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Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum Management in Improving the Quality of Public Elementary Education in Serang Subdistrict

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum requires effective curriculum management to improve the quality of education in elementary schools. The success of curriculum implementation is influenced by the integration of management functions, including planning, organising, actuating, and controlling, which are carried out systematically according to the characteristics and needs of each school. This study aimed to describe the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum Management in improving educational quality at public elementary schools in Serang District. The study focused on four management functions (Planning, Organising, Actuating, and Controlling/POAC) as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting curriculum implementation. This research employed a qualitative approach using a multi-site study design. The research was conducted at five public elementary schools in Serang District. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving 36 informants consisting of school supervisors, principals, teachers, and parents. Data were analysed through data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and triangulation to ensure data credibility. The findings revealed that the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum Management had been carried out systematically through collaborative curriculum planning, clear task organisation, student-centred learning implementation, and continuous supervision and evaluation. The implementation was supported by effective school leadership, teacher collaboration, supervisor guidance, and parental involvement. However, several obstacles were identified, including limited educational facilities, differences in teachers' competencies, and suboptimal utilisation of educational technology. In conclusion, the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum Management based on the POAC management functions has contributed positively to improving the quality of education in public elementary schools in Serang District. Strengthening teachers' competencies, enhancing collaboration among stakeholders, and improving educational facilities are essential to optimise the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Article Info

Keywords:
Manajemen Kurikulum Merdeka, POAC, Mutu Pendidikan, Sekolah Dasar, Implementasi Kurikulum.

ABSTRACT

Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka memerlukan manajemen kurikulum yang efektif untuk meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di sekolah dasar. Keberhasilan implementasi kurikulum dipengaruhi oleh pengintegrasian fungsi-fungsi manajemen—meliputi perencanaan (*planning*), pengorganisasian (*organising*), pelaksanaan (*actuating*), dan pengawasan (*controlling*)—yang dijalankan secara sistematis sesuai dengan karakteristik dan kebutuhan masing-masing sekolah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan penerapan Manajemen Kurikulum Merdeka dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di sekolah dasar negeri se-Kecamatan Serang. Penelitian berfokus pada empat fungsi manajemen tersebut (POAC) serta faktor-faktor pendukung dan penghambat yang memengaruhi implementasi kurikulum. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan rancangan studi multisitus pada lima sekolah dasar negeri di Kecamatan Serang. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan 36 informan, terdiri dari pengawas sekolah, kepala sekolah, guru, dan orang tua murid. Analisis data dilakukan melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, penarikan kesimpulan, dan triangulasi untuk menjamin kredibilitas data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan Manajemen Kurikulum Merdeka telah dilaksanakan secara sistematis melalui perencanaan kurikulum yang kolaboratif, pengorganisasian tugas yang jelas, pelaksanaan pembelajaran yang berpusat pada peserta didik, serta pengawasan dan evaluasi yang berkelanjutan. Pelaksanaan tersebut didukung oleh kepemimpinan sekolah yang efektif, kolaborasi antar-guru, bimbingan pengawas, dan keterlibatan orang tua. Namun, ditemukan beberapa hambatan, antara lain keterbatasan sarana prasarana pendidikan, perbedaan kompetensi guru, serta pemanfaatan teknologi pendidikan yang belum optimal. Kesimpulannya, penerapan Manajemen Kurikulum Merdeka berbasis fungsi manajemen POAC memberikan kontribusi positif dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di sekolah dasar negeri se-Kecamatan Serang. Penguatan kompetensi guru, peningkatan kolaborasi antar-pemangku kepentingan, serta penyempurnaan sarana prasarana pendidikan menjadi hal yang esensial untuk mengoptimalkan implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The government developed the Merdeka Curriculum as part of an effort to reform the education system, making the learning process more flexible and better able to adapt to students' needs so that instruction becomes more flexible and tailored to their requirements. This curriculum gives schools and teachers the freedom to tailor instruction to students' needs and the conditions of the learning environment.

Education in Indonesia is currently undergoing continuous changes and curriculum updates to keep pace with the times and meet the demands of the 21st century. One of the latest policies implemented by the government is the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasises flexible, student-centred learning (Ministry of Education, Culture, and Research, 2023).

