A Form of Independent Curriculum, an Overview of Independent Learning at State Elementary School 05 Gelumbang Muaraenim

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ABSTRACT

Background. The Merdeka Curriculum as an alternative curriculum overcomes learning setbacks during the pandemic which gives "Independent Learning" freedom to learning implementers, namely teachers and principals in compiling, implementing the learning process, and developing curriculum in schools paying attention to the needs and potentials of students.

Purpose. This research was conducted to provide an overview of the Merdeka Curriculum as a form of independent learning in elementary schools regarding the profile of Pancasila students, the structure of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools, and the teaching tools used.

Method. The research was conducted using the Library Research method (literature study) and visited a website that presents information related to the Independent Learning Curriculum in elementary schools.

Results. In preparation for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, teachers need to learn more about the Merdeka Curriculum and consider projects according to student phases in order to achieve meaningful, profound, and fun learning outcomes as well as students.

Conclusion. The Merdeka Curriculum with the concept of independent learning in elementary schools provides "independence" for education implementers, especially teachers and principals, in compiling, developing and implementing the curriculum based on the potential, and needs of students and schools.

INTRODUCTION

The spirit of education lies in the curriculum and can never be separated. state that the curriculum is an educational program that is compiled into a set to be implemented in achieving educational goals which consists of educational components that are interrelated and support

each other (Gabriela dkk., 2022; Qureshi dkk., 2022). explained that the development of curriculum improvement will be said to be effective if the results of the development are in accordance with demands and needs, relevance, flexibility, continuity, practicality, and effectiveness. Therefore, curriculum development should have a strong foundation, and be principled to support the achievement of educational goals. Then (Kartel dkk., 2022) explains that the curriculum occupies a central position in all kinds of educational activities, in order to create educational goals, the curriculum must be able to improve its quality, where the curriculum must be able to adapt to the situation of each good school, pay attention to the needs and development stages of students, the needs of national development while keeping in mind that national education originates from national culture and national education based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Dewi S dkk., 2022; Hikmah dkk., 2022; Keshav dkk., 2022). To continue to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, the curriculum that is applied develops, adapts to the education unit, regional potential, and needs to be evaluated to study the effectiveness of curriculum implementation.

The existence of the 2013 Curriculum implemented in Indonesia has been running for approximately 9 years since 2013. (Demina dkk., 2022) explains that the implementation of K-13 focuses on phenomena that occur in the surrounding environment such as natural, social, artistic and cultural phenomena through observing, questioning, trying, reasoning and communicating activities so that they are more creative, innovative and productive and ready to face problems. The polemic occurred when the covid-19 outbreak hit and the government had to issue a status of emergency with a student learning from home policy that required learning activities to be carried out online, expecting parents to be full companions of children's learning. The intensity of teaching and learning activities has also decreased drastically in a day. UNICEF (2021) explains that online learning activities from home limit the interaction between teachers and students, where the time spent studying per day is approximately 2 to 3 hours, the emergence of parents' anxiety due to limitations in children's learning capacity, lack of teacher guidance, to the emergence of boredom and decreased learning motivation due to the inability of teachers to innovate and be creative in delivering learning materials (Anoum dkk., 2022) stated that to anticipate the widening impact that occurred in pandemic learning on learning loss and learning gaps, Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 719 / P / 2020 concerning Guidelines for Implementing the Curriculum in Education Units in Special Conditions (2020) was released, which in essence is a simplification of the national curriculum.

The emergency curriculum has reduced the basic competencies for each subject matter so that teachers and students can focus on essential competencies and prerequisite competencies for continued learning at the next level (Firman dkk., 2022; Ilham dkk., 2022). Teachers are encouraged to carry out continuous diagnostic assessments to check the cognitive and non-cognitive state of students as a result of learning from home or distance learning. Through this diagnostic assessment, teachers can provide appropriate learning according to students' conditions and needs. (Safitri dkk., 2022) also explained that after running for almost one school year, the Ministry of Education and Culture evaluated the implementation of the emergency curriculum and obtained evaluation results students using the emergency curriculum had better assessment results than those using the full 2013 curriculum, regardless of their socio-economic background. In addition, the implementation of the emergency curriculum can significantly reduce learning-loss during the pandemic for both literacy and numeracy achievements.

