

# The Utilization of Merdeka Mengajar Platform at SD Inpres Sarongsong I

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## Abstract:

Mengajar Platform was presented by the government to answer various protests from several groups who were not yet familiar with the implementation of Merdeka Belajar. This study was conducted to describe the utilization, constraints and efforts to overcome the constraints to the utilization of Merdeka Mengajar Platform at SD InpresSarongsong I. This research is a descriptive study with a qualitative approach. the location of this research was conducted at SD InpresSarongsong I. The data collection techniques used are interviews, observation and documentation. Data validity testing uses data triangulation techniques, methods. Data analysis uses four stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing or verification. The results showed 1) The Utilization of Merdeka Mengajar Platform at SD InpresSarongsong 1 is Merdeka Curriculum features in learning such as Teaching Tools and Independent Training in teaching. However, features such as Student Assessment, Community, Inspiration Videos, and Proof of Work in work have not been accessed or utilized. 2) The constraints to utilizing the Merdeka Mengajar Platform are unstable internet access, teachers' time to access PMM, and features that are still under development and adjustment, making some teachers feel less familiar with utilizing it. 3) Efforts made by school principals and the Education Office, such as workshops, mentoring, and training by supervisors.

**Keywords —Merdeka Mengajar Platform, Merdeka Belajar, Merdeka Curriculum**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Merdeka Belajar is an educational slogan currently being implemented by the Government of Education and Culture. Merdeka belajar in the Merdeka curriculum emphasizes the freedom of students to develop their interests, talents and competencies[1]. The implementation of Merdeka curriculum follows the needs and necessities that are in accordance with current conditions[2]. The principle of Merdeka Belajar is expected to accelerate the process of educational reform in

Indonesia, which has been considered slowly withering. The Government of Education and Research has launched various Merdeka Belajar policies in an effort to achieve the Indonesian Education Vision by improving the quality of Indonesian education. Merdeka Belajar is a revolution in Indonesian education with higher quality. The implementation of Merdeka Belajar is based on the principle of respecting the natural nature of children and the basis of independence and family-based to support the growth and

development of children physically and mentally without orders and coercion but with guidance[3]. Independence provides a wide range of flexibility in the curriculum. Teacher independence is given the right to include local wisdom and independence of thought so that the nation's children can think independently and not be colonized by narrow thinking. Merdeka Belajar is implemented to free the brains and economic opportunities of the nation's children when entering the world of work, free teachers to be able to determine what is best for the competency level and interests of their children, and free educational institutions to innovate and try new things.

The implementation of Merdeka Belajar initially caused problems and rejection from several groups including teachers and schools due to a lack of understanding of the implementation of Merdeka Belajar in Merdeka curriculum. In response to this, the Government launched an application to support the implementation of Merdeka Belajar which can assist teachers in Merdeka Mengajar. The application is Merdeka Mengajar Platform. On the Merdeka Mengajar Platform, there are various features that help teachers prepare and plan learning according to the characteristics of students and material. Merdeka Mengajar Platform Media, which is a learning tool, can be said to be the core point as a support for the learning process. Merdeka Mengajar Platform Media is a tool used in the learning process to provide information needed by teachers as educators.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in conducting descriptive research on the utilization of Merdeka Mengajar Platform by teachers at SD Inpres Sarongsong I. The purpose of this research was conducted to describe 1) The Utilization of Merdeka Mengajar Platform at SD Inpres Sarongsong 1, Airmadidi District, North Minahasa Regency. 2) The constraints of utilizing of the Merdeka Mengajar Platform at SD Inpres Sarongsong I, Airmadidi District, North Minahasa Regency. 3) Efforts taken in overcoming constraints in the utilization of Merdeka Mengajar Platform at SD Inpres Sarongsong 1, Airmadidi District, North Minahasa Regency

## **II. METHOD**

This research is descriptive research with a qualitative approach, the location of this research was conducted at SD Inpres Sarongsong I in Airmadidi District, North Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province. The reason for choosing this research location is because this school is one of the educational institutions that has begun to implement the implementation of Merdeka curriculum. In addition, this school also uses the Merdeka Mengajar Platform. The implementation of this research was carried out from July 2023 to September 2023. The data collection techniques used are interviews or interviews, observation or observation and documentation[4]. Data validity testing uses data triangulation techniques. data analysis method uses four stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing or verification [5].

