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## Analysis of the Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in Improving the Quality of Education in State Kindergartens in West Aceh Regency

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the implementation of the independent learning curriculum in improving the quality of education in State Kindergartens in West Aceh Regency. The approach in this study is a qualitative descriptive approach with a descriptive research type. Implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, namely schools planning the availability of resources, educators and staff, teaching materials and learning materials, infrastructure and facilities, technology and teaching devices, budgets, participation of parents and the community, conducting evaluations and monitoring, building cooperation with various related parties, establishing communication and stakeholder involvement. The implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten is by implementing a clear vision and commitment, a program for developing plans and strategies, teacher training and development programs, monitoring and evaluation, emotional support and motivation to teachers and staff, involving parents and the community, problem solving, informative and open decision making.

**Keywords:** Independent Curriculum, Independent Learning, Quality of Education

### INTRODUCTION

The development of the world of education from year to year continues to experience changes along with the challenges in preparing quality and competitive human resources in the global era. One of the problems is in the field of education faced by the Indonesian nation, namely the still low quality of education at every level in educational units. Therefore, the Government continues to strive to improve the quality of national education, one of which is by improving the curriculum (Akmaluddin & Mutiawati, 2018).

Currently, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) has issued a policy in the development of the Independent Curriculum which is given to educational units as an additional option in order to carry out learning recovery during 2022-2024. The essence of Independent Learning is to explore the greatest

potential for teachers and students to innovate and improve the quality of learning, therefore, equal access to technology is a necessity (Daga, 2021).

According to (Aranger, 2022) Independent Learning is a new breakthrough to change the national education system which has so far seemed monotonous. In independent learning, teachers and students are given full trust in the learning process (Mulyasa, 2017). The presence of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum gave birth to four main policies, including: (1) the elimination of the National Standard School Examination (USBN), (2) replacing the National Examination (UN) with the National Assessment, (3) simplifying the learning implementation plan (RPP), and (4) more flexible acceptance of new students (PPDB).

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum (IKM) which is currently being applied to all educational units in Indonesia is expected to be able to produce superior and quality Human Resources (HR) in various fields in the future. Several programs that support the implementation of the independent curriculum are the Mover School (SP) program and the Center of Excellence Vocational High School (SMK-PK). The program will provide support for gaining good experience, so that it becomes good practice and good learning content in educational units.

The existence of the IKM program is expected to be able to change the national education system for the better. Therefore, it requires the development of innovative thinking by teachers so that the desired goals can be achieved. Teachers and students are given full trust in the learning process (Daga, 2021). Freedom does not mean being as free as possible in carrying out teaching activities without academic control. Freedom to learn means freedom and independence for the educational environment in determining the best method in the learning process. Through the concept of independent learning, schools/madrasas are given the right to advance learning orientation patterns that will be developed according to the needs that occur in the public based on the presentation of the national curriculum (Heliwasnimar et al., 2024).

However, the reality is that teachers' understanding of information technology is still low and teachers are not prepared to face the current digital era. Training for teachers related to the implementation and utilization of information technology is still very minimal. Meanwhile, in the independent learning program, teachers are required to be creative, innovative, and able to adapt to increasingly sophisticated conditions so that they can produce enjoyable learning. In addition, teachers' low knowledge of the Independent Curriculum.

Based on the initial interview conducted by the researcher with Marlita, as the head of the State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga West Aceh, stated that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has not been carried out properly in this school, because teachers still have very minimal knowledge of the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum, in addition, teachers still do not understand how to use information technology (IT), which causes teachers to be less interested in learning independently on the Merdeka Belajar platform, and there is also minimal socialization or training for teachers about the Independent Curriculum.

The interview above is supported by the results of the researcher's observations in the field, it can be seen that in State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga West Aceh, it is not yet fully ready to implement the Independent Curriculum. This is due to the limited ability of teachers to understand the Independent Curriculum, in addition, teachers still have minimal knowledge of how to use information technology, and it can also be seen that the facilities and infrastructure in the school do not support the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. However, from the beginning the school dared to register to become one of the schools that wanted to implement the Independent Curriculum.

The results of the interviews and observations above can be understood that in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga West Aceh, in reality there are still many obstacles in its implementation, these obstacles come from teachers who still have minimal knowledge of the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, and teachers are not able to use information technology, in addition, the facilities and infrastructure

at the school are less supportive, such as an unstable internet network, so that the difficulty of accessing the internet network is also an obstacle for teachers to implement the Merdeka Curriculum.

The above reality, the government's policy in implementing the independent curriculum should have mature readiness, by involving various elements to be able to synergize and collaborate, in improving the quality of better and quality education. In implementing independent learning, management of governance is needed from all elements that are professional and reliable in their fields, both the Regional Government, private sector, principals, teachers, and the public also support the policies issued by the Government.

Research conducted by (Yuliastuti et al., 2022) explains the existence of an independent curriculum as a reference in the driving school, producing students who are noble, independent, critical thinkers, creative, have a spirit of mutual cooperation, and a sense of diversity. The driving school principal encourages various participatory, unique, and innovative programs. Different from the research conducted by (Mulyono & Sulistyani, 2022) that the implementation of the independent curriculum as an additional option in post-COVID-19 pandemic education recovery requires cooperation from all stakeholders in order to have a significant impact. Some challenges in implementing the independent curriculum include the readiness of competencies, skills, mindsets of educators as education implementers, infrastructure readiness, and facilities and infrastructure, therefore efforts are needed to improve this readiness.

Research conducted by (Meliza et al., 2024) shows that the implementation of the independent learning policy in the Vocational High School curriculum by implementing an education system in the input, process, and output domains, the obstacles are: requiring an increase in programmed teacher competencies, teachers do not have field experience, dynamic changes in competency standards require continuous curriculum development and the fulfillment of infrastructure, difficulties in facilitating learning effectively in accordance with culture, efforts to overcome existing obstacles from the implementation of independent learning are: creating a cooperation agreement program, developing learning methods that can create a work atmosphere, synchronizing the curriculum, and improving teacher competencies in the context of fulfilling expectations.

Meanwhile, research conducted by (Nazariana et al., 2024) shows that the implementation of Merdeka Belajar is carried out through the planning, implementation and evaluation stages. In its implementation, it begins with the creation of a school operational curriculum in learning, implementing the learning plan module that has been made and using literacy and steam methods and using loose parts media. The result is that children are freer to determine their media, activities, and creativity and are not bound by teacher instructions. So that children are enthusiastic about learning because they learn in a fun way.