Nadiem Makarim changed and established the Merdeka Curriculum as an improvement from the 2013 curriculum on December 10, 2019. Starting with the four Merdeka Belajar policies described by the Ministry of Education and Culture, (2021a), including first, in 2020 replacing the National Standardized School Examination (USBN) to a test or assessment organized by the school with an assessment of student competence that can be carried out in various forms that are more comprehensive, which gives teachers and schools the freedom to assess their students' learning outcomes. Second, in 2021 the National Examination changes to the Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM) and Character Survey which focuses on literacy, numeracy, and character as an effort to encourage teachers and schools to improve the quality of learning that refers to the good practices of international assessments such as PISA and TIMSS. Third, simplification in the preparation of the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP), which originally consisted of 13 components into 3 core components including learning objectives, learning activities and assessments. This is so that teachers have more time to prepare and evaluate learning in addition to effectiveness and efficiency. And fourthly, a more flexible policy in the admission of new learners in order to be able to support inequality in terms of access and quality in the regions.

The issuance of the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 56 / M / 2022 concerning Guidelines for Curriculum Implementation in the Context of Recovery Learning Development & Learning (2022) is a form of full support for curriculum improvement in Indonesia to realize an advanced Indonesia that is sovereign, independent and has a personality through the creation of Pancasila Students who reason critically, creatively, independently, believe, fear God Almighty, and have noble character, mutual cooperation and global diversity through the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The Merdeka Curriculum is an option for schools that are ready to implement it in the context of restoring learning from 2022 to 2024 due to the pandemic. However, for schools that are not ready to implement the Merdeka Curriculum, there are still other options, namely continuing to use the 2013 Curriculum, or continuing with the Emergency Curriculum until an evaluation of the learning recovery curriculum is carried out in 2024.

The advantages of the Merdeka Curriculum are explained by Kemdikbud (2021b) to focus on essential material and the development of student competencies in its phase so that students can learn more deeply, meaningfully and enjoyably, not in a hurry. Learning is much more relevant and interactive through project activities, providing wider opportunities for students to actively explore actual issues such as environmental, health, and other issues to support the development of the character and competence of the Pancasila Student profile. The aim of this teaching is to strengthen students' literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge in each subject. The phase or level of development itself means the learning outcomes that must be achieved by students, adjusted to the characteristics, potential and needs of students. The Merdeka Curriculum provides freedom and is student-centered, teachers and schools are free to determine appropriate learning. The Merdeka Curriculum carries the concept of "Merdeka Belajar" which is different from the 2013 curriculum, according to (Hartini dkk., 2022) which means giving freedom to schools, teachers and students to freely innovate, learn independently and creatively, where this freedom starts with the teacher as the driving force. A pleasant learning atmosphere, considering that there are many complaints from parents and students regarding learning that requires achieving minimum completeness scores, especially during the pandemic. In the Merdeka Curriculum, there is no longer a demand for achieving minimum completeness scores, but emphasizes quality learning for the realization of

quality students, Pancasila student profile characters, competence as Indonesian human resources ready to face global challenges.

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is not carried out simultaneously and massively refers to a policy that gives schools flexibility in implementing the curriculum. Data collection on school readiness in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum (IKM) was carried out by the Ministry of Culture Research and Technology (2022), which shows that many public and private schools are ready and registered to implement the IKM with an independent learning category of 35,334 schools, in the independent category, there are 59,429 schools, the independent sharing category is 3,607 which will begin to be implemented.

There are 59,429 schools in the independent category, and 3,607 in the independent sharing category, which will begin to be implemented in the 2022/2023 academic year, covering the PAUD, SD, SMP and SMA levels. Because it is new to implementation, in preparation for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, of course, schools and teachers need to prepare well, starting from understanding the structure of the Merdeka Curriculum, the assessments in it, the learning outcomes and the flow of learning objectives, the implementation of projects and others. This can be done by participating in the Activator Teacher and Activator School activities. In addition, it can be done through independent or group mentoring and training by teachers or schools such as the Teacher Working Group (KKG), Subject Teacher Conference (MGMP), Forum Group Discussion (FGD) or other teacher communities, sharing good practices, sharing learning content, seeking independent information through books, participating in webinars, downloading the independent teaching platform application that can be accessed by android users, journaling articles or official websites containing the Merdeka Curriculum. The government supports the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools by providing teaching tools in the form of textbooks and supporting teaching materials; training and providing learning resources for teachers, principals and local governments; and guaranteeing teaching hours and teacher professional allowances.

