

## The Extent of Merdeka Curriculum Implementation in the Specific Context of Elementary School 04 Madenan in Buleleng Regency

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### Abstract

This research explores the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan in Buleleng Regency, focusing on its strengths, weaknesses, and the extent of its application. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through open-ended questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and transcription analysis, with teachers as the primary participants. Teachers were purposively selected due to their pivotal role in implementing the curriculum, providing rich insights into the challenges and successes encountered. Michael Fullan's (2014) theory served as the analytical framework to evaluate the findings. The results indicate that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan has been largely successful in adapting to the school's specific needs. Teachers actively reflect on challenges, assess the curriculum's relevance, and collaborate to develop effective teaching strategies. While most teachers successfully optimize local resources, some still encounter difficulties in utilizing them effectively. Additionally, there are opportunities to enhance local community engagement to support more contextualized learning. Overall, the school's efforts in fostering collaboration among teachers, administration, and the community demonstrate a strong commitment to the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. However, improvements are needed, particularly in developing assessment practices and establishing more structured community partnerships.

**Keywords:** Merdeka Curriculum, implementation, elementary education, qualitative research, curriculum adaptation

### 1. Introduction

The Merdeka Curriculum, introduced as part of Indonesia's educational reform, aims to establish a more adaptable and inclusive student-centered learning environment. This curriculum is designed to address diverse learning needs while promoting active engagement, critical thinking, and creativity among students. Its implementation at the elementary level plays a crucial role in shaping the foundation for lifelong learning and

personal development. Most elementary schools in Indonesia, including Elementary School 04 Madenan in Buleleng Regency, have adopted the Merdeka Curriculum to improve educational quality and better equip students for the demands of the 21st century. The school has undertaken this initiative with the expectation that the new curriculum will foster a more interactive and effective learning experience.

Although the Merdeka Curriculum has been widely implemented in Indonesia's education system, its transition process presents several challenges. The effectiveness of its implementation depends on various factors, including teacher readiness, the availability of resources, and support from the broader school community. Therefore, it is essential to assess both the strengths and challenges of this implementation to understand its impact on the educational process and identify areas for improvement. (McPhail, 2020) emphasizes that every educational institution utilizes a curriculum as a fundamental reference for the learning process. Similarly, (Campbel, 2020) asserts that curriculum plays a central role in shaping educational outcomes, as it determines both the process and results of an education system. (Kaplan, 2023) further explains that the curriculum serves as both a tool for achieving educational objectives and a framework that guides instruction across different educational levels and settings.

Various curriculum models have been implemented in Indonesia to accommodate rapid technological advancements and integrate digital literacy into the learning process. Since 2019, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology has promoted an educational transformation at all levels, from elementary to higher education, under the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum. (Rotty et al., 2022) the Merdeka Curriculum is structured with diverse intra-curricular learning objectives, ensuring that content is optimized to provide students with sufficient time to explore concepts and enhance their competencies. Teachers are given the flexibility to select various teaching tools, allowing them to tailor learning to students' needs and interests.

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum requires teachers to align learning objectives with the Ministry's regulation Number 008/H/KR/2022, which outlines expected competencies in cognitive skills, knowledge, and practical abilities across different education levels, including early childhood, elementary, and secondary schools (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Teachers play a crucial role in the success of curriculum implementation, as their ability to deliver effective teaching directly impacts the learning process. The extent to which a curriculum is successfully implemented in educational institutions depends on the teacher's capacity to understand and apply it effectively. (Warsihna et al., 2023) highlight that the Merdeka Curriculum encourages teachers to focus on the learning process rather than being burdened with administrative tasks. In this approach, teachers are not only information providers but also problem solvers in daily learning activities. By assuming the role of facilitators, motivators, and innovators, teachers can inspire students to think critically and creatively. Effective teaching strategies, coupled with the integration of new ideas and technology, enhance students' knowledge and skills (Kalyani & Rajasekaran, 2018).

However, in practice, the full implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum faces several challenges. Issues such as inadequate human resource preparation and limited supporting facilities have affected its success. Educational institutions at all levels continue to adjust to the curriculum to ensure that national education goals are met (Hayes Jacobs, 2010).

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is widely recognized as a new learning paradigm, emphasizing student-centered learning approaches (Sopiansyah & Masruroh, 2021). This paradigm follows a structured learning cycle, beginning with mapping competency standards, planning the learning process, and conducting assessments to enhance learning outcomes so that students can achieve the expected competencies. Within this framework, teachers have full autonomy in the learning process (Littlewood, 1996), particularly in designing lesson plans and assessments tailored to students' characteristics and needs. Additionally, the Pancasila Student Profile serves as a guiding principle for educational policies and reforms, influencing both learning activities and assessment methods.

While numerous studies have analyzed various aspects of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation, further research is necessary to evaluate its strengths and challenges in the specific context of Elementary School 04 Madenan. Previous research must be considered to identify areas for improvement in this curriculum, especially within particular elementary schools, to facilitate effective future revisions. (Momanyi & Rop, 2019) assert that teacher readiness is a crucial factor in the successful adoption of a new curriculum. However, many studies fail to precisely identify the specific training needs of teachers across different regions, highlighting the necessity of focused research on professional development requirements in elementary schools.

Furthermore, (Nevenglosky et al., 2018) argue that previous studies often overlook the significance of resource availability and how schools utilize these resources in implementing new curricula. This underscores the need for comprehensive research on the accessibility and use of educational resources in specific schools. (Amiruddin et al., 2023) also highlight the lack of empirical data on how students engage with the Merdeka Curriculum and its impact on their learning outcomes. Addressing this gap is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum in enhancing student learning. Moreover, (Pang & Ki, 2024) emphasize that support from the community and school administration plays a vital role in the successful implementation of the curriculum. However, many studies do not thoroughly examine their involvement, indicating the need for further research on the contributions of community engagement and administrative support in facilitating the Merdeka Curriculum's implementation.

