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Empowering teachers: unveiling teacher leadership insights for independent learning curriculum implementation at secondary education units in Toraja Utara district

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ABSTRACT

The urgency of this study to describe unveiling teacher leadership insights for independent learning curriculum implementation at secondary education units Method: This study uses a quantitative approach and is combined with a qualitative approach. The study population are 69 transformational teachers and the study sample are 69 transformational teachers. The study data were obtained through a questionnaire developed by researchers and reinforced by data obtained through in-depth interviews with school principals, vice principals in curriculum matters and teachers. This study questionnaire are leadership insights, the concept of transformational teachers and independent curriculum implementation. Quantitative data descriptive uses tools SPSS 26 to manage result, while qualitative data checks are valid and reliable using triangulation techniques and sources. The results showed that 58.94% of teachers already had insight into teacher leadership and 67.6% agreed to implement the independent curriculum. Reinforced through the results of interviews that the implementation of the independent curriculum is urgent to overcome learning loss and to produce graduates who fit the Pancasila students profile. Leadership insight, the concept of driving teachers in the implementation of the independent curriculum can be improved by providing opportunities for teachers to attend training and massively sharing the knowledge of driving teachers among fellow teachers to accelerate overcoming learning loss.



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Introduction

Education is a major need for every human being. Education is also the escalation of the welfare and progress of a nation (Alifah, S., 2021). Education in Indonesia continues to experience changes as well as the curriculum. The curriculum is always changing along with the demands of the times and science and technology. Curriculum as a tool focuses on needsto solve the nation's problems (Amelia, C., 2019). Currently, there are several types of curricula used in Indonesia, namely the Curriculum 2013 and the independent learning curriculum. However, the independent learning curriculum has not been implemented simultaneously throughout Indonesia under the Ministry of Education and Culture's policy of Research and Technology which gives flexibility to schools or educational units to implement the curriculum. The Independent Learning Curriculum is implemented with several underlying rationales as follows 1) adjustment to changes in learning theory, 2) accommodating the uniqueness of children, 3) preparing student competencies in the Industrial Age 4.0, 4) strengthening national identity for students, 5) carrying out the mandate regulations, and 6) strengthening school autonomy (Amini, A., & Ginting, N., 2020; Kim, T., & Weiner, J., 2022).

In terms of implementing the independent learning curriculum, leadership is needed so that learning outcomes can be achieved. The quality of education is closely related to the leadership of the leader. Leaders who have competence as managers and as leaders will be able to make good plans that are in line with government and school policies (Sihotang, 2022). Planning is carried out by internal stakeholders, namely school principals, teachers, education staff and students. Teachers and educational staff have their respective roles according to their main duties and functions. Teachers and education personnel play a leadership role in schools in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. The role of the teacher is very important and strategic in learning activities in schools to achieve learning outcomes and Pancasila students profile.

Teachers have a unique leadership style of learning management both inside and outside the classroom. The figure of teacher is a role model for students. Each attitude and behavior of the teacher becomes a role model for students. The attitude of leadership must indeed be owned by the teacher because it is always in touch with the planning and management of learning. Teachers are also faced with the complexity of classroom management issues, student assistance, learning and matters related to achieving the school's vision, mission and goals. One's leadership style affects the formation of others' behavior in everyday life. Likewise, teacher carries out the learning task to produce students who become human beings with faith, piety and noble character, which is closely related to their leadership (Lemoine, G. J., Hartnell, C. A., & Leroy, H., 2019; Nicholson, J., &Kurucz, E., 2019). Teacher performance is the result of his leadership as a professional teacher, namely planning lessons, carrying out learning with the right method, mastering the material and conducting learning evaluations. Teachers must also have insight into leadership and regulation to form a supportive educational ecosystem. The quality of teacher as a learning leader needs to be improved in a planned and sustainable manner because a leadership style of delivering learning is influencing and motivating students to achieve learning objectives. This was conveyed by Harris, A., & Jones, M. (2019) that teacher leadership is required to create a pleasant learning atmosphere so that learning takes place effectively and efficiently. In leadership, there are three types of leadership styles namely authoritarian style, participatory democratic style and independent style or laissez faire. In line with the opinion of Sagala (2013), it is said of the three teacher leadership styles that it is better if the democratic leadership of the teacher carries out learning in general using a democratic leadership style involving and prioritizing the learning experiences of students in solving problems in learning and problems of everyday life. The same thing, Sanjani, M. A. (2018) stated that democratic leadership allows good development, mutual respect and achieves every opinion to create an optimal and productive learning climate. Fahri, F., Lubis, M. J., & Darwin, D. (2022) also stated that teacher leadership influences students in making decisions.