The Merdeka Curriculum represents an effort to transform education by granting educational institutions the freedom to develop learning experiences tailored to students' needs and school conditions (Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo, 2022). This aligns with the concept of "Merdeka Belajar" (Freedom to Learn), which calls for a paradigm shift from teacher-centred to student-centred learning. In line with this, the Merdeka Curriculum is also viewed as a strategic step in addressing the challenges of 21st-century education, which require students to possess critical and creative thinking skills, as well as the ability to collaborate in various situations (Indarta, 2022).

However, the implementation of this curriculum in the field still faces various challenges. The shift in teaching approaches requires significant adjustments, particularly for teachers in designing and delivering instruction that is more varied and adaptable to students' needs (Fitriyah & Wardani, 2022).

On the other hand, the success of curriculum implementation depends heavily on the readiness of teachers as the primary implementers of learning. Teachers are expected not only to act as conveyors of content but also as facilitators capable of guiding students through a more active and independent learning process (Mulyasa, 2021).

In this context, the role of teachers is crucial as the primary implementers of the curriculum in schools; they serve not only as instructors but also as facilitators capable of guiding students toward achieving the expected competencies.

Suyanto also states that the success of educational policies is largely determined by implementation at the school level, particularly regarding curriculum management and the readiness of human resources (Suyanto, 2018). Furthermore, sound educational management is essential to ensure that curriculum implementation runs optimally. Effective educational management encompasses the planning, organising, execution, and evaluation of all educational activities at the school (Daryanto, 2014).

From a curriculum management perspective, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum should be understood as an integrated management process rather than a series of separate administrative activities. The planning function establishes curriculum objectives, learning priorities, and the resources required to respond to students' needs. The organising function distributes responsibilities and coordinates the roles of school principals, curriculum teams, and teachers. The actuating function translates curriculum plans into classroom practices, while the controlling function monitors implementation, evaluates progress, and provides a basis for improvement. These functions are interdependent: planning requires an appropriate organisational structure, implementation requires coordination and support, and monitoring provides feedback for subsequent planning. Accordingly, the POAC framework offers an analytical lens for examining how curriculum management is organised and enacted in schools. In this study, educational quality is considered in relation to the management and implementation of learning processes, rather than being assumed to result automatically from curriculum adoption.

In a broader context, curriculum changes also require educational institutions to adapt to evolving policies. This is crucial to ensure that any changes are implemented consistently and sustainably at the school level (Tilaar, 2015).

Thus, the Kurikulum Merdeka demands changes not only in the curriculum itself but also in the school's educational management system. Therefore, an in-depth study is needed regarding the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, particularly concerning curriculum management in elementary schools, so that its implementation can proceed effectively and yield higher educational quality.

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum provides schools with the flexibility to tailor learning to students' characteristics and the conditions of the learning environment (Barlian, 2022). This flexibility is expected to create a learning process that is more effective, creative, and relevant to the times.

The implementation of a flexible curriculum enables schools to develop learning experiences that better align with students' needs and the specific conditions of their educational environments. Curriculum management at the school level becomes more autonomous, as educational institutions have the opportunity to tailor learning programs to the characteristics of students and the school environment.

Curriculum development is no longer uniform, as schools can incorporate environmental conditions, local culture, and students' interests into the learning process. Aligning content with students' real-world experiences can foster student engagement during instruction. One of the main challenges in implementing the "Merdeka" curriculum management approach is the lack of in-depth understanding and readiness among educators and educational institutions regarding the concepts and methodologies of "Merdeka" curriculum management itself.

Studies on the management of the "Merdeka" Curriculum specifically linked to improving the quality of education in elementary schools are still scarce. Most previous research has focused on increasing students' interest in learning through the use of digital literacy in the digital learning process. Previous studies have not yet revealed how "Merdeka" curriculum management contributes to improving the quality of education (Phasya, 2022).

The current state of educational quality in Indonesia still faces various challenges. Based on the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation

and Development, Indonesian students' achievement levels in literacy, mathematics, and science remain below the OECD average (OECD, 2023). Furthermore, various studies indicate that disparities in educational quality persist across schools, particularly regarding readiness to implement the Merdeka Curriculum. These disparities are evident in teacher readiness, the availability of facilities and infrastructure, and schools' capacity to manage learning based on the Merdeka Curriculum (Phasya, 2022).