According to (Farma et al., 2024) that the independent curriculum is the reference in the driving school, which produces students who are noble, independent, critical thinkers, creative, have mutual cooperation, and a sense of diversity. The driving school principal encourages various participatory, unique, and innovative programs. Fostering cooperation with teachers who support their leaders to participate in realizing the driving school. In contrast to the research results (Sitorus, 2024) that the obstacles to implementing the independent curriculum are frequent changes in regulations, unequal training for teachers, incomplete facilities and infrastructure, teachers do not understand the substance of the Independent Curriculum, teachers still have difficulty in preparing lesson plans. Meanwhile, the problems faced by students are that most students come from lower middle class families with less learning support from their parents, students are used to passively listening to teacher explanations, it takes time to become active in searching for and studying material.

Based on several research results above, it can be understood that the implementation of the independent curriculum management is running smoothly, and there are also some that

are constrained in their implementation. Implementation in principle is a way for a policy that has been established to achieve its goals, (ES Hidayat, 2019) The study of policy implementation is crucial to public administration and public policy. Policy implementation is the stage of policy making between the formation of the policy and the consequences of the policy for the society it affects. (E. Hidayat, 2021) Policy implementation is providing the means to implement a policy so that it can have an impact or effect on a particular thing.

In policy analysis (Sari et al., 2022) said that implementation is the implementation of an activity after it has been approved by the stakeholders organized by the executive agencies. Policy implementation is an implementation of an activity by following several steps previously determined in the policy to achieve the goal. (Entjaurau et al., 2021) states that policy implementation is an action carried out by the government or private sector, either individually or in groups, to achieve the goals as formulated in the policy.

(Yunus & Rezki, 2020) adding that implementation is seen as one of the stages in the policy process, the position of which is between the stages of policy formulation and the results or implications (output, outcome) which caused by that policy. According to (Sidiq & Widyawati, 2019) states that the policy implementation process includes nothing other than work and activities carried out after the law is enacted, and is related to efforts to transform or translate statements of policy objectives that have been set into concrete programs and actions, forming organizational staff tasked with providing benefits and services to target groups and mobilizing the resources needed to achieve goals.

Meanwhile, according to (Yuanita et al., 2022) mentions that a program is one component of a policy. A program is an authorized effort to achieve a goal. One of the program implementation models is the model developed by David C. Korten, using a learning process approach and better known as the program implementation suitability model, three elements in program implementation, namely: the program itself, program implementation, and program target groups.

Korten stated that a program will be successfully implemented if there is conformity between the three elements of program management implementation, (1) conformity between the program and the beneficiaries, (2) conformity between the program and the implementing organization, (3) conformity between the beneficiary group and the implementing organization, namely conformity between the conditions decided by the organization to be able to obtain program output with what can be done by the program's target group (Darmiyanti, 2022).

The pattern developed by Korten, it can be understood that the performance of the program will not be successful as expected if there is no conformity between the three elements of policy implementation. This is because if the program output does not match the needs of the target group, it is clear that the output cannot be utilized. If the program implementing organization does not have the ability to carry out the tasks required by the program, then the organization cannot deliver the program output properly. Or, if the requirements set by the program implementing organization cannot be met by the target group, then the target group does not get the program output. Therefore, conformity between the three elements of policy implementation is absolutely necessary for the program to run according to the plan that has been made.

## **METHOD**

The approach in this study is a qualitative descriptive approach, namely a research procedure in producing descriptive data sources in the form of written words or statements from people and observed behavior. The use of a qualitative descriptive approach because this study has complex, dynamic and meaningful problems, and requires a deep understanding of social situations (Abdullah et al., 2022). Qualitative research is the collection of data in a natural setting, using natural methods, and conducted by researchers who are naturally interested.



Descriptive research is a research technique that attempts to describe, record, analyze and interpret conditions or events that already exist and are found in the field in the form of society, problems or symptoms in society, by collecting in-depth facts, then the data is presented in verbal form, not in numerical form (Moleong, 2017). In this case, the researcher attempts to describe in depth the analysis of the implementation of independent curriculum management at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, West Aceh.

The research location is the object of research where the research activity is carried out. Determining the research location is intended to facilitate or clarify the location that is the target of the research. The location referred to in this study is at the State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga West Aceh

The reason the author chose the research location was because the educational unit is currently implementing the independent curriculum, besides that the location is one of the kindergarten level driving schools, another reason is because the location is easy to reach for researchers to conduct research. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting research at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga West Aceh.

The research time is scheduled to start in August to December 2024. Data collection in this study through interviews, observations and documentation. Data analysis as an effort to systematically record the results of observations, interviews and documentation to improve the researcher's understanding of the problems that the researcher is studying and presenting them as findings for others, to make it easier for researchers to analyze data, researchers will reduce data, present data and draw conclusions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Planning the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten to Improve the Quality of Education.

To find out the implementation of the independent curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, it is measured by six interview question indicators, namely as follows:

*Availability of resources for the implementation of the independent curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education.*

To find out the availability of resources for the implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, the following are the results of an interview with Marlita, as the Head of the 12 Sama Tiga State Kindergarten, West Aceh, stating that:

*For Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga Aceh Barat, the availability of resources is very important for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in improving the quality of education. Currently, the teachers at this school are very supportive, especially since several teachers have become driving teachers, so they can motivate other teachers to implement the Independent Curriculum. In addition, teachers at this Kindergarten who have not become driving teachers receive appropriate professional development training and guidance so that they can implement the Independent Curriculum effectively. Usually, education and training for teachers that focus on project-based approaches, active learning, and children's character development must be prioritized, (Interview: October 1, 2024).*

The results of an interview with Nilawati, as a teacher at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga West Aceh, stated that:

*The presence of competent educators in managing and understanding the new curriculum will have a direct impact on children's educational outcomes. Especially in this Kindergarten, educators as the main source of human resources are very supportive because several teachers have participated in the Teacher Mover Education program, who learned directly with tutors and facilitators about the implementation of*

*the Merdeka curriculum, and the results have had a huge impact on this Educational Institution, these teachers also conducted outreach to other teachers in this Educational Institution, (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

Meanwhile, the results of an interview with Sariana, as a teacher at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga West Aceh, stated that:

*Resources at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga Aceh Barat, are very supportive, for example the provision of adequate facilities such as comfortable classrooms, educational play equipment, and appropriate learning media are very supportive of the Merdeka curriculum. The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes learning that prioritizes exploration, so equipment and classrooms that support children's creativity and collaboration are very important. Other resources such as textbooks, teaching aids, and relevant and diverse teaching materials make it easier for teachers to prepare materials that are in accordance with the Merdeka Curriculum in this Kindergarten. In addition, financial resources also support it, as well as the availability of technological resources, even parents of students are also involved in the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, (Interview: October 03, 2024).*

The results of the researcher's observations on the availability of resources for the implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, it can be seen that all resources are available in the Kindergarten, for example, very qualified teacher resources, because several teachers have completed the Leading Teacher Education, then the availability of complete facilities and infrastructure, and also financial resources also greatly support it, besides that, the support of parents of students who are involved in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is also seen, so that this supports the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, and has an impact on improving the quality of education, (Observation: October 04, 2024).

