

EVALUATION OF MBKM PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The two most important things in education in Indonesia today are 'Freedom to Learn' and driving teachers. This study aims to provide an overview of the implementation of the 'Freedom to Learn' program at the elementary school level, as well as to explain the various innovations, obstacles encountered, and solutions made by the school and teachers as teaching boards. This study uses descriptive quantitative research methods, with 166 respondents from 21 districts/cities in East Java. The results of this study show that; (1) the successful implementation of the 'Freedom to Learn' program can be seen from the ability of schools and teachers to develop teaching creativity during the learning process. (2) Most of the obstacles encountered during program implementation stem from the inability of the teacher to provide learning methods that are right on target, skills that are not sufficient and the limited ability of students to accept the 'transfers of knowledge' provided by the teacher. This study concludes that schools and teachers can optimize learning innovations by using various methods adapted to the student's environment, such as; applying student center learning methods, exposition discovery learning methods, individual group learning methods, brainstorming methods, blended learning, and other methods that can improve students' skills and creativity, by implementing fun teaching and learning programs.

Keywords: Program Evaluation, Learning Innovation, Social Network, Independent Study

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INTRODUCTION

The development of the education system in Indonesia continues to increase, both in terms of quality and quantity implemented through teaching and learning processes inside and outside of school. Through improving the existing education system, present

and future civilizations are expected to be able to encourage the growth of a golden generation and superior and sustainable Human Resources.¹ The education system must keep up with the times in the era of globalization and digitalization with all the dynamics and progress that follow.²³⁴ The two most important things in education today that have been adapted to the education system in Indonesia are 'Freedom to Learn' and driving teachers.

Through the breakthrough of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikbudristek), independent learning is intended to advance education in Indonesia. This thinking is a step that is considered very strategic and innovative as well as a big challenge in the world of education in Indonesia. Freedom of learning is the freedom of educational institutions, both schools, teachers and students as an effort to continue to innovate, be independent and creative⁵ in carrying out a fun teaching and learning process. Yamin & Syahrir⁶ state that Merdeka Learning is oriented towards learning which prioritizes the assignment of various literacy sources while continuing to develop and develop character education, which includes hard work, independence, discipline, religiosity, honesty, justice, curiosity, tolerance, responsibility, creativity, mutual respect, concern for the environment and society, love for the motherland, and national spirit.

The implementation of the Freedom to Learn policy encourages the role of schools and teachers both in curriculum development and in the learning process to actively

¹ Anna Lehtonen., Arto O. Salonen., & Hannele Cantell, 'Climate change education: A new approach for a world of wicked problems', *Sustainability, human well-being, and the future of education*, (2019), 339-374. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78580-6_11>.

² I Ketut Sudarsana, 'The Importance of Morals Teaching in Shaping The Students' Characters in School. Dharma Acarya Faculty International Seminar (Dafis) Proceeding, Character Education Across Culture', (2016), 11 October (367-376).

³ Eko Suhartoyo., Sitti Ainun Wailissa., Saika Jalarwati., Samsia Samsia., Surya Wati., Nur Qomariah., Elly Dayanti., Imas Maulani., Imam Mukhlis., Muhammad Holqi Rizki Azhari., Hidayatullo Muhammad Isa., & Ilham Maulana Amin, 'Pembelajaran kontekstual dalam mewujudkan merdeka belajar', *Jurnal Pembelajaran Pemberdayaan Masyarakat (JP2M)*, 1(3) (2020), 161-164. <<https://doi.org/10.33474/jp2m.v1i3.6588>>.

⁴ Suwandi Suwandi., & Riswan Hadi, 'Pelaksanaan Manajemen Kampus Merdeka di Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara', *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 7(1) (2023), 152-159. <<https://jptam.org/index.php/jptam/article/view/5274>>.