Research that has discussed the portrait of an independent curriculum, a form of independent learning in elementary schools has not been reported before. Generally, many studies conducted discussing the Merdeka Curriculum are still focused on the tertiary level. The implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in elementary schools itself is still limited to driving schools only as stated by Nopiana dkk., 2022 explained that the implementation in several driving schools went well at first but required further understanding to the implementers, especially teachers and explained by Evy Ramadina, (2021) the role of the principal in designing curriculum development in elementary schools. Broadly speaking, this paper will describe an overview of the development of an independent curriculum in elementary schools in terms of the profile of Pancasila students, the structure of the Merdeka curriculum and its content, and teaching tools that portray an independent curriculum as a form of independent learning in elementary schools. This research is important for teachers, principals and other parties in helping to understand the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in elementary schools, considering that before the new 2022-2023 school year, this curriculum will begin to be implemented.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to determine and describe an overview of the development of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools in terms of the structure of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools, and teaching tools that portray the Merdeka Curriculum as a form of independent learning in elementary schools. The research method applied in writing this article is the Library Research method (literature study). According to M. Sari and Asmendri in (Najeed dkk., 2022), research using Library Research (literature study) data information is obtained from various sources such as books, journal articles related to the problem to be discussed. In this case, researchers collect library data, information that has been documented in the form of books, journals, notes, read and record and process research materials related to the development of the Merdeka Curriculum. In addition, the method of accessing websites or sites that provide various information related to the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools is also used.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Pancasila Students

The Pancasila learner profile is a reflection of superior Indonesian students with lifelong learning, character, global competence and behavior in accordance with the values of Pancasila, acting as the main reference that directs education policy including being a reference for teachers in building student character and competence. To develop the character of the Pancasila learner profile, the Head of the Education Curriculum and Assessment Standards Agency, (2022) issued Decree Number 009/H/KR/2022 to help more intensive understanding of the dimensions, elements, and subelements of the Pancasila learner profile in the Merdeka Curriculum. The Merdeka Curriculum refines the cultivation of student character education with the Pancasila learner profile, which consists of 6 dimensions, each dimension of which is elaborated in detail into each element.

Table 1
Dimensions and Elements of the Pancasila Student Profile

NO	Dimensions	Elements
1	Believing, Fearing To God Almighty	- Religious morals - Personal morals - Manners to man
2	Global Diversity	- Recognizing and appreciating culture - Communication and interaction between cultures - Reflection and responsibility for the experience of diversity
3	Mutual cooperation	- Collaboration - sharing

		- Care
4	Independent	- Self- and situation-understanding - Self-regulation
5	Critical Reasoning	- Acquire and process information and ideas
		- Analyzing and evaluating reasoning
6	Creative	- Generate original ideas
		- Produce original works and actions
		- Have flexibility in thinking in finding alternative solutions

1. Structure of Merdeka Curriculum in Elementary Schools

To support the implementation of new paradigm learning, reforms in the organization of learning are needed. The central government and local governments have their respective authorities which are divided into:

a. Central government authority; regulates curriculum structure, Pancasila learner profile, learning outcomes, and learning and assessment principles.

b. Local government authority; regulates the vision, mission and objectives of schools, learner profiles in schools, local policies related to curriculum, learning and assessment processes, operational curriculum development in education units and development of teaching tools.

The structure of the Merdeka Curriculum in primary schools is regulated in the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 56 / M / 2022 concerning Guidelines for Implementing the Curriculum in the Framework of Learning Recovery Development & Learning, (2022) which is divided into 3 phases, namely:

a. Phase A for students in grades 1 and 2

b. Phase B for students in grades 3 and 4

c. Phase C for students in grades 5 and 6

The Merdeka curriculum, which is designated as the learning recovery curriculum at the primary education level, is divided into 2 activities, namely:

a. intracurricular learning, in intracurricular learning activities for each subject refers to learning outcomes.

b. the project of strengthening the profile of Pancasila students, aimed at strengthening efforts to achieve the Pancasila student profile which refers to the Graduate Competency Standards (SKL) with the proportion of the learning load allocated around 20% - 30% per year. The project on strengthening the profile of Pancasila students is implemented flexibly, both in terms of content and implementation time. From the content, the reference of this project is that there are achievements of the Pancasila learner profile that are in accordance with the phase of students, and do not have to be associated with learning outcomes in the subject. From the organization of the implementation time, the project can be carried out by adding the allocation of the Pancasila

learner profile strengthening project lesson hours from all subjects and the total implementation time of each project is not the same.