Based on the results of the interviews and observations above, it can be concluded that the availability of resources for the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education is very supportive, this is measured by the availability of teacher resources who have good competence, for example, several teachers have graduated from the Leading Teacher Education training, so that they become the driving force for the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, in addition to the availability of complete facilities and infrastructure, financial resources, and even the support of students' parents greatly support the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, so that it has a great impact on improving the quality of education in West Aceh State Kindergarten.

*Coordination between agencies regarding the implementation of the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education.*

To find out the coordination between agencies regarding the implementation of the independence curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, the following are the results of an interview with Marlita, as the head of State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*So far, it has been very good and running well, the coordination between these agencies aims to create strong synergy so that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum can run smoothly and produce optimal results. This synergy not only improves the quality of education in this Kindergarten, but also ensures that every child gets learning that is in accordance with their potential and needs, with good coordination, all related agencies can work together to achieve the goals of the Independent Curriculum, namely creating education that is more inclusive, adaptive, and focuses on the holistic development of children, (Interview: October 1, 2024).*

Results of an interview with Dewi Anjani, as a teacher at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*Coordination between agencies is very important to ensure that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga runs well and can improve the quality of education. So far, the forms of coordination carried out include coordination with the Regional Government, because the Regional Government has a role in implementing this policy at the regional level. Therefore, the Regional Government needs to play an active role in supervising the implementation of the curriculum in educational units in its area, providing technical assistance to schools, and facilitating training for educators (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

Meanwhile, the results of the interview with Tri Wahyuni, as a teacher at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*Usually the school coordinates with the local government, and coordination has been going well so far, the local government through the Education Office is very concerned about the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in improving the quality of education. The Education Office has a role in assisting schools in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The Education Office seeks to coordinate the distribution of teaching materials, learning aids, and facilitate communication between teachers and related parties. In addition, at the school level, the head of the Kindergarten facilitates teachers in collaborating, identifying needs, and ensuring that the Merdeka Curriculum can be implemented effectively, (Interview: October 03, 2024).*

The results of the researcher's observations on coordination between agencies regarding the implementation of the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten. In improving the quality of education, it is seen that schools coordinate with various stakeholders between agencies well, including coordination with the local government through the Education Office, coordination between teachers at school, and coordination with parents of students, this is very important to do, because the Independent Curriculum emphasizes the holistic development of children's potential. Schools work with parents to convey learning objectives and processes, and invite parents to play an active role in learning activities outside the classroom. For example, in terms of providing feedback, sharing information about children's development, or involving parents in extracurricular activities that support learning, (Observation: October 4, 2024).

Based on the results of the interviews and observations above, it can be concluded that coordination between agencies regarding the implementation of the independence curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, it is currently running well, the coordination carried out is with the local government through the education office, with teachers at school and even coordinating with parents of students. Coordination is carried out with the aim of creating strong synergy so that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum can run smoothly and produce optimal results, and can improve the quality of education in kindergarten, and ensure that every child gets learning that is in accordance with their potential and needs.

*Strengthening teacher capacity for implementing the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education.*

To find out about strengthening teacher capacity in implementing the independent curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, the following are the results of interviews with Marlita, as the head of State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*Strengthening teacher capacity for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in schools has a very important role in improving the quality of education. The Independent Curriculum offers a more flexible approach and is based on the needs and potential of children, so that strengthening teacher capacity is the main key to realizing this goal. To strengthen teacher capacity, State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga provides opportunities for all teachers to participate in various training related to the*

*implementation of the Independent Curriculum, both independently and by participating in training held by the office, even teachers have their own initiative to participate in the Teacher Mobilization Education program, which is implemented by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, (Interview: October 1, 2024).*

Results of an interview with Ernawati, as a teacher State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga West Aceh, stated that:

*So far, the principal has tried to provide training to strengthen the capacity of teachers in implementing the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education. In addition, the principal encourages teachers to take part in training, seminars and workshops independently at PMM, and also provides training conducted by teachers who have taken the Teacher Leader Education, as a form of dissemination of the material that has been obtained, (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

Meanwhile, the results of an interview with Aqil Akmal, as a parent of a student at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, West Aceh, stated that:

*According to our monitoring as parents of students, it is clear that the principal is consistent in strengthening the capacity of teachers in implementing the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, for example by providing training, seminars and workshops, even the principal provides opportunities for teachers to take part in various training independently, both online and offline, we see that the teachers here have good quality, this is very noticeable, because it really has an impact on our children.*

The results of the researcher's observations show that strengthening teacher capacity in implementing the independent curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education is carried out in several ways, including the principal as a motivator providing reinforcement and motivation to teachers for a quality learning process, in addition the principal sends teachers to attend training if there is an invitation from the office or Ministry, and also creates their own training at school in the school learning community. The principal advised teachers to take training independently, through the Merdeka pengajar platform (Observation: October 4, 2024).

Based on the results of the interviews and observations above, it can be concluded that strengthening teacher capacity for implementing the independent curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education is carried out with various alternatives, including the principal providing motivation, input, and suggestions, as well as direction to teachers to improve their capacity, the school forms a school learning community as a forum for self-actualization of teachers in improving their capacity with their colleagues. In addition, the principal has the initiative to provide training, seminars and workshops to teachers to improve teacher capacity for learning, in State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga has teachers who have become Moving Teachers.