⁵ Fahrian Firdaus Syafi'i, 'Merdeka belajar: sekolah penggerak', *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Dasar*, (2022), 25 November (39-49). <<https://ejournal.pps.ung.ac.id/index.php/PSNPD/article/view/1049/743>>

⁶ Muhammad Yamin., & Syahrir Syahrir, 'Pembangunan pendidikan merdeka belajar (telaah metode pembelajaran)', *Jurnal ilmiah mandala education*, 6(1) (2020), <<http://dx.doi.org/10.58258/jime.v6i1.1121>>.

innovate and increase teaching creativity. According to Prasetyas,⁷ the key to the success of education in Indonesia in implementing the Freedom to Learn program policy is the existence of an adaptive curriculum and being able to adapt to the times. In Merdeka Learning, apart from being a source of learning, the teacher also acts as a learning facilitator supported by pedagogical, personal, professional, and social competencies. With these competencies (skills), teachers can realize the implementation and objectives of implementing the Free Learning policy. Merdeka Learning itself is a concept that aims to return the national education system to the essence of the law to give independence to schools by interpreting the basic curriculum competencies that are their assessment.⁸ The Freedom to Learn Program also gives freedom to educational institutions, to be free from bureaucratization, students are free to choose their preferred field, and teachers are free in carrying out assessments and teaching and learning processes.^{9 10}

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture and Technology, the implementation of the Free Learning policy initiated by the government includes four basic policies, namely: (1) Implementation of the National Based Examination (USBN) is changed to an examination (assessment) whose implementation is left to each school; (2) Substitution of the National Examination (UN) as an indicator of student graduation and success into a Minimum Competency Assessment and Character Survey; (3) Teachers are given the freedom to develop the RPP format (Learning Implementation Plan); and (4) Regulations concerning the acceptance of new students (PPDB), which were previously zoning, became more flexible to accommodate various conditions in the regions.¹¹ Therefore, schools and teachers both have very important roles and responsibilities both in curriculum development and in its implementation. Likewise, teachers play a very important role in the implementation of the Freedom to Learn policy, and contribute effectively and collaboratively to work with school curriculum development to organize and structure materials, textbooks/coursebooks, and learning content.

⁷ Vetti Rina Prasetyas, 'Sekilas mengenai program merdeka belajar kampus merdeka', *Kumparan*, 10 June (2021), <https://kumparan.com/vetti-rina-prasetyas/sekilas-mengenai-program-merdeka-learning-kampus-merdeka-1vunZcnNnSQ/2>.

⁸ Sherly Sherly., Edy Dharma., & Humiras Betty Sihombing, 'Merdeka belajar: Kajian literatur', *Urban Green Conference Proceeding Library*, (2021), 183-190, <<http://proceeding.urbangreen.co.id/index.php/library/article/view/33>>.

⁹ Sarwiji Suwandi, "Pengembangan Kurikulum Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa (dan Sastra) Indonesia yang Responsif terhadap Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka dan Kebutuhan Pembelajaran Abad ke-21", Dalam: *Prosiding Seminar Daring Nasional: Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia*, (2020), 21 Oktober 2020 (pp 1-12), <<https://ejournal.unib.ac.id/index.php/semiba/article/view/13356>>.

¹⁰ H Muhsin, 'Kampus Merdeka di Era New Normal. Masa Depan Kampus Merdeka & Merdeka Belajar: Sebuah Bunga Rampai Dosen', (2021), 143.

¹¹ Atika Wijaya., Moh. Solehatul Mustofa., & Fadly Husain, 'Sosialisasi Program Merdeka Belajar dan Guru Penggerak Bagi Guru SMPN 2 Kabupaten Maros', *Jurnal Puruhita*, 2(1) (2020), 46-50, <<https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/puruhita/article/view/42325/18488>>.