These conditions indicate that improving educational quality remains a challenge that requires serious attention, particularly regarding curriculum management in schools. This is further underscored by the fact that Indonesian students' literacy, mathematics, and science proficiency levels remain below the OECD average, making educational quality improvement a critical priority in national education management (PISA, 2022).

Issues with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum are also evident in classroom instruction. Based on the researcher's initial observations, it was found that some teachers still do not fully understand how to develop instructional modules and Learning Objective Sequences (ATP). This situation has resulted in the Merdeka Curriculum not yet being fully and effectively implemented to support improvements in educational quality at the school level (Purnama et al., 2025).

Previous studies on the Merdeka Curriculum have examined several related dimensions, including curriculum planning, teacher readiness, classroom implementation, learning outcomes, and the use of flexible instructional approaches (Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo, 2022; Fitriyah & Wardani, 2022; Malahati et al., 2023). These studies provide an important foundation for understanding how curriculum reform is enacted in elementary education. However, their different emphases also indicate that curriculum implementation needs to be examined from a broader management perspective. Studies focusing on teachers' instructional practices help explain what happens in the classroom, while studies focusing on planning highlight the preparation required before learning takes place. Neither perspective alone fully explains how planning, organisational arrangements, implementation, and evaluation interact within a school's management system. Therefore, the contribution of curriculum management research lies in examining these functions as connected processes and identifying how their coordination supports the implementation of learning programmes. This perspective is particularly relevant to understanding differences in school readiness, teacher collaboration, resource availability, and monitoring practices across educational settings.

Based on preliminary observations conducted by the researcher at several public elementary schools in Serang Subdistrict, it was found that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has not yet been optimal. Some teachers still face difficulties in developing Learning Objective Sequences (APS) and instructional modules. Additionally, the assessment of learning has not been conducted consistently, and coordination among school community members in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum still needs to be improved.

The results of the initial observations show that out of 30 teachers interviewed, approximately 18 teachers (60%) admitted to still having difficulty understanding how to develop Learning Objective Sequences (LOS) and instructional modules in accordance with the characteristics of the Merdeka Curriculum. A total of 40% of teachers also stated that they still require guidance in conducting learning assessments and evaluations. These conditions indicate that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum still faces various challenges, necessitating more effective management to support improvements in educational quality.

Another study explains that the success of the Merdeka Curriculum is influenced by teaching strategies and teachers' readiness to conduct instruction (Barlian, 2022). Furthermore, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum provides teachers with the flexibility to develop instruction tailored to students' needs and characteristics, thereby allowing teachers to play a more flexible role as facilitators in the learning process (Bahri, 2023).

Research on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum grants teachers the freedom to adapt instruction to the characteristics of students in elementary schools (Malahati et al., 2023). Additionally, other studies have examined various variables such as student learning motivation, student learning outcomes, teacher competencies, school culture, and the effectiveness of instruction in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Barlian, 2022). Based on these previous studies, there are similarities and differences with the research conducted by the author. The similarities lie in the fact that they both discuss the Merdeka Curriculum and the improvement of educational quality in schools. The differences, however, lie in the focus of the research. Previous studies have primarily addressed the general implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, improvements in student learning outcomes, learning motivation, instructional effectiveness, and teacher competencies. In contrast, this study focuses more on the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum management to improve educational quality through the aspects of curriculum planning, organisation, implementation, and evaluation in schools. This study was designed based on several considerations related to the implementation of curriculum management in elementary schools. First, the management of the Merdeka Curriculum is carried out through a series of systematically organised activities to ensure that instruction proceeds in accordance with the school's educational objectives. Second, the quality of education is reflected in the school's ability to create effective learning experiences and foster student development aligned with educational goals. Third, the implementation of the curriculum provides teachers with the opportunity to tailor learning activities to students' abilities and characteristics, thereby making the learning process more flexible. Fourth, the quality of education in schools can improve if curriculum management is carried out consistently and supported by ongoing evaluation. Several studies indicate that the management of the Merdeka Curriculum has a positive impact on improving educational quality.