*Measuring teacher performance on the implementation of the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education.*

To find out the measurement of teacher performance in implementing the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, the following are the results of the researcher's interview with Marlita, as the head of the 12 Sama Tiga State Kindergarten, stating that:

*Teacher performance measurement conducted at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, namely: (a) data collection, collecting data needed to measure performance, such as student test results, attendance reports, and parent satisfaction surveys, (b) data analysis, analysis of data collected to identify trends, achievements, and discrepancies with predetermined targets, (c) evaluation of the teaching process, evaluation of the*



*teaching process carried out by teachers by involving classroom observations, student portfolio assessments, and interviews with teachers. (Interview: October 1, 2024).*

Results of the interview with Nilawati, as a teacher at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga West Aceh, stated that:

*Performance measurements carried out at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, including: (a) consultation with stakeholders, involving stakeholders, parents of students, and teachers in the evaluation process to obtain input and views on the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, (b) improvements and adjustments, analyzing performance data, and identifying areas that need improvement, then making the necessary improvements in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, (c) making reports and communicating, periodically about the performance of the Independent Curriculum and sharing it with all relevant parties, including the school committee, parents, and teachers. (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

The results of the researcher's observations in the field regarding the measurement of teacher performance in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, it can be seen that the school: (a) provides training and development, based on the results of the performance evaluation, the school determines whether additional training or development is needed for teachers or school staff to improve the implementation of the curriculum, (b) involves the learning community, involves the local community in monitoring and evaluating performance to get support and input from them, (c) conducts continuous evaluation, the performance measurement process is required to be part of the continuous evaluation to ensure that improvements continue to be made and the curriculum develops according to needs. (Observation: October 4, 2024).

Based on the results of the interviews and observations above regarding the measurement of teacher performance in planning the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten, it can be generally understood that the school is trying to: identify key performance indicators, set targets, periodic monitoring, data collection, data analysis, evaluation of the teaching process, stakeholder consultation, improvement and adjustment, reports and communication, training and development, community involvement, and ongoing evaluation. This is done in order to improve the quality of education.

*Stakeholder involvement in the implementation of the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education.*

To find out the involvement of stakeholders in the implementation of the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, the following are the results of an interview with Marlita, as the head of State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*Everyone is involved in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, including: (a) teachers and staff who have important roles in schools, (b) school committees who have important roles in making school policies, (c) collaborating with learning communities, can be a valuable resource by working together to support educational initiatives, such as holding extracurricular activities or getting support in terms of resources and facilities, (d) consulting with education experts such as curriculum developers or educational researchers, this can help in designing and evaluating the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, (e) creating an open discussion forum involving all stakeholders, in the form of regular meetings, seminars, or workshops that allow all parties to talk about issues related to the curriculum, (Interview: October 1, 2024).*

Results of interviews with Suriana, as a teacher State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*Stakeholder involvement is the key to the success of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, so far all components have been involved, including the principal, teachers, staff, school committee, parents of students, and the community, as well as the local government. In addition, schools conduct satisfaction and feedback surveys on parents, students, and teachers periodically to collect feedback on the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, using the results of this survey for improvements and adjustments. Then there is transparency and open communication, ensuring that information about the Independent Curriculum, implementation plans, and the latest developments are conveyed openly to all stakeholders, this can be done through the school website, bulletins, or social media, (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

The results of field observations on stakeholder involvement in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, it can be seen that all stakeholders are involved, such as: principals, teachers, staff, parents of students, school committees, and the community, the school considers input in decision making, from all stakeholders in the decision-making process related to changes in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. (Observation: October 04, 2024).

Based on the results of the interviews with the observations above regarding stakeholder involvement in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, in general it can be concluded that all stakeholder elements are involved, including: involvement of teachers and school staff, involvement of parents and guardians, support from the school committee, collaborating with learning communities, consulting with education experts, creating open discussion forums, conducting satisfaction surveys and feedback on parents, students, and teachers periodically, transparency and open communication. Stakeholder involvement is a key element in creating a collaborative and ensure that the Independent Curriculum can produce better educational outcomes for students.

*Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the implementation of the independence curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education.*

To find out the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the implementation of the independence curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, the following are the results of an interview with Marlita, as the head of the State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stating that:

*There are 3 (three) mechanisms carried out, namely: (a) evaluation of the results that have been collected to evaluate the achievement of performance indicators, identify trends, achievements, and discrepancies with the targets that have been set, (b) evaluation of the teaching process, it is important to evaluate the teaching process, this is done through classroom observations, teacher teaching assessments, and discussions with teachers about the approaches used in teaching, (c) surveys and feedback related to student, parent, and teacher satisfaction to collect feedback on the curriculum and its implementation, this is done in order to help identify areas that need improvement. (Interview: October 01, 2024).*

Meanwhile, the results of the researcher's interview with Dewi Anjani, as a teacher at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*The mechanisms carried out have several stages, namely: (a) regular meetings and discussions with the school management team, to discuss the development of curriculum implementation, emerging problems, and improvement plans, (b) comparing results and processes with the standards set in the Independent Curriculum, (c) follow-up and improvement, after evaluation, identifying areas that need improvement and following up with a clear action plan, ensuring that the action plan can be implemented effectively. (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

The results of the researcher's observations in the field regarding the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Kindergarten

12 Sama Tiga, it can be seen that: (a) reporting results, making periodic reports on the results of monitoring and evaluation, this report is submitted to all stakeholders, including the school committee, parents, and teachers, (b) continuous evaluation, monitoring and evaluation are part of an ongoing process, this process must run throughout the school year to allow for continuous improvement, (c) training and development, based on the evaluation results, it determines whether additional training or development is needed for teachers or school staff to improve the implementation of the curriculum. (Observation: October 04, 2024).

Based on the results of the interviews and observations above regarding the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, in general it can be concluded that: determination of performance indicators, collection of necessary data, periodic monitoring, evaluation of collected results, evaluation of collected results, evaluation of the teaching process, surveys and feedback related to student satisfaction, periodic meetings and discussions, comparison with standards, follow-up and improvement.

### **Implementation of the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten.**

To find out the implementation of the independent curriculum implementation management at the West Aceh State Kindergarten, it is measured using seven question indicators, namely as follows:

*Speed of implementation of the independent curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education.*

To find out the speed of implementing the independent curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, the following are the results of an interview with Marlita, as the Head of the State Kindergarten, stating that:

*State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga is very responsive in all aspects for the speed of implementation of the Independent Curriculum, for example: (a) the existence of government support and resources, the level of support from the regional or central government, and the availability of necessary resources, such as textbooks, teaching materials, and learning tools, greatly impact the speed of implementation, (b) the occurrence of cultural and mindset changes, changes in school culture and the mindset of teachers, students, and parents towards the Independent Curriculum approach do take time, but the process in this school can be faster, because there is an understanding and effective communication about its benefits. (Interview: October 1, 2024).*

The results of an interview with Tri Wahyuni, as a teacher at Sama Tiga State Kindergarten 12, stated that:

*Based on his experience at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga regarding the speed of implementing the Independent Curriculum depends on two things, namely: (a) evaluation and adjustment, curriculum implementation always requires continuous evaluation and adjustment, the speed in responding to evaluation results and making necessary changes will affect the success of implementation, (b) local factors, specific factors such as social, economic, cultural, and geographical conditions in the area where the school is located can also affect the speed of implementation. (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

The results of the researcher's observations in the field regarding the speed of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, it can be seen that (a) there is school readiness, (b) there is government support, (c) there is training for teachers, (d) there is communication and stakeholder involvement, the involvement of parents, the community, and other related parties in the implementation process can accelerate the implementation process of the Independent Curriculum. (Observation: October 4, 2024).

