

## Teachers' perceptions of Merdeka curriculum development in Nias

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**Abstrak.** *This research aims to explore teachers' perceptions of the development of the Merdeka Curriculum on Nias Island. Using a qualitative approach, data was collected through in-depth interviews with a number of teachers in schools on Nias Island. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns and key themes that emerged from conversations with teachers. The results of the study highlighted the different views, challenges and expectations of teachers regarding the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The findings provide valuable insights into how educators in the region are responding to and managing the dynamics of the development of the new curriculum. The implications of the findings of this study are expected to provide guidance for improving the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Nias Island and similar areas.*

**Keywords:** *Teachers' Perceptions; Merdeka Curriculum ; Nias Island*

**Abstrak.** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi persepsi guru tentang pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka di Pulau Nias. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan sejumlah guru di sekolah-sekolah di Pulau Nias. Analisis tematik digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi pola dan tema-tema utama yang muncul dari percakapan dengan para guru. Hasil penelitian ini menyoroti berbagai pandangan, tantangan, dan harapan para guru mengenai implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka. Temuan-temuan ini memberikan wawasan yang berharga tentang bagaimana para pendidik di wilayah ini menanggapi dan mengelola dinamika pengembangan kurikulum baru. Implikasi dari temuan penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan panduan untuk meningkatkan implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka di Pulau Nias dan daerah-daerah serupa.

**Kata kunci:** Persepsi Guru; Kurikulum Merdeka; Pulau Nias

### BACKGROUND

The implementation and development of curricula play a central role in shaping the educational landscape of a region. In the Indonesian context, the introduction of the Merdeka Curriculum marked a significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to improve the quality of education. This research aims to explore teachers' views on the development of the Merdeka Curriculum on Nias, providing an overview of their perceptions, challenges and potential benefits. Nias, as a unique cultural and educational context, provides an interesting case study to understand how teachers evaluate and adapt to the changes brought about by the Merdeka Curriculum. This curriculum, introduced as part of Indonesia's general education reform initiative, emphasises a holistic approach to education and aims to develop critical thinking skills, creativity and character development in students.

Teachers' perceptions are crucial in this process, as they are the ones who will implement this curriculum in the classroom. They have a major influence on how students

experience and understand the material. Understanding teachers' perceptions is crucial for policymakers, education administrators and curriculum developers to make informed decisions and adjustments. The results of this study could provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Nias, and offer recommendations for improvements and adjustments based on the real-life experiences of educators.

This research aims to explore teachers' views on the design, implementation and impact of the Merdeka Curriculum on Nias. Through qualitative research methods such as interviews, surveys and focus group discussions, the research aims to capture the nuanced experiences of teachers in navigating the requirements of the new curriculum. The research will also explore the extent to which teachers felt adequately prepared for the changes and the level of support they received from the education authorities.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research applies deep qualitative descriptive approach form of interview to identify English teachers' perceptions of development of an independent curriculum. This research aims to gain an understanding of how English teachers see implementation independent curriculum in several schools Subjects in This research consisted of six schools and one school had not yet implemented the independent curriculum sixth These schools include: SDN 078448 EWO TUHEMBERUA, SMP Swasta Kristen BNKP Gunungsitoli, SMP Negeri 1 Hilimegai, SMP Negeri 1 Lolowau, SMA Negeri 1 Hilimegai, SMA Negeri 1 Ulunoyo.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Merdeka curriculum is a broad intracurricular learning programme learning programme where students will have sufficient time to learn concepts and acquire competencies because the subjects will be delivered more effectively. To customise teaching to the interests and learning needs of individual students, teachers can choose from a number of teaching resources. Curriculum Implementation Merdeka Learning seeks to improve competence of graduates, both soft skills and hard skills, to be more prepared and relevant to the needs of the times. with the needs of the times. It also helps graduates develop into superior national leaders in the future future and foster a positive

personality. positive personality. Teachers also need learning tools during the learning process. Tools These learning tools are made to ensure that the learning process is successful maximum

In our research of several English teachers in each school, information on teachers' perceptions related to Merdeka curriculum development on Nias was not specifically available. Teachers' perceptions can vary and are influenced by a variety of factors, including personal experience, professional knowledge and approach to change. Teachers' perceptions of Merdeka curriculum development:

### **A. Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in Schools**

The Merdeka curriculum at school has been implemented and has been carried out in accordance with the path and provisions of the Merdeka curriculum, in the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum the learning process is very different from learning in the 2013 curriculum. The Merdeka curriculum that has been implemented provides opportunities for students to develop their respective abilities and potential, students are also invited to actively participate in teaching and learning activities and access learning from various sources. In addition, the Merdeka curriculum emphasises projects and the results obtained from these projects so that students learn more real and meaningful. During the implementation of this Merdeka curriculum, teachers and students are more motivated and the spirit of learning is higher, learning is more real, making school members understand learning better. And teachers have also been equipped with various things about the independent curriculum with IHT programmes, PMOs etc.