Although research on the Merdeka Curriculum continues to expand, there remains a significant gap in studies examining its implementation at the micro level, particularly within specific school settings such as Elementary School 04 Madenan. Most existing studies focus on the theoretical framework of the curriculum or provide broad overviews of its implementation across various regions. However, in-depth case studies

that analyze the practical challenges and successes at the school level are still limited. Several research gaps need to be addressed, including:

First, Context-Specific Analysis. There is a lack of detailed studies that explore how the Merdeka Curriculum is implemented in diverse school environments. Given its unique demographic and socio-economic characteristics, Elementary School 04 Madenan serves as an important case for understanding the localized impact of the curriculum.

Second, Teacher Preparedness and Professional Development. While some studies have examined teachers' general readiness for the Merdeka Curriculum, there is insufficient data on the specific professional development needs and experiences of teachers in elementary schools like 04 Madenan. Identifying gaps in training and support can help design more effective professional development programs.

Third, Resource Availability and Utilization. Further analysis is required to assess the availability and use of educational resources within the Merdeka Curriculum framework. This includes physical materials, digital tools, and infrastructure, all of which play a crucial role in ensuring the curriculum's successful implementation.

Fourth, Student Engagement and Learning Outcomes. Although the curriculum is designed to improve student engagement and learning outcomes, empirical evidence from specific schools remains limited. Investigating how students at Elementary School 04 Madenan interact with the curriculum and how it influences their educational achievements can provide valuable insights.

Fifth, Community and Administrative Support. The role of school administrators, parents, and the broader community in supporting the Merdeka Curriculum's implementation has not been widely studied. Research into how these stakeholders contribute to curriculum changes could highlight key factors that drive successful implementation.

By addressing the existing research gaps, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and challenges associated with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan. The findings of this research will not only contribute to the existing body of knowledge but also offer practical recommendations to enhance curriculum implementation in schools with similar characteristics. This study holds significant value as it identifies gaps in the literature concerning the Merdeka Curriculum, particularly in its micro-level implementation, such as at Elementary School 04 Madenan. Most prior studies have predominantly focused on theoretical aspects or provided broad overviews of curriculum implementation across various regions. However, detailed case studies that examine the practical challenges and successes of curriculum implementation in specific schools remain limited.

Furthermore, the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has the potential to transform elementary education in Indonesia. However, such a transformation requires a nuanced understanding of local contexts, sustained support for educators, and a strong commitment to addressing emerging challenges. Therefore,

this study not only analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of the Merdeka Curriculum's implementation at Elementary School 04 Madenan but also provides insights that can assist educators and policymakers in refining the curriculum and its implementation strategies. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to ongoing efforts to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, particularly within the context of elementary education.

## 2. Method

The present study adopts a qualitative research design aimed at constructing a comprehensive understanding of perspectives on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum within a specific elementary school in Indonesia. To ensure the reliability and validity of the research, a range of qualitative research instruments are employed, including open-ended questionnaires, verbatim transcriptions, and, when necessary, audio recordings and in-depth interviews. The participants in this study comprise teachers who are directly involved in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan. These teachers are selected as primary informants due to their pivotal role in curriculum enactment, enabling them to provide critical insights into both the challenges and successes encountered in the process. A purposive sampling strategy is employed to ensure the inclusion of diverse perspectives and experiences, thus allowing for a more holistic and nuanced analysis of the curriculum's implementation.

Data analysis in this study is conducted using a thematic analysis approach, facilitating the identification, analysis, and reporting of patterns (themes) emerging from the data. The initial phase of this process involves data transcription, wherein all interview recordings and observation notes are meticulously transcribed to capture and document all pertinent information. These transcriptions then undergo multiple readings to ensure a deep comprehension of the data content, which serves as the foundation for the initial coding process. The initial coding phase involves labeling relevant segments of data in alignment with the research questions. These codes represent recurring concepts or themes identified throughout the dataset. For example, codes such as teacher preparedness, administrative support, and student engagement may emerge from the analysis of interview transcripts and observational data. The coding process is conducted manually and may also incorporate qualitative analysis software to enhance data organization and facilitate pattern recognition.

Following the initial coding, the identified codes are systematically categorized into broader thematic constructs that encapsulate key findings relevant to the study. Emerging themes may include strengths of the Merdeka Curriculum, limitations of the curriculum, challenges in implementation, and available support and resources. Organizing the data into meaningful thematic categories allows the researcher to discern relationships among the identified codes and provide a structured framework for interpretation. The interpretative stage of data analysis involves an in-depth exploration of the meanings underlying the identified themes. This stage integrates the

study's findings with existing literature and contextual considerations at Elementary School 04 Madenan, ensuring a comprehensive and contextually grounded analysis. Data triangulation is employed to enhance the credibility and validity of the findings by cross-verifying insights obtained from interviews, observations, and relevant documents.

The final phase of the analysis involves compiling the research findings into a formal report. This report presents a detailed synthesis of key findings, thematic interpretations, and practical recommendations for optimizing the future implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. By providing a critical evaluation of the curriculum's strengths and challenges within the studied context, the study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on curriculum development and educational reform in Indonesia.