Curriculum development in the education system and in the current context in Indonesia, MBKM is a curriculum goal that is considered very essential at the level of education up to university.¹² Changes and updates to this system have come to the attention of many scholars, experts and researchers to examine and conduct a more in-depth analysis regarding the implementation and application of the MBKM program in educational settings. For example, in a study conducted by Sudaryanto, Widayati, & Amalia¹³ examined the relationship between the concept of Independent Learning Independent Campus and the field of education in Indonesian language and literature. In line with this study, Arifin & Muslim¹⁴ also conducted a study of the implementation of the Freedom to Learn policy and the challenges of its implementation in private Islamic universities in Indonesia. The study conducted by Kurniawan, Saputra, Daulay, & Zubaidah¹⁵ also revealed other findings, that the paradigm that has occurred in the field recently shows that the implementation of the MBKM policy has in fact not been fully implemented due to various constraints and problems both internal and external.

Various previous studies related to the implementation of the MBKM program have been carried out by many researchers. However, this study is considered important to study in order to evaluate how MBKM is implemented in elementary schools. Thus, this study is expected to be able to produce policy recommendations related to the implementation of MBKM.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study examines the evaluation of the implementation of MBKM at the elementary school level. This study was conducted in East Java, where based on the policy of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology that the MBKM curriculum aims to provide the widest possible opportunity for students to be able to explore themselves, both the interests and talents of each student, so that can choose the appropriate educational path. With the MBKM curriculum, it is hoped that students will be able to think critically, independently and enhance cooperation among students.

¹² Rahmattullah Rahmattullah., & Fetro Dola Syamsu, 'Tantangan Perkuliahan Berbasis Social Distancing Masa Pandemi COVID 19 di Provinsi Aceh Tahun 2020'. *Genta Mulia: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 12(1) (2021), < <https://garuda.kemdikbud.go.id/documents/detail/2444567>>.

¹³ Sudaryanto Sudaryanto., Wahyu Widayati., & Risza Amalia, 'Konsep Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka dan Aplikasinya dalam Pendidikan Bahasa (dan Sastra) Indonesia', *Jurnal Bahasa*, 9(2) (2020), < <https://jurnal.unimed.ac.id/2012/index.php/kjb/article/view/18379>>.

¹⁴ Syamsul Arifin., & Moh. Muslim, 'Tantangan Implementasi Kebijakan "Merdeka Belajar, Kampus Merdeka" pada Perguruan Tinggi Islam Swasta di Indonesia', *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Al-Ilmi*, 3(1) (2020), < <https://doi.org/10.32529/al-ilm.v3i1.589>>.

¹⁵ Nanda Alfian Kurniawan., Randi Saputra., Annisa Arrumaisyah Daulay & Zubaidah Zubaidah, 'Implementasi Prinsip-prinsip Merdeka Belajar Bagi Calon Konselor', Paper presented at the Prosiding Seminar Nasional Bimbingan dan Konseling Universitas Negeri Malang, (2020), < <http://conference.um.ac.id/index.php/bk/article/view/60>>.

Based on Permendikbudristek No. 7 of 2022, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in an effort to restore learning is carried out based on content standards developed through the formulation of the scope of material that is in accordance with the competence of graduates. Since its launch in 2022, the Independent Curriculum has been implemented in more than 140 thousand schools.¹⁶ Meanwhile in East Java itself, since July 2022, as many as 76 percent of the 4,086 educational units have implemented the Independent Curriculum.¹⁷

This study uses a quantitative research method with a descriptive type. Respondents in this study were elementary school teachers, from both public and private schools. The research respondents were 166 teachers. The data shows that 16 respondents (9.6%) were male teachers and 150 respondents (90.4%) were female teachers. The research locations are spread over 21 regencies/cities in the East Java region. A total of 147 respondents (88.6%) came from public elementary schools and 19 respondents (11.4%) came from private elementary schools.