Based on the results of the interview with the observation above regarding the speed of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, in general

it can be concluded that the speed of implementation can vary depending on several factors that can influence it, namely: school readiness, teacher training and development, government support and resources, cultural and mindset changes, evaluation and adjustment, local factors, communication and stakeholder involvement. In many cases, the implementation of a new curriculum takes time for adaptation and development. It is important to ensure that this process goes well and that education

*Consistency in implementing the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education.*

To determine the consistency of the implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, the following are the results of an interview with Marlita, as the principal of State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stating that:

*State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, is very consistent in implementing it, as evidenced by the school: (a) making thorough plans for its implementation, (b) conducting training for teachers and staff related to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, (c) involving stakeholders, the school involves teachers, parents, and the community in the decision-making process related to the Independent Curriculum and ensuring open communication and their involvement in its implementation, (d) providing consistent resources, including textbooks, learning tools, and other educational equipment, (e) having leaders who fully support the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and ensuring consistency in its implementation in schools. (Interview: October 1, 2024).*

Meanwhile, the results of the researcher's interview with Ernawati, as a teacher at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*Very consistent in implementing the Independent Curriculum, for example: (a) conducting effective communication, between all related parties, including teachers, school staff, parents, and students, to ensure a common understanding of the Independent Curriculum and educational goals, (b) making adjustments and improvements, always ready to adjust and improve implementation strategies based on evaluation results and feedback from teachers and students, (c) having a supportive school culture, building a school culture that supports change and innovation in education, so that consistency in curriculum implementation can be achieved properly and optimally. (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

The results of the researcher's observations in the field regarding the consistency of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, it can be seen that its implementation is very consistent, this is measured by careful planning, holding ongoing training for teachers and staff, and monitoring by education authorities at the local government level and even the center plays an active role in monitoring and supporting the implementation of the curriculum in schools. (Observation: October 4, 2024).

Based on the results of the interviews and observations above regarding the consistency of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, in general it can be concluded that the implementation is very consistent, this is measured by several indicators, namely: thorough planning, holding ongoing training, conducting routine monitoring and evaluation, involving stakeholders, providing consistent resources, having leaders who fully support the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, conducting effective communication between all related parties, making adjustments and improvements, having a supportive school culture, and monitoring by the Education authorities.

*Leadership support for the implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten.*



To find out the leadership support for the implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten, the following are the results of an interview with Marlita, as the principal of the 12 Sama Tiga State Kindergarten, stating that:

*As the principal, of course, ensuring that teachers receive adequate training on the Independent Curriculum, this includes initial training and ongoing training to ensure a deep understanding of the Independent Curriculum. The principal is active in monitoring and evaluating the implementation process and holds regular meetings with teachers to hear their input, identify obstacles, and find solutions. The principal provides emotional support to school staff, especially in dealing with changes, the principal encourages and motivates teachers to adapt to the Independent Curriculum. (Interview: October 1, 2024).*

Meanwhile, the results of the researcher's interview with Lukman, as a parent of a student at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*I see that the principal plays a very important role in involving parents and the community in supporting the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, this includes organizing parent meetings, community discussions, or communication campaigns. The principal is always ready to address problems that arise during the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and seek solutions proactively. (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

The results of the researcher's observations in the field regarding leadership support for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, it can be seen that school leadership is based on data and facts in decision making related to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, this involves data collection and analysis. The principal's leadership maintains open and transparent communication with school staff, parents, and the surrounding community, this is very helpful in avoiding misunderstandings and uncertainty. (Observation: October 04, 2024).

Based on the results of the interview with the observation above regarding leadership support for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, in general it can be concluded that the principal has a clear vision and commitment, the principal has a plan and strategy development program, the principal has a teacher training and development program, the principal conducts monitoring and evaluation, the principal provides emotional support and motivation to teachers and staff, the principal involves parents and the community, the principal is able to solve problems, the principal in every decision making is very informative and open. With strong and involved leadership support, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Elementary Schools in Bireuen Regency has a greater chance of success and achieving the desired educational goals. Effective leadership is key to guiding and motivating the entire school community towards positive change in Education.

*Community participation in the implementation of the independence curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education.*

To find out community participation in the implementation of the independence curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, the following are the results of an interview with Marlita, as the principal of State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stating that:

*The community here is very active in participating, they contribute in the form of material resources, such as books, equipment, or funds to support educational activities at school. When the school holds a forum or meeting, it involves parents and community members to gather input and ideas related to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. In this case, the community also helps formulate school policies and provides diverse perspectives. Parents of students and the community help each other in the school evaluation process, such as taking part in parent satisfaction surveys or*

*providing constructive feedback on the Education program. (Interview: October 1, 2024).*

Meanwhile, the results of the researcher's interview with Kausar, as a parent of a student at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*The community around Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga is very supportive and united in taking part in actively participating in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. The community helps with village transportation facilities for students who have difficulty reaching school, especially in areas that are difficult for students to access, and the community is actively involved in helping to educate the surrounding community about the importance of the Independent Curriculum and its positive impact on children's education. (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

The results of the researcher's observations in the field regarding community participation in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, it can be seen that the community participates in helping to maintain the security of the school and its surroundings by reporting suspicious incidents or providing support in terms of student safety. Parents and the community monitor the academic and social development of students, and communicate with the school about problems that may arise. In addition, the community provides inspiration to students by sharing their life and career experiences, acting as models for students. (Observation: October 04, 2024).