## **III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### *A. The Utilization of Merdeka Mengajar Platform at SD Inpres Sarongsong I*

The implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at SD Inpres Sarongsong I has started in determining the school curriculum by choosing Mandiri Berubah, which means that the education unit uses the Merdeka Curriculum in developing its education unit curriculum and applies it in carrying out learning and assessment. It can be seen from several classes that have implemented the Merdeka curriculum. For grade 1, grade 2, grade 4 and grade 5 while grade 3 and grade 6 still apply the 2013 curriculum. The change from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum is a challenge for teachers, but they gradually adapt to these changes. This challenge is in line with the Merdeka Belajar policy as a freedom to innovate, freedom to learn independently and creatively, which means that schools have the freedom to determine the curriculum according to their needs. Meanwhile, teachers have the freedom to learn and prepare lessons. Teachers who have a role as educators and as teachers must educate with heart and full of responsibility in developing the character of students and must be able to transfer knowledge

and develop learning materials according to the curriculum and experience[6]. Teacher competence determines the achievement of learning objectives[7], improving teacher competence must be carried out in a programmed and scheduled manner[8].

The first research finding is that teachers develop their competence by utilizing the Merdeka Mengajar Platform in the teaching tool feature. The Merdeka Mengajar Platform is a technology platform developed by the Government of Education and Culture to support education units in carrying out the learning process and capacity building of teachers and education personnel[9]. With a learning id account, principals and teachers can access and utilize the Merdeka Mengajar Platform or PMM. With the use of Merdeka Mengajar Platform or PMM, teachers have been greatly helped in getting to know and implementing Merdeka curriculum. Merdeka Mengajar Platform is a technology platform provided for teachers and principals in teaching, learning, and working.

The utilization of Merdeka Mengajar Platform at SD Inpres Saroinsong I is the teaching tool feature. This feature helps teachers find references[10] or inspiration for learning materials that are suitable for the characteristics and needs of their students. Teaching tools can be in the form of teaching materials, teaching modules, project modules, or text books. Through Teaching Tools, teachers can easily find inspiration for teaching materials according to the subject and phase in which the teacher teaches. Each teaching tool is also equipped with learning pathways and outcomes that make it easier for teachers to navigate the learning process in accordance with the principles of an Merdeka curriculum. Mean while, the teaching module contains learning objectives, steps, and media, as well as assessments needed in one topic based on the Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP). The teaching module contains a classroom learning plan.

Interview results related to the Self-training feature in PMM provides an opportunity for teachers to improve their understanding of Merdeka Curriculum. However, most teachers are still in the early stages of completing the training modules and

not many have received certificates. As can be seen, those who have certificates as a result of real action are the principal and grade 4 teacher. However, teachers have started to study and complete modules in Merdeka Mengajar feature as one of the requirements for filing for receiving certification benefits. And it is a motivation to get a certificate that can later be used in calculating the credit score for promotion of civil servant teachers.

The results of interviews with principals and teachers related to research questions about other features such as student assessment in teaching, communities in learning, as well as inspirational videos and evidence of work and work show that they only know the features and do not understand the function of these features so that teachers still do not access them. Although informants have not accessed some of the features in PMM, they shown thusiasm to continue learning and adapting to the changes in Merdeka curriculum.