Data collection was carried out through interviews, using a questionnaire instrument. Data is then collected and analyzed with previous studies and relevant theories. Data analysis techniques in this study used the stages of data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The technique of drawing conclusions is based on the results and discussion in the study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Education in Indonesia continues to make system improvements by adjusting the needs of educators/teachers and students. This improvement is expected to result in an increase in the quality of Human Resources that is superior and has character. This study produced several findings related to the MBKM program in elementary schools in East Java, namely; First, implementing the MBKM program in elementary schools. Second, the obstacles that must be faced in implementing the MBKM program in elementary schools. Third, the solutions offered by teachers, schools and the government regarding the implementation of the MBKM program in elementary schools.

Implementation of the MBKM Program in Elementary Schools

¹⁶ Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (2023, Januari). Kurikulum Merdeka, Meningkatkan Kualitas Pembelajaran Siswa. [Accessed 03 July 2023]. <https://www.kemdikbud.go.id/main/blog/2023/01/kurikulum-merdeka-meningkatkan-kualitas-pembelajaran-siswa#:~:text=Jakarta%2C%20Januari%202023%20%E2%80%93%20Sejak,lebih%20dari%20140%20ribu%20sekolah.>

¹⁷ Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (2022, July). Pemda Jawa Timur Dukung Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Sesuai Kesiapan Sekolah. [Accessed 03 July 2023]. <https://www.kemdikbud.go.id/main/blog/2022/07/pemda-jawa-timur-dukung-implementasi-kurikulum-merdeka-sesuai-kesiapan-sekolah>

The current implementation of education has two important points, namely 'Freedom to Learn' and 'Moving Teacher. Freedom of Learning is defined as a condition in which educators/teachers and students/students have the freedom to learn independently, creatively and are able to innovate.

This study resulted in the finding that out of 166 respondents stated that the implementation of the MBKM program in elementary schools was divided into four groups (see Table 1), namely; (1) 28.9% of teachers stated that the MBKM program in elementary schools was running very well; (2) 63.9% of teachers stated that the MBKM program in elementary schools was running well; (3) Approximately 4.2% of teachers stated that the MBKM program in elementary schools was not running well; (4) While another 3.0% stated that the MBKM program had not been implemented in the elementary school where they taught.

Table 1. Implementation of the MBKM Program in Elementary Schools (n = 166)

No	Implementation of the MBKM Program in Elementary Schools	F	%
1	The MBKM program at SD runs very well	48	28,9%
2	The MBKM program in SD is going well	106	63,9%
3	The MBKM program in SD is not going well	7	4,2%
4	The MBKM program in SD has not yet been implemented	5	3,0%
Total		166	100%

Source: Primary data

The implementation of the MBKM program in elementary schools is actually divided into two major groups, some of which are implemented for all grades from grade one to grade six of elementary school. But there are also those that are only implemented for certain classes and are not designed as a whole for all classes. The results of the study showed that there were 22.9% who stated that all classes took part in the MBKM program in elementary schools. As many as 12.0% of teachers in this study stated that in their schools, the MBKM program in elementary schools was only implemented for students in grades 1, 2 and 3.

As many as 13.9% of teachers stated that in their schools the MBKM program was only implemented for students in grades 4, 5 and 6. Some teachers, including around 6.0%, stated that the implementation of the MBKM program only applies to grade 1 students. While the majority of respondents, namely as many as 42.2% of teachers stated

that the MBKM program was only implemented for grade 1 and grade 4 elementary school students where they taught. On the other hand, 3.0% of teachers stated that in their schools the MBKM program had not been implemented at all. The distribution of the implementation of the MBKM program in elementary schools which is not the same as one another can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Distribution of Classes Participating in the MBKM Program in Elementary Schools (n = 166)

No	Distribution of Classes Participating in the MBKM Program in Elementary Schools	F	%
1	All classes follow the MBKM program	38	22,9%
2	Grades 1, 2, and 3 participating in the MBKM program	20	12,0%
3	Grades 4, 5 and 6 participating in the MBKM program	23	13,9%
4	There is only one class that participates in the MBKM program	10	6,0%
5	Grades 1 and 4 participating in the MBKM program	70	42,2%
6	The MBKM program in SD has not yet been implemented	5	3,0%
Total		166	100%

Source: Primary data

Based on the findings of this study data, it can be explained that the Freedom to Learn program has in fact not been fully implemented. This is in line with the results of a study by Kurniawan, Saputra, Daulay, & Zubaidah¹⁸ which also revealed that the conditions that occurred in the field showed that the implementation of the MBKM policy had not been fully implemented due to various constraints and problems both internally and externally.