The structure of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools is as follows:

a. The writing system is divided into 4 structure tables, namely: grade 1; grade 2; combined grades 3, 4, and 5; and grade 6.

b. The learning load for each subject is written in Lesson Hours (JP) per year. Schools can manage the time allocation for each week flexibly in 1 school year.

c. Religious Education subjects are followed by all students in accordance with their respective religions.

d. The organization of learning content uses a subject or thematic approach.

e. Natural and Social Sciences (NSP) begins to be taught to students starting in grade 3, although the learning outcomes already exist for grades 1 and 2.

f. Art and Culture content is provided by the school at least 1 type of art (music, fine arts, theater arts, and/or dance) and students can choose 1 type of art

g. Local content can be added by each school in accordance with government regulations and regional characteristics/local wisdom flexibly in 3 ways, including:
   1) Integrate it into other subjects
   2) Integrate it into the theme of the project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students
   3) Develop it into a separate subject

h. English subject can be chosen depending on the readiness of the school. If the school is not ready then it can be integrated into other subjects, and/or extracurricular activities by involving the community, school committee, student volunteers, and/or parental guidance.

i. English and Local Content as elective subjects with a maximum of 2 JP per week or 72 JP per year

j. The total JP in the curriculum structure table does not include English Language, Local Content, and/or additional lessons organized by the school.

k. Primary schools that provide inclusive education can provide program services for students with special needs according to the needs of students

The curriculum structure for each grade is as follows:

Grade 1

Grade 1 is included in phase A, if it is assumed that 1 year is 36 weeks, and each lesson hour (JP) = 35 minutes, then the independent curriculum structure in grade 2 can be seen in the following table:

Table 2

Grade 1 Merdeka Curriculum Structure as follows

subject		Allocation Intracurricular allocation per year	Project Allocation for Strengthening the Profile of Pancasila Students per year	Total JP per year
Required				
Islamic Religious Education and	Budi	108 (3)	36	144
Pekerti* Budi	and	108 (3)	36	144
Christian Religious Education	and	108 (3)	36	144
Budi Pekerti* And	and	108 (3)	36	144
Catholic Religious Education		108 (3)	36	144
Budi Pekerti* and		108 (3)	36	144
Buddhist Education		144 (4)	36	180
Budi Pekerti* and		216 (6)	71	288
Hindu Religious Education and		144 (4)	36	180
Ethics*		108 (3)	36	144
Confucianism and Ethics Education and Ethics Education		108 (3)	36	144
Pancasila Education				
Indonesian Language		72 (2)	-	72
Mathematics		72 (2)	-	72
Physical Education Sports and		828 (23)	253	1080

Grade 2

In grade 2, there are similarities with the independent curriculum structure in grade 1. The difference is the additional time allocation in 2 subjects, namely:

1) Indonesian language to 252 JP per year (7 JP per week), which was originally 216 JP per year (6 JP per week) in grade 1

2) Mathematics becomes 180 JP per year (5 JP per week), which was originally 144 JP per year (4 JP per week) in grade 1.
3) So that the total allocation of time for intercurricular learning increases to 900 JP per year (25 JP per week), which was originally 828 JP per year (23 JP per week) in grade 1.

If it is assumed that 1 year is 36 weeks, and each lesson hour (JP) = 35 minutes, the structure of the independent curriculum in grade 2 can be seen in the following table:

Table 3
Class 2 Merdeka Curriculum Structure as follows:

Subjects	Allocation Intracurricular per year	Allocation of Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project per year	Total JP per year
required			
Islamic Religious Education and	108 (3)	36	144
Pekerti* Budi	108 (3)	36	144
Christian Religious Education	108 (3)	36	144
Budi Pekerti* And	108 (3)	36	144
Catholic Religious Education		36	144
Budi Pekerti* and		36	144
Buddhist Education		36	180
Budi Pekerti* and		72	324
Hindu Religious Education and		36	216
Ethics*		36	144
Confucianism and Ethics Education and Ethics Education Pancasila Education		36	144
Indonesian Language		-	72
Mathematics		-	72
Physical Education Sports and	252		1.152