Previous studies have primarily focused on the general implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, teacher competencies, student learning outcomes, and the effectiveness of instruction. However, research on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum management—

examined in depth through the management functions of planning, organising, actuating, and controlling or evaluation—in relation to improving the quality of education in public elementary schools in Serang Subdistrict remains limited. Consequently, a research gap exists:

Most previous studies have focused solely on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum as a learning process without conducting an in-depth examination of how curriculum management is systematically applied to enhance the quality of education in schools. Furthermore, previous research has predominantly adopted a general approach to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, thus failing to thoroughly uncover the challenges and strategies of curriculum management at the school level. These conditions indicate the existence of a research gap, which serves as the key rationale for this study.

Although previous studies have discussed the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, teacher readiness, instructional practices, and educational outcomes, further investigation is needed into how curriculum management functions operate together at the school level. In particular, it is important to understand how planning, organising, actuating, and controlling are implemented in practice, how these functions are coordinated, and how school-specific conditions shape their implementation. Examining these processes across several public elementary schools can reveal both common management practices and differences associated with each school's context. The research gap addressed in this study is therefore not the absence of research on the Merdeka Curriculum, but the need for a more integrated, context-sensitive account of curriculum management through the POAC framework in public elementary schools in Serang Subdistrict. By focusing on five schools, this study seeks to describe management practices, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and explain how school stakeholders perceive the contribution of these practices to the quality of educational processes.

Building on this research gap, this study aims to describe the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum management in five public elementary schools in Serang Subdistrict through the four functions of POAC: planning, organising, actuating, and controlling. It also examines the supporting and inhibiting factors encountered during implementation. The study contributes a multisite qualitative account of how these management functions are enacted and coordinated across different school contexts. By comparing practices across the five schools, the study seeks to identify recurring patterns and contextual differences that may inform school-level curriculum management. The findings are intended to provide practical insights for school principals, curriculum teams, teachers, and education supervisors in strengthening curriculum planning, coordination, instructional implementation, and continuous evaluation. Given its qualitative design, the study focuses on describing processes and perceived contributions to educational quality rather than establishing a causal effect of curriculum management on student outcomes.

2. METHOD

A qualitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on the phenomenon of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum management, which occurs naturally within the school environment. The qualitative approach was used because this study aims to understand and describe in depth the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum management in improving the quality of education at public elementary schools in Serang Subdistrict. This approach emphasises understanding social phenomena through the collection of data in the form of words, actions, behaviours, and various pieces of information obtained directly from the research subjects.

The five public elementary schools in Serang Subdistrict were examined as multiple research sites to obtain a contextual understanding of Merdeka Curriculum management practices across different school settings. The selection of participants was guided by their involvement in curriculum planning, organisation, implementation, and evaluation. Relevant participants may include school principals, curriculum coordinators, and teachers who have direct experience with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The inclusion of each participant was based on the relevance of their role and experience to the research objectives. Describing the selection process and participants' roles provides readers with a clearer understanding of the perspectives represented in the study.

By using a qualitative approach, the researcher can gain a deeper understanding of the process of implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka management system, the supporting and inhibiting factors, as well as its impact on improving the quality of education in elementary schools.

Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation to develop a comprehensive understanding of curriculum management practices at the participating schools. Interviews were used to explore participants' experiences and perspectives regarding curriculum planning, the distribution of responsibilities, classroom implementation, and evaluation. Observations provided contextual information about the implementation of curriculum-related activities and the conditions in which these activities took place. Documentation was used to examine relevant school records and curriculum-related documents that were available to the researcher. The three techniques were intended to provide complementary perspectives on the research questions and to enable the researcher to compare information obtained from different sources. The specific procedures and records examined should be described in sufficient detail to clarify how the evidence was obtained.

The research method used in this study is the case study method with a multisite approach. This method was chosen because the study focuses on several public elementary schools in Serang Subdistrict—namely SDN Cikulur, SDN 20 Serang, SDN 11 Serang, SDN Sayabulu, and SDN 7 Serang—to examine the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka management system. Through the multisite case study method, the researcher was able to conduct an in-depth, detailed, and systematic analysis of various activities, policies, and conditions related to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at each school. This research also allowed the researcher to understand the

phenomena occurring directly within the real-world context of the school environment.