Along with the independent learning policy, teacher leadership development has become one of the focuses of the driving teacher development program. The Government's Mobilization Teacher Program aims to produce teachers as leaders in carrying out learning tasks and in other tasks. Teachers have leadership competencies so that teachers become role models for students. Ministry of Education and Culture (2021) that

findings The results of research academic year 2020/2021 that schools that apply the 2013 Curriculum have decreased learning outcomes in aspects of literacy and numeracy. This shows an indication of learning loss. Meanwhile, schools which are using the Emergency Curriculum have also decreased when compared to the 2019/2020 Academic Year but are better when compared to using the Curriculum 2013. Therefore it is suspected that the independent curriculum can overcome learning loss (Literary observations (school.penggerak.kemdikbud.go.id) show that this model of learning figures is expected to develop the potential of students in a holistic, active and proactive manner. Learners become the main center of learning that must be encouraged to become Pancasila students. Thus, driving teachers are plotted as educational leaders in the future in realizing superior Indonesian generations who have global competence and behave under Pancasila students profile. Since the Independent Learning Curriculum policy has only been running for two years and research related to the implementation of the independent learning curriculum is still small, we are interested in conducting research related to teacher leadership insights through the concept of driving teachers to implement an independent learning curriculum.

Method

This study was conducted at Rantepao Christian High School, District North Toraja from October 2022 to March 2023. The study population is all the transformational teachers of schools in District North Toraja. Sampling technique with purposive sampling technique. The sample of study were 69transformational teacher in transformational school with purposive sampling technique. This study uses a combination research method or mixed methods (Tashakkori, A., & Creswell, J. W., 2007; Indrawan, D., &Jalilah, S. R., 2021). The quantitative approach adheres to the positivism paradigm while the qualitative approach adheres to the constructivism paradigm (Saleem, A., Kausar, H., &Deeba, F. (2021). The research focus is on teacher leadership insights in implementing an independent curriculum, teacher understanding of the concept of driving teachers, and readiness to implement the implementation of the independent curriculum. The study data were obtained from questionnaires and data on how to implement the independent curriculum through in-depth interviews to corroborate the data obtained through the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was used to obtain data on teacher leadership insights with indicators (1) Leadership sided with students, (2) Program management has an impact on students, (3) decision-making based on virtues, (4) ability to lead students. Data of teacher concept understanding is driving teachers with indicators (1) learning outcomes, (learning goal flow), (3) learning models, (4) classroom management, and (5) teaching modules. While data on the implementation of the independent curriculum with intracurricular curriculum indicators and Pancasila students profile's projects. The instrument of the research was the Likertscala model (Sriwahyuni, N., Syahniar, S., & Ahmad, R., 2018, July). Therefore, a 4-point Likert-rating scale, with gradations of very appropriate, appropriate less appropriate, and Inappropriate was used questionnaire validation and reliability using product moment correlation. To strengthen how to implement an independent curriculum, data were obtained through in-depth interviews with school principals, vice principals for curriculum, teachers, parents and students.

The data obtained through the questionnaire was first tested for validity and reliability. Test the validity and reliability using SPSS 26. Meanwhile, qualitative data checking valid and reliable data using triangulation techniques and sources. Data analysis according to Miles and Huberman (Hashimov, E., 2015) data analysis with a qualitative approach. Qualitative data were obtained through interviews to strengthen quantitative data.

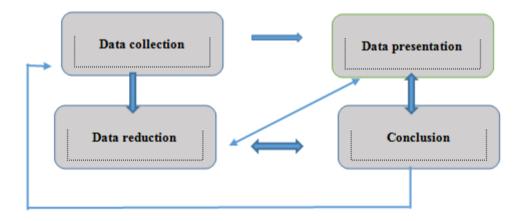


Figure 1. Shows that data was collected from questionnaires and in-depth interview

The results were validated by triangulation techniques and sources. Then, it presented in a diagram and conclusions were drawn to answer the problem.

Results and Discussions

Based on the data obtained through questionnaires and in-depth interviews, the research results are presented, the demographics of 67 respondents are described based on gender, age, educational qualifications and length of service. The following is presented in a bar chart.