¹⁸ Nanda Alfian Kurniawan., Randi Saputra., Annisa Arrumaisyah Daulay & Zubaidah Zubaidah, 'Implementasi Prinsip-prinsip Merdeka Belajar Bagi Calon Konselor', Paper presented at the Prosiding Seminar Nasional Bimbingan dan Konseling Universitas Negeri Malang, (2020), <<http://conference.um.ac.id/index.php/bk/article/view/60>>.

Obstacles Faced in Implementing the MBKM Program in Elementary Schools

Implementation in the implementation of the Freedom to Learn (MBKM) program encourages more active roles for teachers both through curriculum development and through the teaching and learning process. In implementing the MBKM program, the teacher acts as a learning facilitator supported by pedagogical, personality, professional, and social competencies. With these competency qualifications, educators/teachers can realize the objectives and implement the MBKM policy. However, every program that has been designed will in fact always face obstacles in the implementation process.

One of the real obstacles that must be faced in the MBKM policy is the busyness of teachers who are trapped in learning administration so that teachers are not optimal in carrying out the learning process in class. The educational climate in Indonesia accepts that one of the teacher's duties is to prepare and organize learning administration in accordance with applicable regulations. The busyness of taking care of the administration of learning is part of the learning process. Teachers and schools are caught up in ways and objectives which make education administration the main activity so as not to violate bureaucratic regulations, accreditation, grades and exams. Teachers and schools actually make educational administration the goal and priority of educational activities.

The implementation of the MBKM program also had many other obstacles, which prevented the policy from running smoothly according to the objectives to be achieved (see Table 3). Based on the results of data collection from 166 research respondents, the obstacles faced by both schools and teachers can be explained through four major groups, namely: (1) Teachers and teaching staff do not have experience that can be adapted to implementing the MBKM program in elementary schools, there are as many as 22.9% of teachers in this study acknowledged these obstacles; (2) There were 23.5% of teachers who stated that they had limitations in terms of references regarding the rimplementation of the MBKM program; (3) Another 22.3% stated that they lacked access to the learning process; and (4) There were 15.7% who stated that the obstacle they faced was the lack of adequate competence (skills) on the part of educators/teachers.

Table 3 Obstacles or Problems in Implementing the MBKM Program in Elementary Schools (n = 166)

No	Obstacles or Problems in Implementing the MBKM Program in Elementary Schools	F	%
1	No experience	38	22,9%
2	Reference limitations	39	23,5%
3	Access owned in learning	37	22,3%
4	time management	18	10,8%

5	Adequate competence (skill).	26	15,7%
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6	Limitations of textbooks and understanding of managers in making teaching modules	1	0,6%
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7	Students feel bored quickly when the material reads more	1	0,6%
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8	Students who have difficulty understanding the lesson	1	0,6%
<hr/>			
9	The MBKM program in SD has not yet been implemented	5	3,0%
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Total		166	100%

Source: Primary data

Of course, these constraints can affect the movement of educators/teachers in supporting the implementation of the MBKM program in each school where they teach. Apart from the administrative busyness of the school, as well as the four major obstacles that have been mentioned, there are still several other obstacles that reduce the program's performance in achieving the desired 'Freedom to Learn' goal. These obstacles include the limitations of textbooks and understanding of management or how to make teaching modules, students feel bored quickly when the material provided requires them to read more, and some students are considered to have difficulty understanding learning material. While the others were due to the fact that the school was lagging behind or had not implemented the MBKM program.