### **B. Challenges to Merdeka Curriculum Change**

Every change has challenges, namely the lack of school preparation in implementing the Merdeka curriculum such as facilities and the existence of some teachers who are not accepting of curriculum changes. So that sometimes they do not want to collaborate in developing activities on the Merdeka curriculum. the challenge is also the lack of learning support facilities such as projectors, printed books. And also the challenge can be how educators can carry out learning in accordance with the demands of the Merdeka curriculum, meaning that educators must be able to adjust and prepare

themselves in teaching students. These challenges may not exist if they are well implemented. And it is facilitated by an understanding of the Merdeka curriculum. With the support of school programme related to the Merdeka curriculum.

### **C. School or Government Support in Supporting Merdeka Curriculum Learning Activities**

Government and school support in implementing the curriculum certainly exists, one of the efforts made by the school and the government is to hold training on the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum to the teachers. So that the teachers can choose the first steps that must be taken in the teaching and learning process in the Merdeka curriculum. And also providing learning textbooks, as well as the IHT programme and also the existence of MGMP from the government.

### **D. Government in Supporting the Merdeka curriculum**

What the government can do in supporting the Merdeka curriculum is one of them providing training to teachers about the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and providing support facilities that can support and assist learning activities. And also provide full understanding to school regarding the Merdeka curriculum. The government needs to provide printed book assistance for the Merdeka curriculum in each school and pay attention to the facilities needed to support learning. And support the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum by preparing a team that can come to school to provide training, or it can also be by conducting seminars for all educators.

### **E. Merdeka Curriculum Changes at School**

Curriculum changes may be difficult to accept by everyone who plays a role in it. However, curriculum changes are good, because over time the times are moving forward, one way to adjust and follow the changing times is to change the curriculum in accordance with the times. Curriculum changes also invite every school community and curriculum stake holder to further hone their abilities and skills so that the expected result is that the curriculum is able to keep pace with the times, especially technological developments. With this curriculum, students are given more opportunities to explore

their interests and talents, while teachers have more freedom to adapt the subject matter according to the needs and conditions of the students.

**Interview Result Data:**

No.	Resource Person	Question	Answer
1.	Jelly Kristina Ndruru, S.Pd.	How is the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in the school where you teach?	The Merdeka Curriculum at the school where I teach has been implemented and has been carried out in accordance with the path and provisions of the Merdeka Curriculum, in the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum the learning process is very different from learning in the 2013 curriculum. The Merdeka curriculum that we have implemented provides opportunities for students to develop their respective abilities and potential.
2.	Anna Aznita Halawa, S.Pd.	Are there any challenges to the Merdeka curriculum change?	The challenge may not be there if it is well implemented.
3.	Okta'Arlin Harefa, S.Pd.	What is the school or government support in supporting Merdeka curriculum learning activities?	There is a lot of support, with us being the driving school, plus our principal is the driving school principal, as well as the IHT programme and also the MGMP from the government.

4.	Kristina Laia, S.Pd.	What do you think the government should do to support the Merdeka curriculum?	In my opinion, the government needs to provide independent curriculum printed books to each school and pay attention to the facilities needed to support learning.
5.	Honesty Laia, S.Pd.	How has the Merdeka curriculum changed in your school?	I think curriculum changes are good, because over time the times are moving forward, one way to adjust and keep up with changing times is to change the curriculum according to the times.
6.	Modestus Ndruru, S.Pd.	How is the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in the school where you teach?	It has begun to be implemented in the 2023-2024 school year specifically in class X. Then it has been running smoothly until now.

## CONCLUSION

From the results of interviews with 6 English teachers regarding the perceptions of those implementing the Merdeka Curriculum and providing opportunities for students to develop their individual abilities and potential, students are also invited to actively participate in teaching and learning activities and access learning from various sources. . Apart from that, the independent climate places more emphasis on projects and the results obtained from these projects so that students learn more realistically and meaningfully. During the implementation of this Merdeka curriculum, teachers and students are more motivated and their enthusiasm for learning is higher, learning is more real, making the school community understand learning better.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank the Almighty God who has given me health so that this article can be completed well and also to the course lecturer who taught the course for this article.

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