Data analysis involved organising the collected information, identifying relevant patterns, comparing evidence across data sources, and interpreting the findings in relation to the research questions. Information from interviews, observations, and documents was examined in relation to the four curriculum management functions: planning, organising, actuating, and controlling. The analysis also considered similarities and differences among the five participating schools to distinguish recurring patterns from context-specific practices. Evidence that supported, complemented, or differed across sources was examined carefully before interpretations were developed. This process helped establish a transparent connection between the collected evidence and the reported findings.

In this study, the researcher served as the primary research instrument, tasked with collecting data, observing field conditions, conducting interviews, and analysing the data obtained throughout the research process. Research data were obtained through observations, interviews, and documentation involving school principals, teachers, educational staff, and other parties involved in the management of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation at public elementary schools in Serang Subdistrict. The use of these various data collection techniques was intended to ensure that the data obtained were more comprehensive, accurate, and capable of accurately depicting actual conditions in the field.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Discussion on the Planning (Planning) of the Merdeka Curriculum in

The results of the analysis show that at five schools—namely SDN Cikulur, SDN 7 Serang, SDN 11 Serang, SDN 20 Serang, and SDN Sayabulu—the planning function (planning) in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has been carried out systematically and serves as a crucial initial stage that determines the success of the curriculum's implementation. Planning was carried out through the development of the School Operational Curriculum (KOSP), the analysis of Learning Outcomes (CP), the development of Learning Objective Sequences (ATP), teaching modules, annual programs, semester programs, the academic calendar, and assessment planning tailored to student characteristics. The entire process involves the principal, the Curriculum Team, teachers, and school stakeholders through coordination meetings and school deliberation forums.

The findings indicate that curriculum planning involved [describe the planning activities actually identified in the data]. This finding was supported by [insert a relevant interview quotation, observation record, or document reference]. Evidence from the participating schools also showed [describe any similarities or differences supported by the data]. These findings illustrate how planning was carried out in the participating schools and provide a basis for examining the relationship between planning practices and the other functions of curriculum management.

The results of this study also demonstrate alignment with the implementation policies of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasise the importance of educational institutions' flexibility in developing the School-Based Operational Curriculum (KOSP) in accordance with student characteristics, school conditions, and environmental needs. All five schools have applied this principle by involving various school stakeholders in the curriculum development process, ensuring that the resulting documents serve as guidelines for implementing contextual and relevant learning.

A cross-site comparison revealed [insert the similarities or differences supported by the findings] in the implementation of curriculum management across the five schools. These patterns suggest that curriculum management practices were shaped by the specific conditions of each school rather than being implemented identically across all sites. The differences identified in the data provide a basis for examining how school leadership, stakeholder coordination, teacher involvement, and available resources relate to the implementation process.

Viewed through the POAC framework, the findings suggest that curriculum management should be understood as an interconnected process rather than as a collection of separate administrative activities. Planning establishes the direction of curriculum implementation, organising clarifies responsibilities and coordination, actuating translates plans into educational practices, and controlling provides information for monitoring and subsequent improvement. The analytical significance of this framework lies in examining how these functions relate to one another in practice. For example, evidence of effective planning alone is insufficient to establish effective curriculum implementation unless the findings also demonstrate how plans are translated into classroom activities and reviewed through monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, the contribution of the POAC perspective is to examine the relationships among management functions, including any gaps or inconsistencies identified in the data.

Organising the Merdeka Curriculum to Improve the Quality of Education

The results of the analysis reveal various findings regarding the implementation of the organising function of the Merdeka Curriculum at SDN Cikulur, SDN 7 Serang, SDN 11 Serang, SDN 20 Serang, and SDN Sayabulu. These findings were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation, which were subsequently synthesised to identify similarities, differences, and characteristics of the implementation of the organising function at each school. The synthesis focused on the distribution of teachers' tasks, the formation of the Curriculum Team, the allocation of authority and responsibilities, coordination among the principal, the Curriculum Team, and teachers, as well as the implementation of supervision as a form of organisational control.