### **3. Findings and Discussion**

The research findings explore the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan through various critical dimensions, including context-specific analysis, teacher preparedness and professional development, resource availability and utilization, student engagement and outcomes, as well as community and administrative support. These aspects are examined to assess how effectively the curriculum adapts to the school's unique socio-economic and cultural context. The findings shed light on the readiness of teachers to deliver the curriculum, the availability and use of resources to support learning, and the extent to which students are engaged and achieving desired outcomes. Moreover, the role of community involvement and administrative backing in facilitating or hindering the curriculum's success is also analyzed, offering a comprehensive understanding of its implementation in this specific setting. Therefore, the data can be analyzed as follows:

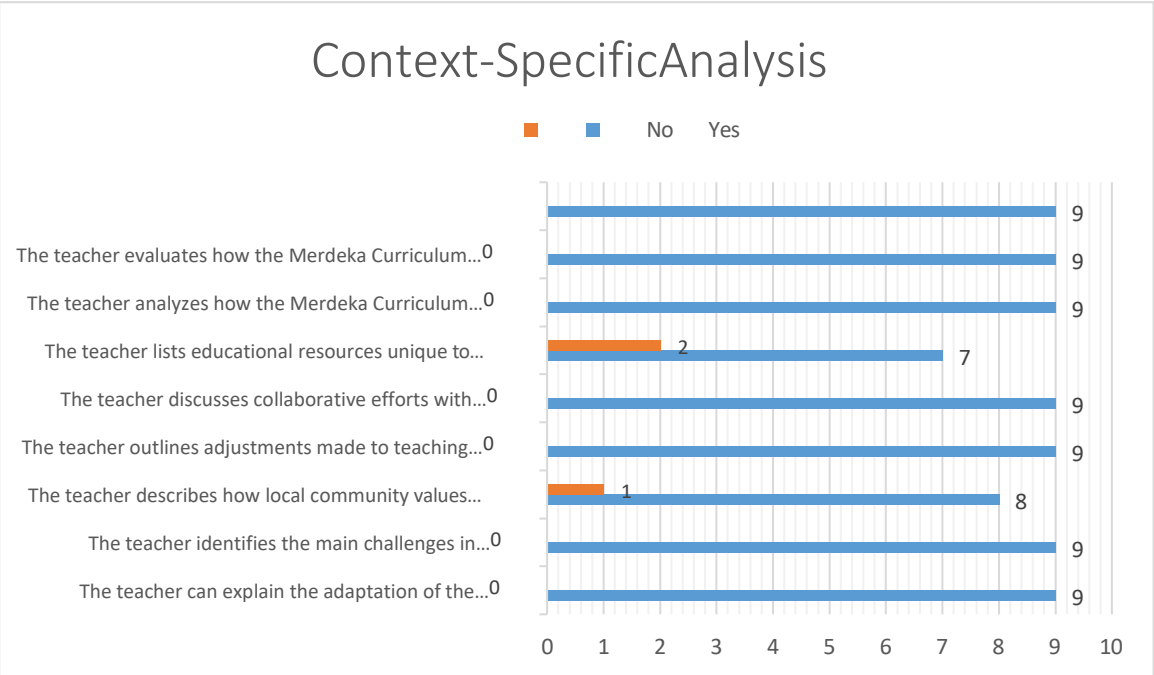
#### **3.1. Context-Specific Analysis**

The context-specific analysis of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan provides a detailed examination of how the curriculum is adapted to the unique characteristics of the school and its surrounding community. This analysis takes into account the diverse socio-economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds of the students, which play a significant role in shaping the educational needs and priorities within the school. At Elementary School 04 Madenan, the Merdeka Curriculum is implemented with the aim of addressing this diversity by offering a more flexible and student-centered approach to learning. The curriculum's emphasis on personalization and contextual relevance aligns well with the challenges and opportunities presented by the school's specific demographic profile. For instance, students come from varied economic statuses, which can affect their access to learning resources and support systems, while cultural diversity requires teaching strategies that are inclusive and respectful of different traditions and perspectives.



Moreover, the school's geographic and infrastructural context influences the extent to which the curriculum's components, such as project-based learning and differentiated instruction, can be effectively executed. Teachers at Elementary School 04 Madenan play a pivotal role in adapting the curriculum to fit these contextual realities, often requiring innovative approaches to overcome resource constraints and ensure that learning objectives are met. The analysis also considers how well the curriculum integrates with local values and practices, fostering a sense of relevance and connection between what students learn in school and their everyday lives. By examining these context-specific factors, the research highlights both the strengths and challenges of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in this setting, offering insights into how such an approach can be refined to better meet the needs of diverse educational environments. Therefore, the chart from the explanation above can be explained as follows.

**Datum 1:**



**Figure 1. The Chart of Context-Specific Analysis**

The chart of "Context-Specific Analysis" provides a comprehensive overview of teachers' various aspects of the Merdeka Curriculum's implementation at Elementary School 04 Madenan. The data is categorized into nine key indicators, measuring whether teachers address and respond to specific context-related factors during the curriculum implementation process. Each indicator reflects the teachers' ability to adapt the curriculum to the unique characteristics of the school and its community. The data shows strong positive responses across most indicators, indicating that the majority of teachers actively engage with critical aspects of curriculum adaptation. For instance, all nine teachers reflected on challenges encountered in implementing the curriculum, evaluated its relevance, and analyzed how it aligns with the specific context of the

school. Similarly, all teachers discussed collaborative efforts with colleagues and outlined adjustments made to teaching methods to suit the unique needs of students. This suggests that teachers at the school demonstrate a high level of awareness and responsibility in contextualizing the curriculum.

However, there are areas where a small percentage of teachers face challenges. Specifically, while seven teachers successfully listed educational resources unique to the school, two were unable to do so. This may indicate limited familiarity or difficulty accessing and utilizing local resources. Additionally, one teacher did not describe how local community values and practices influence teaching, which could point to a need for stronger community engagement or more training in integrating cultural values into the curriculum.