Based on the results of the interview with the above observations regarding community participation in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, in general it can be concluded that the community plays a very active role, including: supporting schools, becoming educational partners, providing resources, participating in decision making, helping to evaluate the process, helping with transportation facilities, awareness campaigns, school security, monitoring student progress, providing inspiration and role models. Active community participation in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum not only improves the quality of education, but also strengthens the relationship between schools and communities, this can create a more inclusive and sustainable educational environment

*Teacher capacity for implementing the independent curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education.*

To find out the teacher's capacity for implementing the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, the following are the results of an interview with Marlita, as the principal of State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stating that:

*State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga has good capacity, the school strives to develop teaching materials and supporting resources that are in accordance with the needs and characteristics of students, in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. Improving understanding and utilization of technology in the learning process to support the implementation of the Independent Curriculum which often emphasizes technology-based learning, in this case the school has teachers who on average have very good technology usage skills. Teachers are able to carry out continuous monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process and learning outcomes, this helps identify areas that need improvement. (Interview: October 02, 2024).*

Meanwhile, the results of the researcher's interview with Nilawati, as a teacher at State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, stated that:

*The capacity for implementing the Independent Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga is very good, capable and ready to implement it with various teacher expertise. Encourage collaboration and exchange of ideas between teachers, school staff, and principals in the development and implementation of the Independent Curriculum. As*

*the principal, I have a deep understanding of the Independent Curriculum and I am committed to supporting its implementation. Currently, the school has adequate access to resources, such as textbooks, learning tools, hardware, and software, needed to support the Independent Curriculum. (Interview: October 2, 2024).*

The results of the researcher's observations in the field regarding the capacity for implementing the Independent Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, it can be seen that the school has good capacity and meets the standards, this is measured by the involvement of parents and the community in supporting the implementation process of the Independent Curriculum by holding parent-teacher meetings, community discussions, or joint projects. Providing psychosocial support to teachers and school staff to overcome challenges and stress that may arise during the implementation process. Following the latest developments in education and the Independent Curriculum, and being ready to make adjustments and updates if necessary. Facilitating teacher involvement in the decision-making process related to curriculum implementation, so that they feel they own the curriculum. (Observation: October 4, 2024).

Based on the results of the interview with the observation above regarding the capacity for implementing the Independent Curriculum at Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga, in general it can be concluded that it has good capacity, this is measured by the following indicators: teacher training and development, local curriculum development, use of educational technology, continuous monitoring and evaluation, collaborative work, leadership support, access to resources, involvement of parents and the community, provision of psychosocial support, continuous updates, teacher involvement in decision making.

## DISCUSSION

The study in this discussion contains the results of research in the field and various theories that are relevant to the findings in the research. In general, the results of the research related to the implementation of the independent curriculum management at the 12 Sama Tiga State Kindergarten are that implementation activities have been carried out which are divided into two aspects, the first aspect of planning consisting of the availability of resources, inter-agency coordination, capacity building, performance measurement, stakeholder involvement and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Second, the implementation aspect consists of speed of implementation, consistency of implementation, leadership support, community participation, implementation capacity, inter-agency coordination and monitoring and evaluation.

### **Analysis of the planning for the implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education**

The findings in the field on how to plan the implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten can be explained as follows. Planning activities began by looking at: First, the availability of Resources such as the availability of educators and staff, providing teachers with training so that they can implement the Independent Curriculum effectively, then the availability of teaching materials in the form of textbooks, teaching aids and digital resources, as well as the availability of school infrastructure and facilities such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories, internet access and other equipment needed.

Schools also invite the participation of parents and the community in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum because it can help gather additional support and resources. This is in line with what was stated by Grindle, the Resource Availability Indicator at this planning stage involves assessing the availability of funds, personnel, infrastructure, and other resources needed to implement the policy effectively (Meliza et al.,

2024). The availability of adequate resources is critical in ensuring successful policy implementation.

Second, Inter-Agency Coordination. The findings in the research field, schools have coordinated with parents of students and the community such as routinely holding seminar meetings or parent education programs to socialize the Merdeka curriculum and invite them to be involved in supporting learning at home, then coordination with non-governmental institutions, private educational institutions, educational NGOs and civil society organizations to support the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, as well as coordination of technology and school government infrastructure with other partners such as access to the internet, hardware and software to support technology-based learning.

Grindle also said that the inter-agency coordination indicator reflects the level of coordination and cooperation between various agencies or departments involved in policy implementation to help overcome obstacles and promote synergy in policy implementation (Meliza et al., 2024). The results of the availability of resources found in the research field as one of the indicators of implementation implementation conveyed by Grindle are important things that cannot be separated and are directly related to the elements of school management that are interrelated with each other including humans, money, methods, equipment (materials), machines, markets and information.

According to Edwards III in (Treasure, 2018) The study of policy implementation is crucial for public administration and public policy, with the stages of policy making between policy formation and the consequences of policy for the society it affects. Implementation is also a concept for which there are a number of models offered. Each of these models does not offer a number of opposing principles, but only slightly different in some respects and the number of variables. The models offered try to provide a picture especially related to a number of factors that influence the implementation process.

Third, findings in the field of research on capacity strengthening indicators have been carried out through collaborative activities and consultations between teachers in the curriculum team and school management team, then strengthening teacher training and development, strengthening curriculum resources, strengthening monitoring and evaluation by forming an evaluation team, strengthening administrative support, strengthening leadership development, strengthening continuous capacity building, and strengthening stakeholder involvement. This is supported by the statement that capacity building can be done by involving skills development training, knowledge transfer and other efforts to strengthen the capabilities needed for successful implementation, Grindle (Meliza et al., 2024).

Referring to other efforts to strengthen these capabilities is a form of adjusting school policies to the reality in the field adjusted to the conditions of the school environment and support and capacity from various aspects, for that it requires continuous development of capabilities, this statement is in accordance with one of the principles of school management, namely the principle of human initiative. Based on this perspective, school management aims to build an appropriate environment for school residents to be able to work well and develop their potential. Therefore, improving the quality of education can be measured from the development of its human resource aspects. This principle recognizes that humans are not static resources, but dynamic (Handoyo et al., 2021).

Fourth, performance measurement at the West Aceh State Kindergarten is carried out in three stages, namely: (1) data collection in the form of student test results, attendance reports and parent satisfaction surveys; (2) data analysis to identify trends, achievements and non-conformities with predetermined targets; (3) evaluation of the teaching process through classroom observations, student portfolio assessments and interviews with teachers, making reports and communicating periodically about the performance of the Merdeka curriculum with parents of students, teachers and the school committee to achieve the results and goals that have been set.



The achievement of objectives in the Performance Measurement Indicator is carried out to provide valuable information on the effectiveness of implementation and assist in adjusting strategies if necessary. This is in line with what was stated by Grindle (Meliza et al., 2024) on performance measurement indicators related to efforts to measure the performance of policy implementation both in terms of the results achieved and the processes used are very important to see whether the policies that have been implemented are running according to plan.

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum learning its position as a national curriculum is essentially the same as the implementation of the previous curriculum, but what is different in its implementation is that in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum it is more directed at Pancasila education which produces competent, characterful, who behave in accordance with Pancasila values, so that in the realization of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, it requires teachers to be professional and design or design effective and enjoyable learning. In this context, schools really need the support and involvement of stakeholders in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum.