Physical Education Sports and 252 1,152

Grades 3, 4 and 5

In grades 3, 4, and 5, the time allocation remains the same even though grade 3 and grade 4 are in phase B, and grade 5 is in phase C. If it is assumed that 1 year is 36 weeks, and each lesson hour (JP) = 35 minutes, then the structure of the independent curriculum in grades 3, 4, and 5 can be seen in the following table:

Table 4

The structure of the Merdeka Curriculum for Grades 3, 4, and 5 is as follows:

subject required		Allocation Intracurricular per year	Strengthening Project Allocation Pancasila Student Profile per year	Total JP per year
Islamic Religious Education and	Islamic Religious Education and	108 (3)	36	144
Pekerti* Budi	Pekerti* Budi	108 (3)	36	144
Christian Religious Education	Christian Religious Education	108 (3)	36	144
Catholic Religious Education	Catholic Religious Education	108 (3)	36	144
Hinduism and Ethics Education		108 (3)	36	144
Pekerti*		108 (3)	36	144
Confucian Religious Education and		144 (4)	36	180
Budi Pekerti and Ethics		216 (6)	36	252
Pancasila Education		180 (5)	36	216
Indonesian Language		180 (5)	36	216
Mathematics		108 (3)	36	144
Natural and Social Sciences		108 (3)	36	144
Physical Education Sports and				
Health		72 (2)	-	72
Art and Culture		72 (2)	-	72
Total		1.044 (29)	252	1.296

Grade 6

In the curriculum structure in Grade 6 there is a reduction in time allocation in some subjects which affects the total amount of time allocation in a year. This is due to the reduction in the number of weeks in a year, which is assumed to be 32 weeks. Although the total amount is still above grades 1 and 2, it is below grades 3, 4 and 5.

Table 5
Grade 6 Merdeka Curriculum Structure as follows:

Subject	Allocation Intracurricular per year	Strengthening Project Allocation Pancasila Student Profile per year	Total JP per year
Required			
Islamic Religious Education and	96 (3)	32	128
Pekerti* Budi	96 (3)	32	128
Christian Religious Education	96 (3)	32	128
Budi Pekerti* and	96 (3)	32	128
Catholic Religious Education	96 (3)	32	128
Budi Pekerti* and	96 (3)	32	128
Buddhist Education		32	160
Budi Pekerti* and		32	224
Hindu Religious Education and	96 (3)	32	192
Ethics*		32	192
Confucian Religious Education and	96 (3)	32	128
Budi Pekerti and Budi Pekerti	96(3)	32	128

Theater Arts			
Dance Arts			
Options			
English language	64 (2)	-	64
Local Content	64 (2)	-	64
Total	928(29)	224	1.152

1. Teaching tools

Teaching tools are a variety of teaching materials used by teachers in their efforts to achieve the Pancasila learner profile and learning outcomes that have been set. Teaching tools consist of textbooks, teaching modules, project modules to strengthen the profile of Pancasila learners, examples of operational curriculum for education units, learning videos, and others. The teaching tools provided by the government for use include:

a. Project Module for Strengthening the Profile of Pancasila Students

The Pancasila learner profile strengthening project is a project-based co-curricular activity that is structured and designed to strengthen efforts to achieve competence and character in accordance with the Pancasila learner profile based on the Graduate Competency Standards. The implementation of the Pancasila learner profile strengthening project is designed separately from intercurricular activities (Hermansyah dkk., 2023; Noer dkk., 2023). The objectives, content, and series of project learning activities do not have to be associated with intracurricular objectives and subject matter. Schools can involve the participation of the community and/or the world of work to design and organize projects to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. The teaching module for the project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students must be made in advance.

The teaching module for the Pancasila learner profile strengthening project is a document that contains the objectives, steps, learning media, and assessments needed to carry out a project to strengthen the Pancasila learner profile. The government has provided various examples of project modules to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students with the main themes that have been formulated, so that schools and teachers have the authority and flexibility in compiling, selecting, and modifying their own project topics to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students according to the context, characteristics, potential and needs of students. Teachers who have compiled project modules provided by the government no longer need to compile project modules.