#### *B. The Constraints of Utilizing the Merdeka Mengajar Platform at SD Inpres Saroinsong I*

The second research finding in the utilization of Merdeka Mengajar Platform or PMM is the constraints to its implementation. The constraints faced in utilizing the Merdeka Mengajar Platform or PMM, namely the main supporting factor is the internet network. This research finding is as revealed in the journal article in [11]. Because in accessing PMM must have a stable internet network. If there is no PMM internet network, teachers will not be able to log in, the good state of the network in the SD Inpres Saroinsong I environment is only in certain classes such as in the grade 1 area, teachers use internet quotas on smartphones. For grade 4 and grade 5 teachers have to leave the classroom because the stable internet network is in the school yard. In addition, another factor is the utilization of time teachers can only access PMM after the lesson is over. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factor is that most of the teachers are housewives who have no time to access PMM when they return home. In addition to the age gap, teachers who have experienced curriculum changes from year to year find it difficult to use PMM because they are not yet fluent in using it, such as the research findings from journal article in [9]. As the results of

interviews with grade 1 teachers and grade 4 teachers they often forget the learning account id used in logging in PMM.

However, there are drawbacks to Merdeka Mengajar Platform, which is still under development based on the latest information released on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 in the figure 1 below:



Fig. 1. Merdeka Mengajar Platform can be accessed using Chromebook

As well as the location of features that change places in the application. So that teachers when accessing are a little confused and have to open with the help of school operators or teachers who understand and better how to operate it.

### C. The role of guru penggerak as a Coach or Practice Teacher for other teachers

The results of the researcher's interview with the principal that the principal, apart from providing an internet network and quota, has a program at the beginning of each new school year, namely collaboration with supervisors and principals in Airmadidi District will hold workshop activities during the class promotion holiday so that it does not interfere with learning activities. The next program is IHT or In House Training, which is a training activity specifically for teachers of SD Inpres Sarongsong I, so that teachers are more focused on material about implementing the

Merdeka Curriculum, in which there is already material on the use of PMM. This is like the research findings of journal article in [12] that there are several strategies carried out in implementing Merdeka Mengajar Platform, namely habituation, peer learning, conducting in-house training and workshops.

The results of the researcher's interview with the grade 2 teacher that collaboration between grade 1 and grade 2 teachers has been created in phase A is a positive step. This allows the sharing and development of materials from CP and ATP, so that teachers can support each other in implementing Merdeka curriculum and integrating ICT advances with TPACK implementation [13]. Likewise, what was conveyed by the grade 4 teacher was that their grade 4 and grade 5 teachers collaborated with each other in determining the material for phase C.

Furthermore, the efforts made by the government of North Minahasa Regency for schools in improving learning that is increasingly developing with digital is Chromebook assistance. Each public and private elementary and junior high school was given 27 units of chromebooks. Chromebook assistance is the result of cooperation between the North Minahasa Regency government and Pusdatin (Data and Information Center), so that this chromebook is specifically for use in learning and can access educational applications such as Merdeka Mengajar Platform. The handover of this assistance took place at Sentra Hotel, on Monday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023 symbolically by Regent Joune Ganda, represented by Regional Secretary Ir. Novly Wowiling accompanied by Assistant for Government Affairs Umbase Mayuntu. Based on the figure 2 and 3 below.



Fig. 2 Handover of ICT (Chromebooks) to Public and Private Elementary and Junior High School Education Units



Fig. 3 Handover of ICT (Chromebooks) to Public and Private Elementary and Junior High School Education Units

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it is concluded as follows.

1. The utilization of Merdeka Mengajar Platform at SD Inpres Sarongsong I is Merdeka Curriculum features in learnings such as Teaching Tools and Independent Training in teaching. However, features such as Student Assessment, Community, Inspiration Videos, and Proof of Work in work have not been accessed or utilized.
2. The constraints to utilizing the Merdeka Mengajar Platform are unstable internet access, teachers' time to access PMM, and features that are still under development and adjustment, making some teachers feel less familiar with using it.
3. Efforts made by school principals and the education office, such as workshops, mentoring and training by supervisors

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