Solutions offered by Teachers, Schools and the Government regarding the Implementation of the MBKM Program in Elementary Schools

The implementation of the MBKM program in every school certainly has many variations in implementation, both in terms of creativity and innovation by the local government, the school's teachers/educators. Apart from the positive things, there are also obstacles/obstacles that require improvement through solutions offered by each related party, especially the school in the success of the MBKM program at the elementary school level. In the two previous discussions, it was explained how the MBKM program was implemented in schools and what obstacles were faced by the school and teachers related to the implementation of the MBKM program. To be able to get out of the limitations and constraints of program implementation, appropriate solutions and problem handling are needed. Of course, this is expected to minimize program failures and can increase the success of the MBKM program implementation that is right on target.

Efforts made by teachers or schools more broadly will encourage the creation of program implementations that are in accordance with the conditions of each student. One

of these efforts can be done through teacher innovation in each school. Table 4 describes the various efforts that can increase the success of the MBKM program, including; (1) Schools and teachers innovate by applying the student center learning model;¹⁹ (2) Schools and teachers also innovate in the teaching and learning process through the application of exposition discovery learning; (3) Schools and teachers apply the group individual learning method;²⁰ (4) There is an application of the brainstorming method by the teacher;²¹ (5) The school provides a lot of encouragement to teachers, both in groups and from independent teacher initiatives, to hold or participate in symposium activities; (6) Teachers apply blended learning;^{22 23 24 25} (7) Modification of creative learning using fun game methods;^{26 27 28} (8) The teacher holds class discussions, which makes the

¹⁹ Leslie S. Keiler, 'Teachers' roles and identities in student-centered classrooms', *International journal of STEM education*, 5(34) (2018), 1-20, <<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-018-0131-6>>.

²⁰ Sheida K. Raley., Karrie A. Shogren., & Annette McDonald, 'How to implement the self-determined learning model of instruction in inclusive general education classrooms'. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 51(1) (2018), 62-71, <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059918790236>>.

²¹ Edward Alfian., Nurdin Kaso., Sumardin Raupu., & Dwi Risky Arifanti, 'Efektivitas Model Pembelajaran Brainstorming dalam Meningkatkan Hasil Belajar Matematika Siswa', *Al Asma: Journal of Islamic Education*, 2(1) (2020), 54-64, <<file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/13596-Article%20Text-36208-1-10-20200531.pdf>>.

²² Walib Abdullah, 'Model Blended Learning dalam Meningkatkan Efektifitas Pembelajaran Fikrotuna', *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Manajemen Islam*, 7(1) (2018), <<https://doi.org/10.32806/jf.v7i1.3169>>.

²³ Shankar Subramanian Iyer., A. Seetharaman.,K. Maddulety, 'Education Transformation Using Block Chain Technology - A Student Centric Model'. In: Sharma S.K., Dwivedi Y.K., Metri B., Rana N.P. (eds) *Re-imagining Diffusion and Adoption of Information Technology and Systems: A Continuing Conversation. TDIT 2020. IFIP Advances in Information and Communication Technology*, Springer, Cham, 617 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-64849-7_19>.

²⁴ Charlotte Larmuseau., Piet Desmet., & Fien Depaepe, 'Perceptions of instructional quality: Impact on acceptance and use of an online learning environment', *Interactive Learning Environments*, 27(7) (2019), 953- 964, <<https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2018.1509874>>.

²⁵ Lazar, I. M., Panisoara, G., & Panisoara, I. O. (2020). Digital Technology Adoption Scale in The Blended Learning Context in Higher Education: Development, Validation and Testing of a Specific Tool. *PLoS one*, 15(7).

²⁶ Zulkif Eser Sabirli., & Ahmet Naci Çoklar, 'The Effect of Educational Digital Games on Education, Motivation and Attitudes of Elementary School Students against Course Access', *World Journal on Educational Technology: Current Issues*, 12(4) (2020), 325-338, <<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1267176>>.