The main themes that can be selected for the implementation of the Pancasila learner profile strengthening project and compiled in the Pancasila learner profile strengthening project teaching module for elementary schools include:

1) Sustainable Lifestyle; students understand the impact of human activities, up in the short and long term, on the sustainability of life in the world and beyond. Students also build awareness of environmentally friendly attitudes and behaviors, study the potential sustainability crisis that occurs in the surrounding environment and develop their readiness to face and mitigate it.

2) Local Wisdom; students build their curiosity and inquiry skills through exploration of the culture and local wisdom of the surrounding community or certain regions, as well as their development. Students learn the process and reasons why local/regional communities can develop as they do, the concepts and values behind local arts and traditions, and reflect on the values that can be taken and applied in their lives.

3) Unity in Diversity; students recognize and promote a culture of peace and non-violence, learning to build respectful dialogue on diversity and values. Students will also learn the perspectives of various religions and beliefs, critically and reflectively examine negative stereotypes and their impact on conflict and violence.

4) Build the Soul and Body; students build awareness and skills in maintaining physical and mental health both for themselves and those around them. Students conduct research and discuss issues related to wellbeing, bullying, and seek to find ways to address these issues. (bullying), and try to find solutions. Students will also examine issues related to physical and mental health, including issues of drugs and abuse, pornography, and reproductive health.

5) Engineering and Technology; students use critical, creative, innovative, and empathetic thinking skills to engineer technological products that facilitate the activities of themselves and their surroundings. Students can build a smart society culture by solving various

problems in the surrounding community through technological innovation and application, synergizing social aspects and technological aspects.

6) Entrepreneurship; students identify economic potential at the local / surrounding level and problems in developing this potential, linking it to various aspects such as environmental, social, and community welfare. Through this activity, the horizon of future opportunities is broadened, more sensitive to the needs of the community, skilled in solving problems, fostering creativity and entrepreneurial culture of students and ready to become a workforce with integrity and professionalism.

In elementary schools, the project of strengthening the profile of Pancasila students takes about 20%-30% of the total lesson hours per year, so that the time allocation for each project of strengthening the profile of Pancasila students is not the same which allows the implementation of one project with another project is not the same (Amado-Alonso dkk., 2019; Rahmah dkk., 2022; Rohmalimna dkk., 2022). In managing the implementation time, the project can be implemented by adding the allocation of project lesson hours from all subjects and the total implementation time of each project does not have to be the same. At the elementary school level, in 1 school year, the project of strengthening the profile of Pancasila students can be implemented by choosing at least 2 (two) projects with 2 (two) different themes.

a. Teaching Module

The teaching module used in the Merdeka Curriculum is a document that contains the objectives, steps, learning media and assessments needed in one unit/topic based on the flow of learning objectives. Teachers have the freedom to compile, select and modify the available teaching modules according to the context, characteristics, and needs of students. The government provides examples of teaching modules that can be used as inspiration for schools, a choice that facilitates and eases the burden on teachers in preparing learning designs (Dianovi dkk., 2022). Teachers are free to choose or modify teaching modules that have been provided by the government to adapt teaching modules to the characteristics of students, or independently compile teaching modules that are in accordance with the characteristics of their students.

Teaching modules have the following criteria:

1) Essential; understanding the concepts of each subject through learning experiences and across disciplines.

2) Interesting, meaningful, and challenging; foster students' interest in learning and involve students to be active in the learning process. Relates to students' prior knowledge and experience so that it is not too complex but also not too easy for their age stage.

3) Relevant and contextual; related to students' prior knowledge and experience, in accordance with the context of the time and place where the students are.

4) Continuous; the flow of learning activities is related to the student's learning phase. The components in the teaching module in the Merdeka Curriculum are the basis for preparing teaching modules and for completing learning preparations that can be added according to the needs of each subject. Not all components must be included by the teacher in the teaching module.

CONCLUSION

The Merdeka Curriculum with the concept of independent learning in elementary schools provides "independence" for education implementers, especially teachers and principals, in

compiling, developing and implementing the curriculum based on the potential, and needs of students and schools. Free learning frees teachers to arrange learning that emphasizes essential material by considering characteristics so that learning outcomes will be achieved more meaningfully, enjoyably, and deeply. Project activities that are arranged according to the phase and relevant to the environment help students develop the character and competence of the Pancasila Student Profile in themselves. In designing curriculum development in schools, principals need to consider student characteristics, school potential and regional potential.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.
Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.
Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.
Author 4: Formal analysis; Methodology; Writing - original draft.
Author 5: Supervision; Validation.

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