

Analysis of Teacher Readiness in Welcoming the "Freedom to Learn" Policy

Intan Jamilah¹, Rahayu Condro Murti², Irul Khotijah³

¹ Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia; intanjamilah.2021@student.uny.ac.id

² Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia; rahayu_cm@uny.ac.id

³ Universitas Nusa Cendana, Indonesia; irul.khotijah@staf.undana.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Teacher Readiness;
Free Learning;
Elementary school.

Article history:

Received 2022-10-02

Revised 2022-12-05

Accepted 2023-02-07

ABSTRACT

The Indonesian government is currently implementing a new curriculum known as "Freedom to Learn" as an alternative to overcome the decline in learning due to Covid-19. This research was analyzed using a qualitative descriptive approach with 14 respondents from two elementary schools in the Mojodedang sub-district, Karanganyar, Central Java. The data collection method was carried out through interviews, observation, and documentation using the triangulation data testing technique then data analysis was carried out using the Miles & Huberman model. The results of this study are the readiness of elementary school teachers to welcome the new curriculum with four central policies, which are studied through physical, psychological, knowledge, and material readiness. Based on the research, it was found that; (1) physical readiness in the excellent category, where the teacher has a good medical history of welcoming the new curriculum at his school; (2) psychological readiness in the sufficient category, where the teacher has a sense of interest and motivation to welcome the new curriculum, but in the process, the teacher still has much to learn; (3) knowledge readiness where the teacher has a high understanding of the preparation of lesson plans (modules) and the zoning PPDB system, while understanding is still lacking on aspects of USBN and UN; (4) material readiness is in the excellent category where schools have provided infrastructure in good condition following Permendikbud No. 26 of 2016 while infrastructure facilities for teachers through discussion and training activities on curriculum development.

This is an open-access article under the [CC BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license.



Corresponding Author:

Intan Jamilah

Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia; intanjamilah.2021@student.uny.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental part of human life for a country's national development because the quality of education is very influential on the progress of the nation and state (Akib et al., 2020). The development of an increasingly advanced era also has an impact on the education system in Indonesia, as stated by Baro'ah (2020) that in facing the future, it will be influenced by the flow of globalization and the existence of the principle of openness and advances in information technology, in this case, the world of education will be faced with various new challenges that are increasing, for example in terms of the curriculum. A good curriculum in the world of education that continues to develop will impact personality that is better functionally because the curriculum plays a vital role in educational success. (Setiawan et al., 2020). In education, the curriculum is a set of lesson plans and the things that have been prepared therein, containing interrelated components as guidelines for achieving educational goals. (Kamiludin & Suryaman 2017).

Curriculum development is a vital component in the educational process because the curriculum is considered the "heart" of every learning institution, and it can be said that schools will not exist without a curriculum. (Kranthi, 2017). According to Indarta et al. (2022), curriculum development will be effective if the development follows the needs and demands of a growing community. Based on this opinion, one of the government's efforts to achieve educational goals is to develop a curriculum (Nurwiatin, 2022). Curriculum development is a planned, directed, progressive and systematic process of improving education (Kranthi, 2017). The dynamics of educational development always experience policy changes, in Indonesia at least there have been more than ten changes to the curriculum since the beginning of independence from the 1947 learning program to the 2020 independent learning (Nurjanah, 2021).

In 2020 the Indonesian government will implement a new curriculum at all levels of education. As conveyed by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr. Nadiem Anwar Makarim implemented a new idea in the world of education, namely "Freedom to Learn," which was born because of the many problems in the field of education, especially in terms of empowering every human being, this resulted in various changes in the education system (Baro'ah, 2020). This curriculum was initiated as an initial step that aims to reduce the effects of learning loss due to Covid-19 (Rachmawati et al., 2022). The term "Freedom to learn" is defined as freedom in learning by providing as free learning opportunities as possible for students to learn in a calm, happy and relaxed manner according to their natural talents without going through pressure and coercion. (Abidah et al., 2020).