The research results indicate that the organising function—carried out through a clear division of tasks, the formation of a Curriculum Team, continuous coordination, and collaboration among teachers—has a positive impact on improving the quality of education. Each teacher understands their tasks, authority, and responsibilities, enabling the teaching and learning process to proceed in a more focused, effective, and organised manner. Coordination carried out through faculty meetings, Teacher

Working Group (KKG) activities, supervision, and open communication allows any learning-related issues to be resolved quickly and collaboratively. These conditions create a conducive work environment, enhance teacher professionalism, strengthen a culture of collaboration, and support the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

A cross-site comparison revealed [insert the similarities or differences supported by the findings] in the implementation of curriculum management across the five schools. These patterns suggest that curriculum management practices were shaped by the specific conditions of each school rather than being implemented identically across all sites. The differences identified in the data provide a basis for examining how school leadership, stakeholder coordination, teacher involvement, and available resources relate to the implementation process.

Implementation (Actuating) of the Merdeka Curriculum in Improving the Quality of Education

The results of the study, as presented in Chapter IV, reveal various findings regarding the implementation (actuating) of the Merdeka Curriculum at SDN Cikulur, SDN 7 Serang, SDN 11 Serang, SDN 20 Serang, and SDN Sayabulu. These findings were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation that describe how the Merdeka Curriculum is implemented in the learning process at each school. The aspects analysed include the implementation of differentiated instruction, the development and use of instructional materials, guidance provided by school principals to teachers, and various forms of support in the implementation of instruction.

The implementation (actuating) of the Merdeka Curriculum—manifested through differentiated instruction, the use of teaching modules, and guidance provided by school principals—has significant implications for improving the quality of education.

Instruction tailored to students' needs, characteristics, and abilities enhances student engagement throughout the learning process. Students gain more meaningful, active, and enjoyable learning experiences, enabling them to develop their knowledge, skills, and character more effectively.

Monitoring and Evaluation (Controlling) of the Merdeka Curriculum in Improving the Quality of Education

The results of the analysis, as presented in Chapter IV, reveal various findings regarding the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation (controlling) functions of the Merdeka Curriculum at SDN Cikulur, SDN 7 Serang, SDN 11 Serang, SDN 20 Serang, and SDN Sayabulu. Research data were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation that describe how school principals carry out academic supervision, monitor learning administration, evaluate the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, and follow up on supervision results to improve the quality of education.

The research results indicate that the functions of supervision and evaluation (controlling) have significant implications for improving the quality of education. The implementation of academic supervision, monitoring of learning administration, evaluation of curriculum implementation, and follow-up on supervision results help schools ensure that all Merdeka Curriculum programs are carried out in accordance with established regulations.

Factors Supporting and Hindering the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Improving the Quality of Education

A comparison of the research results reveals various findings regarding the factors that support and hinder the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SDN Cikulur, SDN 7 Serang, SDN 11 Serang, SDN 20 Serang, and SDN Sayabulu. These findings were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation that depict the actual conditions at each school in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. These factors include human resources, principal leadership, facilities and infrastructure, coordination among school community members, parental support, and various obstacles encountered during the learning process.

Taken together, the findings contribute to the understanding of Merdeka Curriculum management by presenting a cross-site account of how the four POAC functions are enacted in public elementary schools. Rather than assuming that the presence of planning, organisational arrangements, instructional activities, and monitoring automatically results in improved educational quality, the analysis examines the practices documented in the participating schools and the relationships among them. The study therefore offers contextual insights into curriculum management processes and the factors that may support or constrain their implementation. Its contribution lies in explaining these processes within the study settings, while the extent to which they influence student learning outcomes or broader educational quality requires further empirical investigation.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum management in five public elementary schools in Serang Subdistrict through the four POAC functions: planning, organising, actuating, and controlling. The findings highlight the importance of school leadership, collaboration among school stakeholders, teacher commitment, and continuous improvement in supporting curriculum implementation. The findings also indicate that curriculum management needs to be understood as an interconnected process in which planning, coordination, instructional implementation, and evaluation support one another.

The contribution of this study lies in describing how curriculum management practices are implemented across different school contexts and identifying factors that may support or hinder these processes. However, the findings primarily reflect observed practices and the experiences of school stakeholders. They do not, by themselves, establish that curriculum management directly improves educational quality or student learning outcomes. Further research using explicit educational quality indicators and student learning outcome data is needed to examine the relationship between curriculum management practices and educational outcomes.

These findings suggest that schools should continue strengthening curriculum planning, coordination among stakeholders, support for teachers, and systematic evaluation. Such efforts may provide a foundation for

improving curriculum implementation, while their effects on educational quality require further empirical examination.

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