Fifth, in terms of stakeholder involvement, the research findings show that State Kindergarten 12 Sama Tiga has (1) collaborated with the learning community through extracurricular activities or obtained support in terms of resources and facilities, (2) consulted with education experts such as curriculum developers or education researchers to help design and evaluate the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, (3) open discussions involving all stakeholders, in the form of regular meetings, seminars, or workshops that allow all parties to talk about issues related to the curriculum.

Active community participation in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum not only improves the quality of education, but also strengthens the relationship between schools and communities. This can create a more inclusive and sustainable educational environment. Practically, active participation can also be understood as communication, which in this case refers to the involvement of stakeholders in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum of West Aceh State Kindergarten. This is in accordance with Edward's explanation (Yuanita et al., 2022), where to achieve success in implementing public policy requires communication, which in Edward's understanding, communication is the success of policy implementation requires the implementer to know what to do, where the goals and objectives of the policy must be transmitted to the target group, so that it will reduce implementation distortion.

The final findings at the planning stage of the implementation of the independent curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten regarding the mechanism and monitoring indicators, were carried out through 3 stages of activities, namely: (a) evaluation of the results that have been collected to evaluate the achievement of performance indicators, identify trends, achievements, and non-conformities with the targets that have been set, (b) evaluation of the teaching process, it is important to evaluate the teaching process, this is done through classroom observations, teacher teaching assessments, and discussions with teachers about the approaches used in teaching, (c) surveys and feedback related to student, parent, and teacher satisfaction to collect feedback on the curriculum and its implementation, this can help in identifying areas that need improvement.

The monitoring and evaluation (monev) mechanism is an important instrument to ensure that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten runs according to plan and has a positive impact on student learning. This statement is supported by Hasibuan in his book Curriculum and Educational Thinking on curriculum components (2019: 41) that at the evaluation point, curriculum evaluation should be carried out continuously until it can be known based on clear references and benchmarks.

Evaluation is used to find out two main things, namely evaluation of curriculum results and curriculum processes. This is in line with Evaluation is used to find out two main things, namely evaluation of curriculum results and curriculum processes. Curriculum evaluation is

intended as an assessment of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and productivity in order to achieve learning objectives. Efficiency is related to the application of time, energy, facilities and infrastructure and optimization of learning resources (Sukmadinata, 2015). Effectiveness is related to the right way or strategy in achieving goals. Relevance is related to the suitability of the program and implementation based on actual conditions in the field. Productivity is related to the optimal results of achievement.

The planning carried out in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has been designed maximally and very maturely, because the implementation must be prepared with ideal planning from the start so that its implementation can last for a long time. Implementation itself can only be implemented after a mature plan and preparation and not just an action alone. Thus, the implementation of the implementation must be systematic and bound by a mechanism in order to achieve the desired goals. To achieve the goals of implementation, of course, requires a concept. Before the implementation is made, the most important thing is the design or drawing of the implementation by looking at the various possibilities that occur, both positive and negative possibilities (Meliza et al., 2024).

### **Analysis of the implementation of the management of the implementation of the independent curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten**

This problem formulation examines how the West Aceh State Kindergarten carries out the implementation of the independent curriculum through several indicators including speed of implementation, consistency of implementation, leadership support, community participation and implementer capacity. These implementation indicators will be explained as follows.

The achievement of activities at the implementation stage is carried out through: First, the Speed of Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergartens is influenced by several factors, namely: (1) government support factors, the existence of government support and resources, the level of support from the regional or central government, and the availability of necessary resources, such as textbooks, teaching materials, and learning tools, have a major impact on the speed of implementation, (2) changes in culture and mindset, changes in school culture and the mindset of teachers, students, and parents towards the Independent Curriculum approach require time and effective communication in order to achieve the implementation of the Independent Curriculum as mandated by law. (3) local actor factors, specific factors such as social, economic, cultural, and geographical conditions in the area where the school is located can also affect the speed of implementation.

In many cases, the implementation of a new curriculum requires time for adaptation and development. It is important to ensure that this process goes well and that the education provided remains of high quality. Patience, support, and effective communication are key to accelerating the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten. The speed of implementation indicator must go hand in hand with the second finding, namely the consistency of implementation that has been carried out by West Aceh State Kindergarten.

It was found that they had supporting evidence related to the following, (a) making thorough planning for its implementation by providing resources (Teaching Devices and Teaching Modules), (b) conducting training for teachers and staff related to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, (c) involving stakeholders, schools involving teachers, parents, and the community in the decision-making process related to the Independent Curriculum and ensuring open communication and their involvement in its implementation, (d) having leaders who fully support the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and ensuring consistency in its implementation in schools. Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the speed of implementation and consistency of implementation are the reactions and responses of the Office as a professional education actor in responding to the policies mandated by the Law.

This is supported by his study of how schools in the United States responded to policy reforms, (Parwati et al., 2023) conclude that the implementation of policies in different contexts will always cause different reactions and responses. This occurs as an impact of the interaction between policies that come from outside the school with policies, practices, traditions, and cultures that are already running in the school. The policy adaptation process will often cause new conflicts and problems in educational units, and this is essentially part of the learning process (Parwati et al., 2023).

However, the government should not let educational units go through the dynamic learning process themselves. Instead, support must continue to be provided so that the process that occurs in the educational unit produces the expected output, namely the implementation of policies that have a real positive impact on the quality of learning. The dynamics and new problems that arise due to the introduction and implementation of new policies also vary according to the context of each educational unit.

At the same time, support to facilitate the implementation process is also needed from various parties or stakeholders in the education system. To understand the context and support from the stakeholders in question, the ecological system approach initiated by Bronfenbrenner and adapted by (Meliza et al., 2024) to explain the factors related to and influencing curriculum implementation. The ecological system model helps in analyzing the challenges of curriculum implementation from various system levels and in identifying the roles of each actor from different levels, which can support the curriculum implementation process used to visualize government support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum.

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the Kindergarten level prioritizes project-based learning in order to realize the profile of Pancasila students. This is also very relevant to 21st century learning where learning focuses not only on the realm of knowledge but also emphasizes aspects of character, literacy mastery, skills and technology. Learning in the Independent Curriculum will be returned to the subject approach, the preparation of the schedule is quite easy for teachers because the division of time per week uses subjects. The preparation of the Independent Curriculum is different from the preparation of the schedule in the previous curriculum, which must consider the details of effective days and effective weeks.

The implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is still being carried out in stages, which means that it has only been implemented in several classes and levels of education that are in accordance with the guidelines for implementing the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum from the Ministry of Education and Culture. In addition, the systematics and structure of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum are actually very simple in their implementation. However, in its planning, it requires precision and speed so that its implementation can be maximized.

Third, leadership support from the results of researchers' observations in the field regarding leadership support for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten, it can be seen that school leadership is based on data and facts in decision making related to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, this involves data collection and analysis. The principal's leadership maintains open and transparent communication with school staff, parents, and the surrounding community, this is very helpful in avoiding misunderstandings and uncertainty.

The principal ensures that teachers receive initial training and ongoing training on the Independent Curriculum, and is active in monitoring and evaluating the implementation process and holds regular meetings with teachers to hear their input including providing emotional support to teachers to participate and adapt to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, identify obstacles, and find solutions. This is in line with what was explained (Ali et al., 2015) The teaching and learning process will run effectively if teachers and principals have high responsibility in efforts to improve the quality of learning. The implementation of the curriculum is also interpreted as the process of realizing the curriculum in the realization

of learning in schools, and with the implementation of the curriculum, teachers are required to be proficient in designing effective and meaningful (enjoyable) learning, choosing designs and approaches and actively forming competency concepts and applying success criteria in education.

In general, the implementation of the curriculum that needs to be considered by the principal in improving teacher quality includes three main activities, namely program development, implementation of learning and evaluation. Almost the same as George Edward III's theory in (Rivie et al., 2022) see policy implementation as a dynamic process, where there are many factors that interact with each other and influence policy implementation. These factors need to be displayed in order to find out how these factors influence implementation, such as disposition factors, which are the nature and characteristics possessed by the implementer.

If the implementer has a good disposition, then the implementer can implement the policy well as desired by the policy maker, this is manifested in the attitude and support of the principal by holding training and guidance activities related to the Merdeka Curriculum, actively participating in the evaluation process and building open communication to support teachers emotionally in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, then carrying out effective communication between all related parties, making adjustments and improvements, having a supportive school culture, and monitoring by the Education authorities.

Leadership support for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten is very good because the principal has a clear vision and commitment as a manifestation of his bureaucratic function, the Principal carries out his duties and responsibilities to teachers, who are bureaucratically under the leadership of the principal has been done very well. This statement is supported by Edward's Theory about the success factors of a policy implementation, namely the bureaucratic structure factor, which is the arrangement of work components (units) in an organization that shows the division of labor and clarity on how different functions or activities are integrated or coordinated.

In addition, the organizational structure also shows job specialization, command channels and reporting. The fourth finding is how the community participation factor plays a role and has a positive impact on the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in West Aceh State Kindergarten, seen from their participation by supporting schools in implementing the Independent Curriculum, the community becomes an education partner, the community provides resources, the community participates in decision making, the community helps evaluate the process, the community helps with transportation facilities, the community campaigns for awareness of the importance of implementing the Independent Curriculum, the community maintains school security, the community monitors student progress, the community provides inspiration and role models.

Active community participation in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum not only improves the quality of education but also strengthens the relationship between schools and communities. This can create a more inclusive and sustainable educational environment as a practice of one of the goals of school management according to the Ministry of National Education (2001: 5), namely increasing the responsibility of schools to parents, communities and governments regarding school quality.

Meanwhile (Wijaya, 2022) mentioning the market in this sense is society, is a place where we market products that have been produced. The market is very much needed in a company. The market is in the form of society (customers) itself. Without a market, a company will go bankrupt. Therefore, the company must think about good market management (marketing), so that product distribution can run smoothly and according to what is expected.

Likewise in the field of education, opening certain majors must be adjusted to the needs of the job market, so that after graduating they will not become unemployed. So as early as possible it is important for the services in West Aceh Regency to plan and implement good



management related to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in order to produce graduates who are in accordance with the criteria of the Pancasila strengthening profile.

Furthermore, the final finding at the implementation stage of the Independent Curriculum is that the capacity for implementing the Independent Curriculum at the West Aceh State Kindergarten refers to the ability of schools, teachers, education personnel, and other stakeholders to plan, implement, and evaluate the curriculum effectively, which in the West Aceh State Kindergarten Education unit has been carried out through: (1) schools develop teaching materials and supporting resources that are in accordance with the needs and characteristics of students, in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum, (2) increasing understanding and utilization of technology in the learning process to support the implementation of the Independent Curriculum which often emphasizes technology-based learning, (3) teachers are able to carry out continuous monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process and learning outcomes, this helps identify areas that need improvement.

The author concludes that the three activities above are summarized in three stages, namely, the planning stage which is carried out by developing teaching materials, the second stage of implementation where learning planning is carried out by collaborating the process of absorbing knowledge by utilizing technology, and the evaluation stage where teachers already have the ability to evaluate and improve parts that need attention. In line with this description, Kompri in his book *School Management* (Yuliantari, 2014) Curriculum implementation evaluation is carried out to examine the implementation and impact of curriculum implementation at the national, regional and educational unit levels.

At the national level, it includes an assessment of the implementation of the curriculum nationally. At the regional level, the assessment of curriculum implementation includes a study of the implementation of the development and management of local content by the local government. While at the educational unit level, the evaluation is carried out at the educational unit level, it is proven that teachers have done this. Meanwhile, the evaluation of the results of curriculum implementation is an evaluation of the achievement of graduate competency standards for each student at the educational unit.

The achievement of graduate competency standards for each student is assessed through: (a) authentic individual assessment results, (b) school exam results, and (c) national exam results. Of course, every education unit in West Aceh has carried out evaluations in the form of school exams and national exams on an ongoing basis. It can be understood that the capacity for implementing the Independent Curriculum for West Aceh State Kindergartens, in general, has good capacity, this is measured by the following indicators: teacher training and development, local curriculum development, use of educational technology, ongoing monitoring and evaluation, collaborative work, leadership support, access to resources, involvement of parents and the community, provision of psychosocial support, continuous updates, teacher involvement in decision making.

## CONCLUSION

Planning the implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten in improving the quality of education, namely the school plans the availability of resources, educators and staff, teaching materials and learning materials, infrastructure and facilities, technology and teaching devices, budget, participation of parents and the community, conducting evaluation and monitoring, building cooperation with various related parties, establishing communication and stakeholder involvement. Implementation of the independent curriculum in the West Aceh State Kindergarten, namely the implementation of a clear vision and commitment, development program plans and strategies, teacher training and development programs, monitoring and evaluation, emotional support and motivation to teachers and staff, involving parents and the community, problem solving, informative and open decision making.

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