The implementation of the new curriculum does not only provide material through the teacher, but students are expected to be able to excel not only from the results of the national exam but through the collaboration of various cognitive abilities so that it does not only focus on the material provided by the teacher, but students can develop their knowledge through experience and other learning resources by involving existing technology (Ramdani et al., 2021). The new curriculum is a curriculum that focuses on essential material, character development, and student competencies to hone children's talents and interests. Previously, the curriculum had been tested through 2,500 driving schools in Indonesia (Nurwiatin, 2022). The independent learning policy was initiated with the hope that it would be the right solution to overcome the current problems because it emerged in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 and society 5.0 which can provide challenges and opportunities for all educational institutions in Indonesia. (Rokhyani, 2022).

Four central policies are regulated in the new curriculum: national standard school policies, eliminating national exams, simplifying lesson plan sheets, and zoning regulations for admitting new students to schools. (Abidah et al., 2020; Baro'ah, 2020; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019; Mardiana & Umiarso, 2020). In addition to the four central policies, one of the orientations of the new curriculum is learning that focuses on achieving concrete results by involving curriculum, assessment, and learning reporting practices involving five principles, namely; (1) focus on learning outcomes; (2) overall curriculum design; (3) provide learning opportunity facilities; (4) according to learning; and (5) using the plan-do-check-action cycle (Suryaman, 2020). The differences between the new curriculum and the

previous learning curriculum are; (1) study hours per year 144 hours; (2) there are learning outcomes; (3) there is a flow of learning objectives; (4) teaching modules; (5) design weekly project learning 20% of the intracurricular; (6) can use a block system; (7) IPA and IPS are made into IPAS; (8) project-based learning; (9) SBdP learning can only be taught in one field; (11) each class is divided into several phases (Angga et al., 2022).

Facing the ever-evolving curriculum development, cooperation from various parties is needed, one of which is the teacher. As said by Alsubaie (2016), without a doubt, the most critical person in the curriculum implementation process is a teacher because they are the most knowledgeable about how to practice teaching and are responsible for introducing the curriculum in the classroom. It is not easy for teachers to deal with the renewal of the previous curriculum with the current curriculum. To address this situation, readiness is needed. Readiness is needed as a reinforcement for someone to grow and find meaning from the situation experienced (Ramdani et al., 2021). In more detail, readiness is the potential to respond to something given, and if someone has readiness, it will be easier to respond (Jannah et al., 2020).

The readiness of education to implement the curriculum is not limited to cognitive and metacognitive abilities. However, it involves understanding the content, how to apply the curriculum, the suitability of the philosophy of the curriculum with the teacher's paradigm, and the learning principles that will be upheld. (Puskur Education and Culture Research and Technology, 2021). As expressed by Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo (2022) that in implementing the curriculum because it includes a new policy, of course, schools and teachers need to prepare correctly, starting from understanding the structure of the curriculum, assessment, learning outcomes, the flow of learning objectives, implementing projects and so on. The government explained that independent learning will be made into the national curriculum in 2024, but in the 2022/2023 school year, the government has started implementing a new curriculum at every level of the school; for elementary schools, it is implemented in grade 1 and grade 4. Based on the background presented above, this research was conducted to provide a direct description of the implementation of the new curriculum in schools. This study aims to determine the readiness of teachers in welcoming the new curriculum in elementary schools.

2. METHODS

This research uses descriptive research with a qualitative approach because the results of this research are in the form of words about the information on the readiness of elementary school teachers to welcome learning through the new curriculum. Qualitative research is a natural method in which the researcher is critical for conducting research through predetermined procedures (Sugiyono, 2016). This research was conducted in October-November 2022 with data sources from the results of literature reviews from various sources discussing the curriculum. Interviews with 2 school principals and 12 teachers at SDN 01 and 02 Gentungan, Mojogedang sub-district, Karanganyar, Central Java. Observations of schools and documentation studies as support for the research results obtained. After that, data analysis was carried out using the Miles & Huberman model through four stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section explains the readiness of elementary school teachers to welcome independent learning. The readiness to be analyzed in this study is through four curriculum policies which are analyzed through four readiness, namely physical readiness, psychological readiness, knowledge readiness, and material readiness. The four main points of the independent learning policy can be explained as follows:

No	Policy	Explanation
1.	National Standard School Examination	USBN will be entirely handed over to the school so that teachers are more flexible in assessing student learning outcomes.
2.	National exam	National Examination will be replaced with a minimum competency assessment and character survey in schools.
3.	Lesson plan	RPP teachers are free to choose, create, and use according to their innovations but remain oriented toward child development.
4.	Expanding the Zoning System in Accepting New Students	There are several differences in the PPDB quota, namely the 50% zoning route, 15% affirmation path, 5% transfer path, and the achievement path or the remaining 0-30%, all of which are adjusted to local conditions and policies.

Independent Learning Concept According to Baro'ah (2020).

Based on the four policies that have been put forward in the curriculum update points, in more detail the policy findings can be explained as follows:

3.1. National Standard School Examination (USBN)

In the new curriculum, teachers and schools are more flexible in assessing student learning outcomes because the USBN will be replaced with an exam (assessment) conducted by the school to assess each student's competence (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019). Based on the theoretical study and the findings obtained during the research, teacher readiness in carrying out USBN replacement assessment activities is a condition where a teacher is willing to substitute USBN in terms of; (1) physical readiness, namely the teacher's health condition in carrying out the USBN substitute assessment; (2) psychological readiness, namely the teacher's motivation and interest in carrying out the USBN assessment; (3) knowledge readiness, namely the teacher's understanding of the implementation of the USBN in his school; (4) material readiness, namely the availability of supporting infrastructure for the implementation of the USBN replacement assessment.

Based on the results of the study, it was found that: (1) the physical readiness of the teacher, based on observations and interviews as a whole, the condition of readiness to welcome the new curriculum from the aspect of physical readiness, the teacher has an excellent medical history so that it does not interfere with the teacher's performance in carrying out the USBN replacement assessment. Based on the findings, there are no serious problems related to the implementation of the USBN replacement assessment implemented in schools; (2) the psychological readiness of teachers based on research shows that the psychological readiness of teachers seen from several indicators, including motivation, interest, and emotional conditions of teachers in applying substitute assessments, psychological readiness of teachers based on research is found in the category of sufficient readiness. Based on the findings, teachers feel interested in studying the USBN alternative assessment by holding discussions in determining the preparation of the assessment to be carried out, but in practice, there is still much that teachers have to learn, especially senior teachers, to study the USBN alternative assessment; (3) teacher knowledge readiness, based on research it was found that in terms of knowledge readiness possessed by teachers, it was in the sufficient category; teachers had understood the types of assessment used by schools to replace USBN but still needed to be improved so that learning could run optimally; (4) material readiness, based on research it was found that from a material perspective, it is in a suitable category. Teachers and schools have provided learning resources for conducting assessments through learning support books,

3.2. National Examination (UN)

The national exam in the new curriculum was changed to a minimum competency assessment and a character survey, namely literacy, numeracy, and character (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019). This concept simplifies the National Examination system but differs in the implementation time. In addition, the assessment will also be measured through a character survey that can be used as a benchmark for schools in providing feedback on learning activities (Baro'ah, 2020). Based on the theoretical study and the findings obtained during the research, teacher readiness in carrying out substitutes for the National Examination is carried out through a minimum competency assessment and character survey reviewed through; (1) physical readiness, namely the teacher's health condition when studying the minimum competency assessment and the National Exam substitute character survey; (2) psychological readiness, namely the teacher's motivation and interest in learning the minimum competency assessment and character survey; (3) knowledge readiness, namely the teacher's understanding of the implementation of the minimum competency assessment and the National Exam substitute character survey; (4) material readiness, namely infrastructure that supports minimum competency assessment activities and character surveys in schools.

