students in concentrating, parental challenges in accompanying children's learning, and classroom management problems in PAI learning, need attention and synergistic resolution efforts from various parties. The efforts that have been made, such as KKG activities, independent training, guardian assistance, additional tutoring, and PAI teacher coordination, are positive steps that need to be carried out consistently and sustainably. The implication of this

research is the need for more intensive support from the education office and other stakeholders in the form of socialization, training, and mentoring for teachers and schools that implement the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. In addition, there needs to be efforts to increase parental involvement and capacity in supporting children's learning at home, as well as optimizing the use of resources and technology in learning.

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