The analysis of the "Context-Specific Analysis" chart provides critical insights into the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan, highlighting teachers' efforts to adapt the curriculum to the unique socio-cultural and educational context of the school. The categorization into nine key indicators offers a structured framework for assessing teachers' responsiveness to context-related factors, revealing that most teachers have demonstrated a commendable ability to align the curriculum with the school's specific needs. This finding is consistent with (Slade et al., 2019), assert that effective curriculum implementation requires teachers to act as reflective practitioners who continuously adapt their approaches based on the context in which they teach. The data indicates that all nine teachers actively reflected on challenges, evaluated curriculum relevance, and collaborated with colleagues to refine their teaching strategies—actions that underscore a strong commitment to contextualizing the Merdeka Curriculum.

The findings further align with (Pathan et al., 2018) sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the importance of considering the socio-cultural environment in education. The teachers' ability to identify challenges and collaboratively adjust teaching methods reflects a deep understanding of how the curriculum interacts with the local context. For example, their efforts to address the unique needs of students demonstrate an application of differentiated instruction principles, which (Hymel & Katz, 2019) describe as essential for fostering inclusive and effective learning environments. The collaborative efforts among teachers also reflect the value of professional learning communities, which (Pak et al., 2020) highlight as critical for enhancing teaching quality and ensuring curriculum adaptation aligns with contextual demands.

However, the data also reveals areas for improvement. While the majority of teachers successfully identified and utilized educational resources unique to the school, two teachers encountered difficulties in this area. This may stem from limited familiarity with local resources or challenges in integrating them into teaching practices. Such gaps align with research by (Ntebi, 2023) which underscores the importance of equipping teachers with adequate training and access to resources to effectively contextualize their teaching. Additionally, one teacher's inability to describe how local community values influence teaching suggests a potential gap in community engagement or cultural



integration—critical aspects of curriculum implementation, as emphasized by (Epstein, 2019) theory of overlapping spheres of influence, which advocates for strong collaboration between schools, families, and communities to enhance student learning.

These findings highlight the dual importance of professional development and community involvement in addressing the identified gaps. Ongoing training programs can help teachers deepen their understanding of how to identify and integrate local resources, while also equipping them with strategies to embed cultural values into their teaching. Furthermore, fostering stronger partnerships with the local community can provide teachers with richer insights into cultural practices and values, enabling them to design lessons that resonate with students' lived experiences. This aligns with the views of (Gay, 2018) who emphasizes the importance of culturally responsive teaching in creating meaningful and engaging learning experiences for students.

### **3.2. Teacher Preparedness and Professional Development**

The extent to which the Merdeka Curriculum is implemented at Elementary School 04 Madenan is closely tied to the preparedness of teachers and the professional development opportunities available to them. Teacher preparedness plays a main role in ensuring that the curriculum's principles of flexibility and student-centered learning are effectively translated into classroom practices. At Elementary School 04 Madenan, teachers are not only required to understand the theoretical framework of the Merdeka Curriculum but also to adapt it to the unique socio-economic, cultural, and educational contexts of their students. This demands a high level of competence, creativity, and responsiveness from teachers, which can only be achieved through targeted professional development programs. Such programs are essential for equipping teachers with the skills and knowledge needed to design and deliver innovative learning experiences, align teaching methods with diverse student needs, and address challenges that arise during curriculum implementation.

Moreover, professional development initiatives also provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate, share best practices, and reflect on their teaching strategies, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. However, the success of these efforts depends on various factors, including the availability of training resources, the relevance of training content to the teachers' specific contexts, and the level of administrative and community support. To better understand the extent of teacher preparedness and the role of professional development in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, the analysis incorporates data on teacher engagement with specific aspects of curriculum adaptation. The chart below offers a detailed breakdown of how teachers at Elementary School 04 Madenan respond to critical indicators as follow below:

Datum 2:

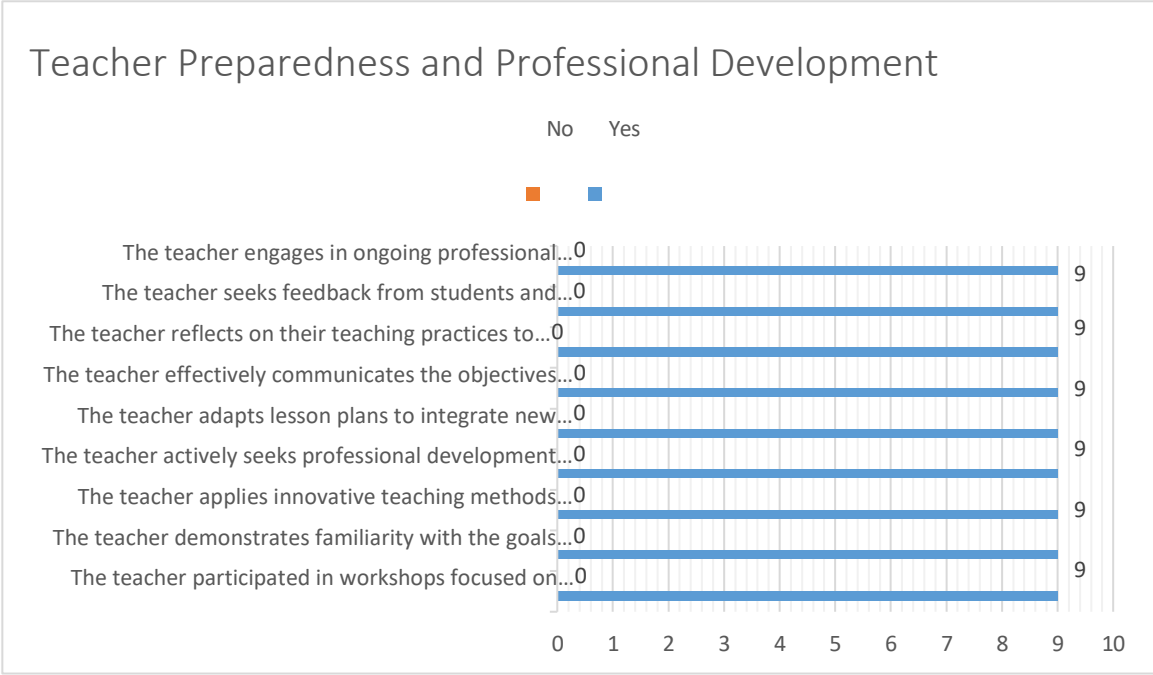


Figure 2. The Chart of Teacher Preparedness and Professional Development

The chart of "Teacher Preparedness and Professional Development" illustrates the responses of teachers at Elementary School 04 Madenan regarding their engagement with various aspects of professional development and readiness in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The data highlights consistently positive responses across all indicators, with all nine teachers affirming their participation and engagement in key areas.

Firstly, the chart shows that all teachers actively engage in ongoing professional development, indicating a commitment to improving their knowledge and skills. They also seek feedback from students and colleagues to refine their teaching practices, demonstrating a reflective and collaborative approach to education. Additionally, all teachers effectively communicate the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum to their students, ensuring clarity in the learning process. This ability to align classroom activities with curriculum goals reflects their understanding of the curriculum's principles.

Furthermore, the teachers consistently adapt lesson plans to integrate new methodologies and innovations, showcasing their creativity and responsiveness to diverse student needs. Their active pursuit of professional development opportunities, such as workshops and training sessions, highlights their dedication to staying updated with best practices. The chart also emphasizes that all teachers apply innovative teaching methods and demonstrate familiarity with the goals and framework of the Merdeka Curriculum. Their participation in workshops specifically focused on implementing this curriculum underscores the structured support they receive to enhance their preparedness.

The analysis of the "Teacher Preparedness and Professional Development" chart highlights the remarkable engagement of teachers at Elementary School 04 Madenan in various aspects of professional growth and readiness for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The consistently positive responses across all indicators reflect the teachers' proactive approach to enhancing their competencies and adapting to the dynamic demands of education. This finding aligns with the perspective of (Darling-Hammond, 2021) who emphasizes that effective teaching is closely tied to ongoing professional development and reflective practices. By actively participating in workshops, seeking feedback, and integrating innovative methodologies into their teaching, these teachers demonstrate a high level of professionalism and commitment to the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum.

One notable aspect of the chart is the emphasis on reflective and collaborative practices. All teachers actively seek feedback from students and colleagues, underscoring their willingness to critically evaluate and improve their teaching strategies. This approach resonates with (Pietrzak, 2022) concept of the reflective practitioner, which advocates for educators to engage in continuous self-assessment and adaptation to meet the evolving needs of their students. Moreover, the teachers' ability to clearly communicate the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum to their students demonstrates an understanding of curriculum alignment, which is critical for ensuring that learning activities are purposeful and effectively linked to desired outcomes. As noted by (Visone, 2022) the ability to translate curriculum goals into actionable classroom practices is a hallmark of effective teaching.

The chart also reveals the teachers' creativity and responsiveness in adapting lesson plans to incorporate new methodologies and innovations. This aligns with the principles of differentiated instruction (Ndlovu, 2020) which emphasize the importance of tailoring teaching approaches to accommodate diverse student needs. The teachers' consistent application of innovative teaching methods further underscores their commitment to creating engaging and student-centered learning environments. Such practices are essential for fostering critical thinking, creativity, and independent learning among students (Sasson et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the teachers' active participation in workshops and training sessions focused on the Merdeka Curriculum highlights the structured support provided to enhance their preparedness. This finding supports the view of (Nguyen, 2019) who argues that professional development initiatives are most effective when they are targeted, ongoing, and directly relevant to teachers' instructional responsibilities. The workshops not only equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge but also foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement within the school. This proactive engagement with professional development reflects the school's commitment to building a strong foundation for the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Despite the overwhelmingly positive responses, the findings also suggest the importance of sustaining and expanding support systems to ensure that teachers can