The results of the study showed that: (1) physical readiness, namely based on observations and interviews, the teacher has a good medical history, does not experience health problems so that it does not interfere with the teacher's performance in learning the minimum competency assessment and character survey at school, as evidenced by the fact that there are no severe problems with substitute assessment UN; (2) psychological readiness, namely the teacher has the motivation and interest in carrying out the minimum competency assessment and character survey by conducting discussions in planning and developing literacy, numeracy and character in students but overall the teachers are happier and are used to it being used as a benchmark for graduation students, namely through the national exam; (3) knowledge readiness, namely through training and learning activities through the independent teaching application the teacher has understood literacy, numeracy and character surveys as a substitute for the national exam policy in schools but teachers feel still confused about the implementation and assessment that will be applied in minimum competency assessment activities and surveys character; (4) material readiness based on research, it was found that textbooks, libraries and additional hours provided by the teacher were available to increase students' understanding in carrying out minimum competency assessments and character surveys. Numeration and character survey as a substitute for the national exam policy in schools, but teachers feel they are still confused about the implementation and assessment that will be applied in the minimum competency assessment and character survey activities; (4) material readiness based on research, it was found that textbooks, libraries and additional hours provided by the teacher were available to increase students' understanding in carrying out minimum competency assessments and character surveys. Numeration and character survey as a substitute for the national exam policy in schools, but teachers feel they are still confused about the implementation and assessment that will be applied in the minimum competency assessment and character survey activities; (4) material readiness based on research, it was found that textbooks, libraries and additional hours provided by the teacher were available to increase students' understanding in carrying out minimum competency assessments and character surveys.

3.3. Freedom to Prepare Learning Implementation Plans (RPP)

Since the emergence of the independent learning policy, especially regarding the simplification of lesson plans, it has become the concern of school principals and teachers to enthusiastically welcome this policy (Ndiung & Menggo, 2021). This curriculum allows teachers to choose, create, use and develop lesson plan formats. The three core components in the making lesson plans are learning objectives, learning activities, and assessments. In this new curriculum, lesson plans are known as teaching modules with a more varied nature. (Maulida, 2022). Based on theoretical studies and findings obtained during the research, teacher readiness in simplifying RPP (teaching modules) is a state of a teacher who is willing to learn to compile teaching modules according to the curriculum format

reviewed through; (1) physical readiness, namely the teacher's health condition in learning the constructors of the new curriculum teaching modules; (2) psychological readiness, namely teacher motivation and interest in learning the preparation of new curriculum teaching modules; (3) understanding readiness, namely the teacher's understanding in preparing the new curriculum teaching modules; (4) material readiness, namely supporting infrastructure in compiling teaching modules in schools.

Based on the research, it was found that; (1) the physical readiness of the teacher, namely based on the results of observations and documentation of the teacher having good health, as evidenced by the absence of serious problems when the teacher carries out the learning process and compiles teaching modules. (2) the psychological readiness of the teacher, namely, the teacher feels interested and happy with the policy of preparing this new teaching module because the format of the teaching module is adapted to students and the creativity of the teacher so that the teacher is more focused on the learning process. (3) the readiness of the teacher's understanding, that is, as a whole, the teacher understands the format of preparing the teaching modules used in the learning process, but some teachers say that they have never directly prepared teaching modules because currently only grade 1 and 4 teachers have used the new curriculum.

3.4. Zoning New Student Acceptance Regulations (PPDB).

The New Student Admission Policy in this curriculum is carried out flexibly to accommodate inequality of access and quality in various regions with various provisions, namely 50% zoning, 15% affirmation, 5% transfer, and 0-30% adjusted to regional conditions (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019). Based on the theoretical study and the findings obtained during the research, teacher readiness in implementing zoning PPDB is a condition for a teacher to study PPDB activities in terms of; (1) physical readiness, namely the health condition of teachers in carrying out PPDB activities; (2) psychological readiness, namely teacher motivation and interest when carrying out PPDB activities; (3) knowledge readiness, namely teacher knowledge about PPDB activities; (4) material readiness, namely infrastructure supporting PPDB activities in their schools.