²⁷ Robekka Risten Fransiska Sinaga., & Lulud Oktaviani, 'The implementation of fun fishing to teach speaking for elementary school students', *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 1(1) (2020), 1-6, <<https://doi.org/10.33365/jeltl.v1i1.245>>.

²⁸ Ika Febriana Wati., & Yuniawatika., 'Digital game-based learning as a solution to fun learning challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic', In: *1st International Conference on Information Technology and Education (ICITE 2020)*, Atlantis Press, (2020), 202-210, <<https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201214.237>>.

learning process go both ways and increases interaction between students;²⁹ (9) Schools and teachers conduct field visits, to carry out comparative studies, as well as to evaluate the learning process; (10) The teacher explores actual issues, so that the learning process is not just monotonous on outdated issues. This also encourages students to be more critical³⁰ in responding to surrounding problems; and (11) The teacher performs a diagnostic analysis to find out each student's learning interest.

Of the several innovations that have been carried out by the school and each teacher, it shows a very high level of implementation and only one of the many solutions for handling problems that have not been able to be implemented properly (see Table 4). On average, teachers and school officials have carried out several innovations simultaneously with a percentage of more than 90.0%, namely; implementing student center learning (93.4%), intensive class discussions (97.6%), and conducting field visits (92.2%). While on average above 80.0% of schools and teachers have simultaneously innovated by applying exposition discovery learning (89.2%), learning media through games (89.2%), and exploring actual issues (83.7%).

On average, teachers and schools have also carried out several innovations simultaneously with percentages above 70.0%, namely by applying the group individual learning method (74.1%), applying the brainstorming method (79.5%), holding or participating in symposium activities (72.3%), and applying blended learning learning methods (77.7%). However, from the several innovations that have been mentioned, innovation by conducting a diagnostic analysis to determine student learning interest is very minimally carried out by teachers and the school.

Through several innovations that have been made in the implementation of the MBKM program in elementary schools, there have been several positive impacts. Table 5 shows that there were 98.2% who stated that the MBKM program could explore students' learning interests and only 1.8% stated otherwise. The MBKM program increased students' active learning and critical thinking by 97.6% and only 2.4% said they did not. There were 96.4% of teachers who stated that through the MBKM program students could express their interest in learning and only 3.6% could not express their interest in learning.

Table 4. Innovations made in Efforts to Succeed the Implementation of the MBKM Program in Elementary School (n = 166)

²⁹ Ahmad Al Yakin., Souvikk Ganguli Muthmainnah., Luis Cardoso., & Andi Asrifan, 'Cybersocialization Through Smart Digital Classroom Management (SDCM) as a Pedagogical Innovation of "Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)" Curriculum', In: Choudhury, A., Biswas, A., Chakraborti, S. (ed) Digital Learning based Education. Advanced Technologies and Societal Change. Springer, Singapore, (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-8967-4_>.

³⁰ Defrizal., Appin Purisky Redaputri., Vonny Tiara Narundana., Nurdiawansyah., Yanuarius Yanu Dharmawan, 'Institutional Model Design for the Implementation of the Program Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (Merdeka Learning Program-Merdeka Campus or MBKM)', Studies in Learning and Teaching, 3(1) (2022), 28-35, < <https://doi.org/10.46627/silet.v3i1.93>>.

No	Innovations made in Efforts to Succeed the Implementation of the MBKM Program in Elementary School	Yes		No		Total
		F	%	F	%	
1	Applying the student center learning method	155	93,4%	11	6,6%	166/100%
2	Applying the exposition discovery learning method	148	89,2%	18	10,8%	166/100%
3	Applying group individual learning methods	123	74,1%	43	25,9%	166/100%
4	Apply the brainstorming method	132	79,5%	34	20,5%	166/100%
5	Schools and teachers hold/participate in symposiums	120	72,3%	46	27,7%	166/100%
6	Applying blended learning methods	129	77,7%	37	22,3%	166/100%
7	Create games	148	89,2%	18	10,8%	166/100%
8	Hold class discussions	162	97,6%	4	2,4%	166/100%
9	Conduct field visits	153	92,2%	13	7,8%	166/100%
10	Exploring actual issues	139	83,7%	27	16,3%	166/100%
11	Conducting diagnostic analysis to determine students' learning interest	1	0,6%	165	99,4%	166/100%
12	The MBKM program in SD has not yet been implemented	5	3,0%	161	97,0%	166/100%