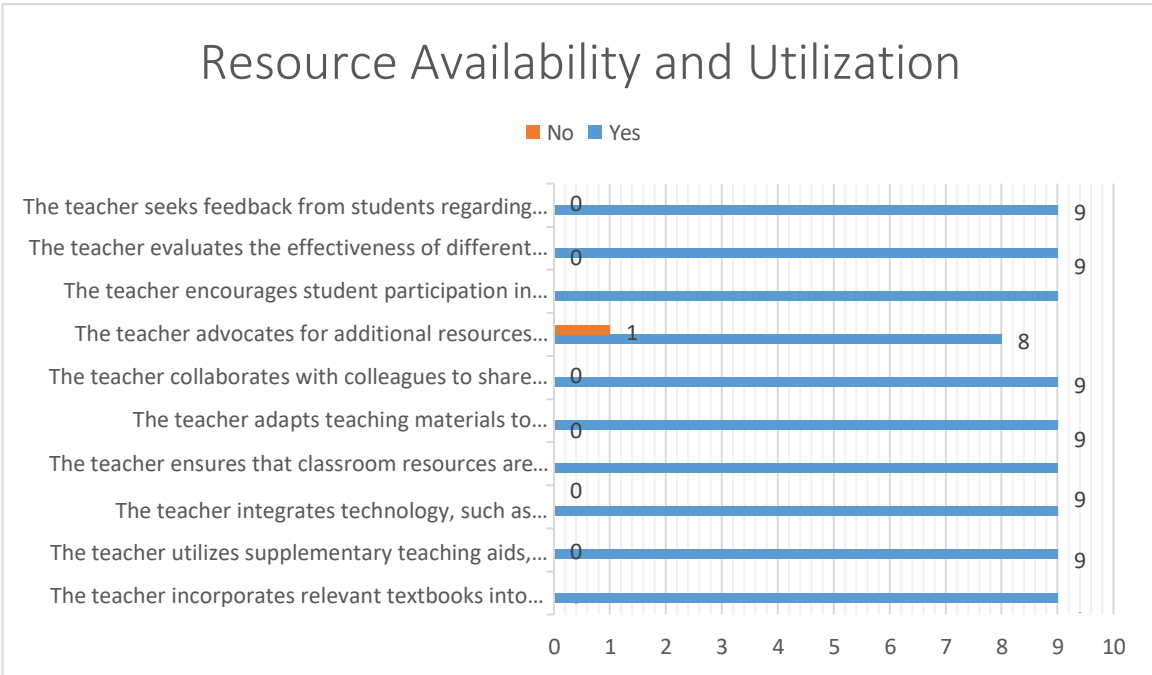
continue to adapt to new challenges. Research by (Kruse, 2017) underscores that effective professional development requires a combination of theoretical knowledge, practical application, and sustained follow-up support. Providing additional resources, such as access to technology, peer mentoring programs, and opportunities for collaborative lesson planning, can further enhance teachers' capacity to implement the curriculum effectively. Additionally, regular evaluation of professional development programs can help identify areas for improvement and ensure that training remains aligned with teachers' evolving needs.

### **3.3. Resource Availability and Utilization**

The successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan is significantly influenced by the availability and effective utilization of resources. Resource availability encompasses a wide range of elements, including teaching materials, technological tools, infrastructure, and financial support, all of which play a crucial role in facilitating the curriculum's objectives. In the context of Elementary School 04 Madenan, the diverse socio-economic background of students highlights the importance of ensuring equitable access to resources to support inclusive learning. The extent to which these resources are utilized effectively depends on the school's ability to identify, acquire, and allocate them in alignment with the curriculum's focus on personalized and flexible education. Teachers' ability to creatively adapt and integrate available resources into their teaching practices is also pivotal, particularly in addressing the diverse needs of students and fostering an engaging learning environment.

Additionally, the utilization of local resources and community involvement enhances the relevance of the curriculum by connecting classroom learning with real-world contexts. However, the school may face challenges such as limited funding, outdated infrastructure, or insufficient training in using modern teaching tools, which can hinder the full realization of the curriculum's potential. Therefore, understanding how resources are managed and applied provides valuable insights into the strengths and areas for improvement in the curriculum's implementation. To analyze this further, data was collected on key indicators of resource availability and utilization at Elementary School 04 Madenan, highlighting how teachers and administrators address resource-related challenges and opportunities. The following chart presents a detailed overview of these findings, offering a comprehensive perspective on the role of resources in shaping the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at this school.

**Datum 3:**



**Figure 3. The Chart of Resource Availability and Utilization**

The chart about "Resource Availability and Utilization" provides an overview of teachers' responses regarding their engagement with various aspects of resource management and application in the context of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan. The findings reveal a highly proactive attitude among teachers in ensuring the effective utilization of available resources to support the curriculum's objectives, with the majority of responses reflecting affirmative engagement across key indicators.

A striking feature of the chart is that all nine teachers consistently seek feedback from students about the effectiveness of the resources utilized, evaluate different materials for their appropriateness, and encourage active student participation in resource-based learning activities. These practices highlight the teachers' emphasis on fostering an interactive and student-centered learning environment. Additionally, all teachers collaborate with colleagues to share best practices and teaching strategies, reflecting a strong culture of teamwork and professional collaboration within the school.

The data also indicates that all teachers adapt teaching materials to align with the diverse needs of students, ensure classroom resources are accessible, and integrate supplementary aids and technology, such as digital tools, to enhance the learning process. Such actions demonstrate a commitment to leveraging both conventional and modern resources to create an inclusive and engaging educational experience.

However, one notable exception in the responses is the question of advocating for additional resources, where one teacher reported not being involved in this activity. This finding may point to a potential gap in addressing resource limitations or engaging

with stakeholders to secure additional support for curriculum implementation. Despite this, all teachers ensure that textbooks and other relevant materials are incorporated into their teaching practices, emphasizing the alignment between curriculum objectives and classroom implementation.

Overall, the chart reflects the teachers' strong efforts to optimize the available resources for the benefit of their students. It also underscores the importance of continuous advocacy and stakeholder engagement to address potential resource gaps, ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation at Elementary School 04 Madenan. The proactive measures taken by the teachers indicate a high level of preparedness and adaptability, important for meeting the diverse needs of the school community.

The chart on "Resource Availability and Utilization" provides valuable insights into how teachers at Elementary School 04 Madenan engage with resource management to support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The findings reveal a highly proactive and adaptive approach, as the majority of teachers demonstrate consistent efforts to optimize resources in alignment with curriculum goals. This proactive engagement aligns with the perspectives of (Hays & Reinders, 2018) who argue that resourcefulness and adaptability are critical for effective teaching, particularly in diverse and dynamic educational settings.

One of the most notable findings is the emphasis teachers place on gathering feedback from students regarding the effectiveness of the resources used. All nine teachers incorporate student feedback to refine their teaching practices, which underscores the importance of fostering a learner-centered approach to education. According to (Irons & Elkington, 2021) feedback mechanism enhances the learning process by enabling educators to identify and address areas of improvement, thereby promoting more meaningful and effective instruction. Moreover, teachers actively evaluate materials for appropriateness and encourage student participation in resource-based activities, reflecting their commitment to creating interactive and engaging learning environments. These practices resonate with (Asif et al., 2021) theory of social constructivism, which emphasizes the role of collaboration and resource-based learning in fostering student engagement and cognitive development.