Based on the results of the study, it was found that; (1) the physical readiness of teachers, namely based on observation and documentation of 100% of teachers ready to carry out PPDB activities, it is proven that teachers and education staff are enthusiastic in welcoming new students and there are no problems when carrying out PPDB activities; (2) psychological readiness, namely teachers and teaching staff feel happy and enthusiastic in accepting prospective new students. It is proven that teachers and education staff have a high concern for the PPDB system in schools by forming PPDB committees, conducting outreach to kindergartens and parents, distributing brochures both offline and online, providing uniforms to students who register at the school; (3) the readiness of teachers' understanding, namely teachers and teaching staff have understood the implementation of the PPDB system because the system for accepting new students in elementary schools through the new curriculum is not much different from the previous curriculum, there is only a difference in the proportion of accepting new students; (4) material readiness, namely the school has prepared infrastructure for the implementation of zoning PPDB such as making PPDB brochures, providing office stationery to record new students, preparing school uniforms for students who wish to register at the school. The availability of school buildings and facilities has met the criteria.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research, the following conclusions are obtained: (1) physical readiness to face curriculum policies, namely 100% of teachers and education staff have an excellent medical history, so they do not interfere with teacher performance in welcoming the new curriculum. (2) based on psychological readiness to face curriculum policies, teachers are ready to use the new curriculum. However, some teachers are seniors or teachers who are old, and they feel tired because they have to learn to adjust to new policies. Currently, a lot of information or policies exist in the digital world, even

though the teachers who are old say they are not good at using the technology that exists today. (3) based on the readiness of the teacher's understanding of the curriculum policy, namely, the teacher does not fully understand the new curriculum policy because, indeed, the socialization is not comprehensive. It is still being carried out in stages. However, teachers can develop their understanding through curriculum training workshop activities provided by various platforms. Besides, the government has required teachers to understand the curriculum through independent teaching applications so that teachers can learn and increase their understanding of the new curriculum policy. (4) based on material readiness. Namely, the infrastructure available in elementary schools has exceeded the criteria for carrying out USBN replacement assessment activities, minimum competency assessments, and UN surrogate character surveys, simplifying RPP or what is known as teaching modules in the new curriculum and zoning the PPDB system. The infrastructure available for students meets the standards following Permendikbud No. 26 of 2016, namely the availability of classrooms, principal and teacher rooms, computer lab rooms, libraries, learning support books, and internet access, while infrastructure facilities for teachers are the availability of wifi networks in schools, borrowing school laptops to facilitate the teacher's work, providing directions to teachers to take part in seminars or workshops in developing a new curriculum and study independently through applications provided by the government.