Source: Primary data

As many as 98.8% of teachers stated that through the MBKM program they could increase collaboration between students and 95.2% could increase student independence. There were 91.6% who stated that the innovations provided by schools and teachers in the implementation of the MBKM program were considered to be able to improve students' time management abilities. However, there are also some abilities that still cannot be improved even though they have been encouraged by several innovations and learning models, for example; student skills and student creativity with Pancasila profile knowledge.

Through this study it was also found that the implementation of the MBKM program in elementary schools was considered capable of expanding the social network of teachers and students. With the existence of innovation and updating of learning methods, it requires teachers and students to be more active and creative in creating an atmosphere of a fun teaching and learning process. This then brings another positive impact, namely by expanding their social network.

Tabel 5. The MBKM Program in Elementary Schools Expands Teacher and Student Social Networks (n = 166)

The MBKM Program in Elementary Schools Expands Teacher Social Networks	F	%
Yes, with the MBKM program the teacher's social network has become very broad	100	60,2%
Yes, with the MBKM program the teacher's social network is widening	59	35,5%
Not expanding the teacher's social network	2	1,2%
The MBKM program in SD has not yet been implemented	5	3,0%
Total	166	100%

Source: Primary data

Table 5 shows that there were 60.2% of teachers who stated that their social network had become wider, 35.5% stated that their social network had expanded, and 1.2% of them stated that there had been no increase or that their social network had not expanded. Meanwhile, teachers consider that the social network of their students has also increased very broadly by 43.4%, with the MBKM program students' social networks have expanded by 51.8%, and only 1.8% have not experienced an increase in terms of expanding student social networks.

Critical thinking means supporting collective thinking by developing individual thinking skills, which can be done logically and judgments are personal. Dewey in 1934³¹ defines critical thinking as "Persistent, active, and careful consideration of what is believed or alleged form of knowledge in the light of the reasons that support it and the consequences it causes. Whereas Paul in 1988 defined finding critical thinking as the ability to reach the right conclusions based on observations and information."³²

Based on this concept, this study found that the curriculum applied to the MBKM learning model was in line with the results of previous studies which stated that critical thinking can increase students' sensitivity to self-exploration, through more open-mindedness in analyzing existing situations and conditions. around. With critical thinking students are encouraged to be able to develop more complex ideas, which are in accordance with their individual potential. So that in the end, students can more easily make decisions in solving a problem.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the MBKM program implementation in elementary schools presents several novel aspects. Firstly, it focuses on assessing the implementation of the MBKM program specifically in elementary schools. While previous research has predominantly explored MBKM implementation in higher education institutions, this study sheds light on the unique challenges and opportunities at the primary education level. Secondly, the research delves into the context of elementary education, offering insights into how the MBKM program can be integrated into existing primary school curricula. By identifying the distinctive aspects of implementing MBKM in elementary schools, this study provides valuable input for the development of the program at this educational level.

Additionally, the evaluation encompasses various crucial elements, including student participation, teacher support and involvement, the role of school principals, parental support, and the program's impact on student learning and development. This comprehensive evaluation approach not only contributes to a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of the MBKM program at the elementary school level but also strengthens our knowledge of its successful implementation or potential areas for improvement. Ultimately, this research offers a valuable contribution to the field of education, particularly regarding the implementation of innovative programs like MBKM in elementary schools, providing a theoretical and practical foundation for policymakers and educational practitioners, while also paving the way for further research in this area.

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