### 3.4. Student Engagement and Outcomes

Student engagement and learning outcomes serve as essential indicators of the success of any curriculum, including the Merdeka Curriculum implemented at Elementary School 04 Madenan. The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes student-centered learning approaches, allowing students to actively participate in their educational journey, develop critical thinking skills, and demonstrate improved learning outcomes. Within this framework, engagement reflects the degree of student involvement in classroom activities, ranging from participation in discussions and collaborative tasks to the application of creative and critical thinking in solving real-world problems. On the other hand, outcomes refer to measurable achievements, including academic performance,



skill development, and the cultivation of positive attitudes toward lifelong learning. Teachers play a pivotal role in designing and delivering lessons that align with the Merdeka Curriculum's objectives, tailoring them to suit the unique needs and interests of the students. The school's emphasis on personalized and contextualized learning further enhances the relevance and impact of the curriculum.

To better understand how these factors interact and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan, a focused analysis of student engagement and outcomes was conducted. This analysis aimed to evaluate how well students connect with the learning process and how their progress reflects the curriculum's core goals. The following chart provides a detailed overview of the data collected, highlighting key trends and areas for further improvement in fostering student engagement and achieving desired learning outcomes. Therefore, it is the data chart as follow below:

Datum 4:

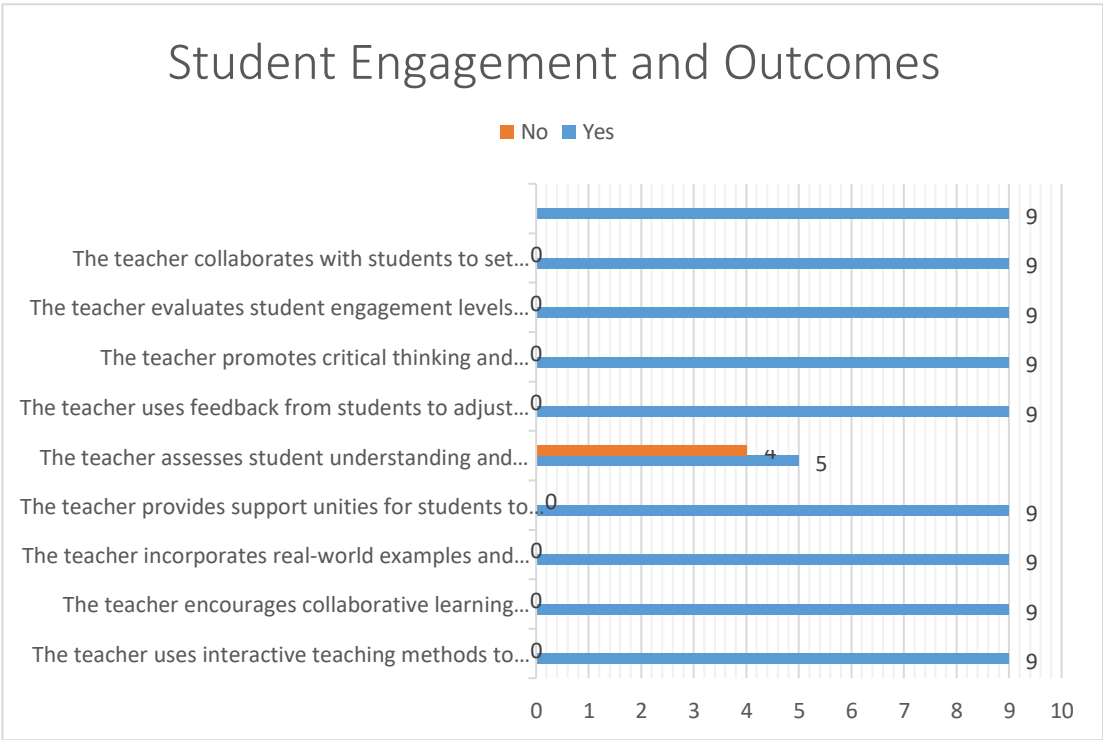


Figure 4: The Chart of Student Engagement and Outcomes

The Student Engagement and Outcomes chart illustrates various aspects related to student engagement and learning outcomes at Elementary School 04 Madenan within the context of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The data shows that the majority of the analyzed indicators achieved perfect scores, with all nine teachers reporting that they performed specific tasks to support student engagement and learning outcomes. These indicators include teacher collaboration with students to set learning goals, evaluation of student engagement levels, promotion of critical thinking

and problem-solving, use of student feedback to adjust teaching strategies, provision of opportunities for active student participation, and the application of interactive teaching methods.

However, one indicator reflects variability in teacher responses, namely the assessment of student understanding and progress. Among the nine teachers analyzed, only five confirmed that they actively assess student understanding, while the remaining four stated they do not. This may indicate a potential gap in the implementation of formal and informal evaluations of students, which are essential elements in supporting overall student engagement. Consistent assessment is necessary to understand individual learning needs and ensure that each student receives appropriate support according to their level of understanding.