REFERENCES

- Abidah, A., Hidaayatullaah, H. N., Simamora, R. M., Fehabutar, D., & Mutakinati, L. (2020). The Impact of Covid-19 to Indonesian Education and Its Relation to the Philosophy of "Merdeka Belajar." *Studies in Philosophy of Science and Education*, 1(1), 38–49. <https://doi.org/10.46627/sipose.v1i1.9>
- Akib, E., Imran, M. E., Mahtari, S., Mahmud, M. R., Prawiyogy, A. G., Supriatna, I., & Ikhsan, M. H. (2020). Study on Implementation of Integrated Curriculum in Indonesia. *IJORER: International Journal of Recent Educational Research*, 1(1), 39–57. Retrieved from <http://journal.ia-education.com/index.php/ijorer/article/view/24#.XqjhBhCQK68.mendeley>
- Alsubaie, M. A. (2016). Teacher Involvement in Curriculum Development. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(9), 106–107.
- Angga, A., Suryana, C., Nurwahidah, I., Hernawan, A. H., & Prihantini, P. (2022). Komparasi Implementasi Kurikulum 2013 dan Kurikulum Merdeka di Sekolah Dasar Kabupaten Garut. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(4), 5877–5889. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i4.3149>
- Baro'ah, S. (2020). Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar Sebagai Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan. *Jurnal Tawadhu*, 4(1), 1063–1073.
- Indarta, Y., Jalinus, N., Waskito, W., Samala, A. D., Riyanda, A. R., & Adi, N. H. (2022). Relevansi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar dengan Model Pembelajaran Abad 21 dalam Perkembangan Era Society 5.0. *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 4(2), 3011–3024. <https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v4i2.2589>
- Jannah, M., Bustamam, N., & Yahya, M. (2020). Kesiapan Diri Mahasiswa Dalam Menghadapi Perkuliahan Daring. *International Journal of Hypertension*, 1(1), 1–171.
- Kamiludin, K., & Suryaman, M. (2017). Problematika pada pelaksanaan penilaian pembelajaran Kurikulum 2013. *Jurnal Prima Edukasia*, 5(1), 58–67. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpe.v5i1.8391>
- Kemendikbud. (2019). Merdeka Belajar. *Kementerian Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan*, 1–21.
- Kranthi, K. (2017). Curriculum devt. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 22(2), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2202030105>
- Mardiana, D., & Umiarso, U. (2020). Merdeka Belajar di Tengah Pandemi COVID-19: Studi di Sekolah Menengah Pertama di Indonesia. *Al-TA'DIB: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Kependidikan*, 13(2), 78. <https://doi.org/10.31332/atdbwv13i2.1896>
- Maulida, U. (2022). Pengembangan Modul Ajar Berbasis Kurikulum Merdeka. *Tarbawi*, 5(2), 130–138. Retrieved from <https://stai-binamadani.e-journal.id/Tarbawi>
- Ndiung, S., & Menggo, S. (2021). Pelatihan Penyusunan RPP Merdeka Belajar Bagi Guru SDN Ules

- Kabupaten Manggarai Barat. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 15–22.
- Nurjanah, E. (2021). Kesiapan Calon Guru SD dalam Implementasi Asesmen Nasional. *Jurnal Papeda: Jurnal Publikasi Pendidikan Dasar*, 3(2), 76–85. <https://doi.org/10.36232/jurnalpendidikandasar.v3i2.1120>
- Nurwiatin, N. (2022). Pengaruh Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Dan Kesiapan Kepala Sekolah Terhadap Penyesuaian Pembelajaran Di Sekolah. *Jurnal Pendidikan, Sains Dan Teknologi*, 9(2), 472–487. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.47668/edusaintek.v9i2.537>
- Puskur Dikbud Ristek. (2021). *Kurikulum Untuk Pemulihan Pembelajaran*. 123.
- Rachmawati, N., Marini, A., Nafiah, M., & Nurasih, I. (2022). Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila dalam Impelementasi Kurikulum Prototipe di Sekolah Penggerak Jenjang Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(3), 3613–3625. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i3.2714>
- Rahmadayanti, D., & Hartoyo, A. (2022). Potret Kurikulum Merdeka, Wujud Merdeka Belajar di Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(4), 7174–7187. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i4.3431>
- Ramdani, Z., Kembara, M. D., Alhapip, L., Amri, A., Warsihna, J., & Anas, Z. (2021). Teachers' Perception and Readiness Towards Adaptive Learning in the COVID-19 Pandemic: Thematical Content Analysis Study. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 13(2), 1383–1393. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v13i2.915>
- Rokhyani, E. (2022). *Penguatan praksis bimbingan konseling dalam implementasi kebijakan merdeka belajar*. 26–38.
- Setiawan, R., Mardapi, D., Aman, & Karyanto, U. B. (2020). Multiple intelligences-based creative curriculum: The best practice. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 9(2), 611–627. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.9.2.611>
- Sugiyono. (2016). *Metodologi Penelitian Pendidikan Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan RND*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Suryaman, M. (2020). Orientasi Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar. *Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 1(1), 13–28. Retrieved from <https://ejournal.unib.ac.id/index.php/semiba/article/view/13357>