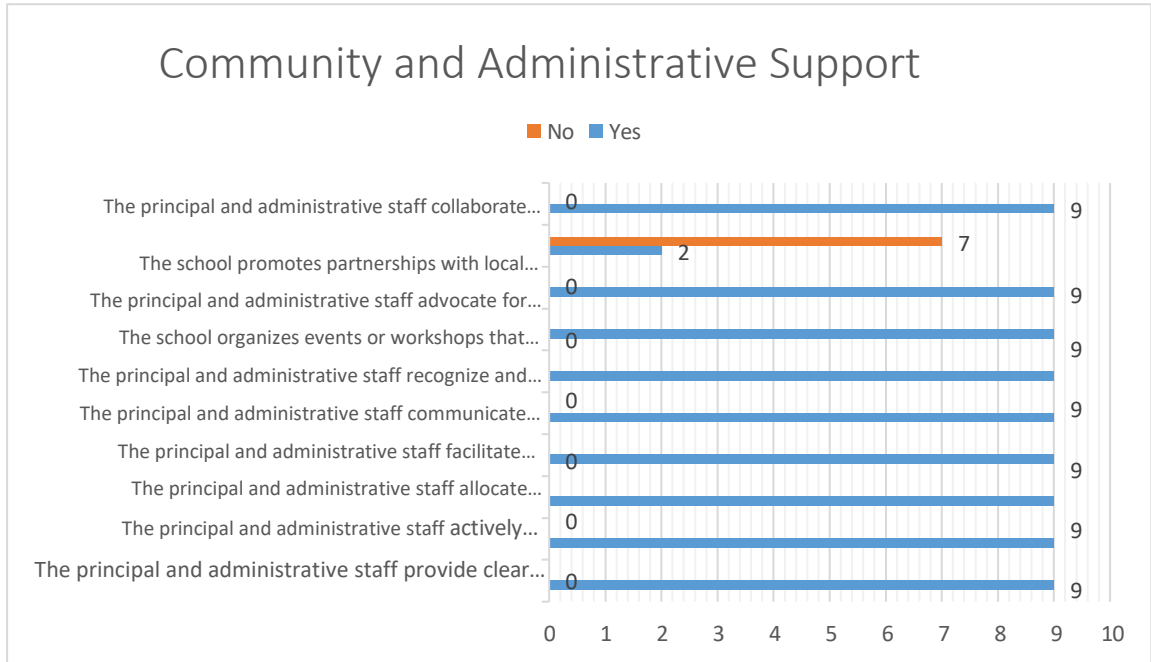
It is important to note that the high positive scores on most indicators demonstrate that the teachers at Elementary School 04 Madenan have shown a strong commitment to supporting student engagement and maximizing learning outcomes in line with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum. This reflects their readiness to create a participatory, innovative, and student-centered learning environment. However, areas that need improvement, such as the assessment of student understanding, could be the focus of further enhancements to ensure the optimal implementation of this curriculum. This data provides valuable insights into the successes and challenges faced by teachers in practicing the Merdeka Curriculum-based teaching approach.

### **3.5. Community and Administrative Support**

Community and administrative support play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of any educational initiative, including the Merdeka Curriculum. At Elementary School 04 Madenan, this dimension reflects the collective efforts of teachers, school administrators, parents, and the broader community in creating a conducive environment for learning. The Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes flexibility, innovation, and student-centered learning, requires robust support systems to ensure its principles and objectives are effectively translated into classroom practices. This support can manifest in various forms, including active involvement of parents in their children's education, collaboration between teachers and school leaders, provision of adequate resources, and the creation of policies that align with the curriculum's goals.

Furthermore, administrative leadership and the encouragement of community participation are essential for addressing potential challenges and enhancing the overall educational experience for students. At Elementary School 04 Madenan, the extent of such support is crucial for empowering teachers to innovate and adapt their teaching approaches while fostering a sense of shared responsibility among stakeholders. By examining the degree of administrative and community involvement, this study seeks to uncover the strengths and gaps in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at the school. The following chart highlights specific indicators related to community and administrative support and provides a detailed analysis of their contribution to the success of the curriculum implementation.

**Datum 5:**



**Figure 5. The Chart of Community and Administrative Support**

Based on figure 5 the chart of "Community and Administrative Support" graph, it is evident that the level of involvement of the principal and administrative staff at Elementary School 04 Madenan in supporting the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum shows highly positive results. Most indicators demonstrate maximum scores, with all respondents indicating that the principal and administrative staff have undertaken various strategic measures to support the learning process and community engagement. These efforts include collaboration between the principal and administrative staff, advocacy for students' needs, organizing relevant events or workshops, recognizing the achievements of students and teachers, effective communication with stakeholders, and providing clear guidance regarding the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

The only indicator that shows variation in responses is the aspect of the school promotes partnerships with local communities. On this indicator, seven respondents agreed that the school has promoted partnerships with local communities, while two respondents disagreed. This suggests a potential area for improvement in building and strengthening relationships with the surrounding community, which could significantly contribute to the holistic implementation of the curriculum. Partnerships with local communities are essential for providing additional resources, expanding students' learning experiences, and creating a more inclusive and contextually relevant educational environment.

Overall, these results reflect the high dedication of the principal and administrative staff in creating a supportive environment for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. However, greater attention to strengthening partnerships with local communities is one aspect that could be improved. This could involve organizing more

collaborative events, involving community organizations in school activities, or establishing relationships with relevant external parties to provide additional benefits for students. By enhancing this dimension, community and administrative support can be optimized to further ensure the success of the Merdeka Curriculum at this school.

#### 4. Conclusion

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Elementary School 04 Madenan demonstrates significant success in adapting the curriculum to the specific needs of the school. Teachers actively reflect on challenges, evaluate the curriculum's relevance, and collaborate to develop appropriate teaching strategies. While most teachers successfully optimize local resources, some still face difficulties in utilizing them. Additionally, there are opportunities to enhance local community engagement to support more contextualized learning. Overall, the school's efforts in fostering collaboration among teachers, administration, and the community reflect a strong commitment to the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, although there is room for improvement, particularly in the development of assessment practices and more structured community partnerships.

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