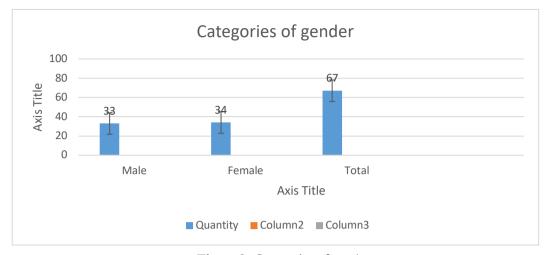


Figure 2. Categories of gender

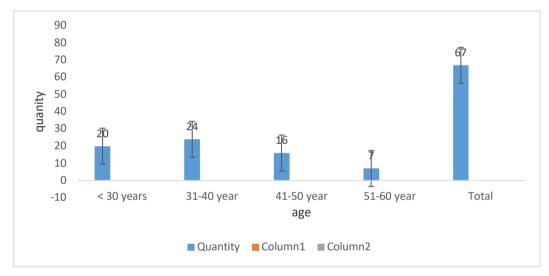


Figure 3. Categories of age

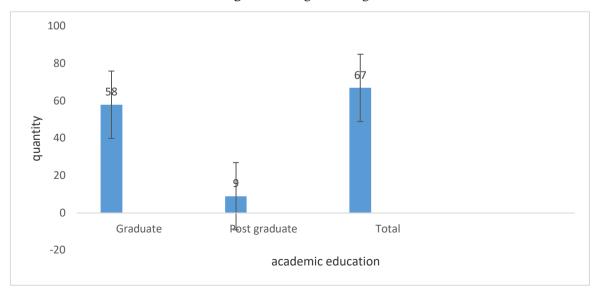


Figure 4. Categories of academic education

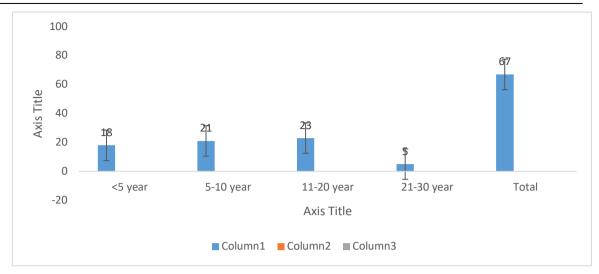


Figure 5. Categories of length of work

Figure 5, there were 67 respondents in the study consisting of 33 men and 34 women. Respondents generally aged 31-40 years were 24 out of 67 people (35.8%). There were 58 people out of 67 (86.6%) with undergraduate education and 13.4% with master's program education. Respondents based on their length of service generally have more than 10 years of work experience.

Teacher Leadership Insights

Based on the data obtained through the questionnaire, the dimension of teacher leadership insight by answering strongly agree 58.94%, agree 40.21%, disagree 0.50% and strongly disagree 0.25%. It can be interpreted that in general driving teachers have insight into teacher leadership. However, teachers continue to be allowed to attend teacher association meetings and training organized by the government in implementing the independent learning curriculum.

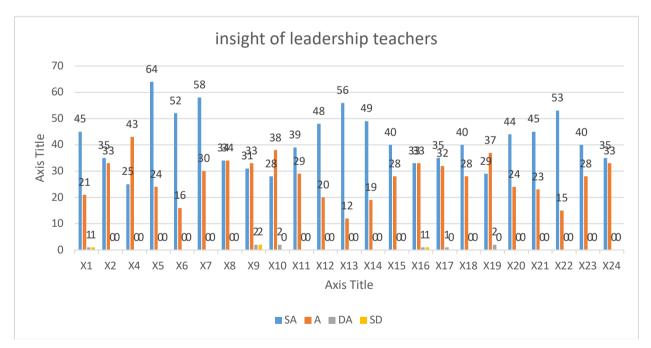


Figure 6. Insight of leadership teachers

Figure 6, it is described out of 24 items that describe teacher leadership insights, items 9,10,16,17, and 19 still need attention to be followed up. The items that are of concern and are followed up are: Item 9 namely the teacher provides space for students to design joint learning. Item 10 namely the teacher allows students to determine how they learn. Item 16 namely teachers can make decisions in favor of the interests of students. Item 19 namely teachers can make decisions in favor of students in cases of ethical dilemmas. Research data obtained from the questionnaire show that student-centered learning is not optimal (Sihotang, 2020). Teacher

leadership insights are continuously reviewed and improved (Baker-Doyle, K. J., 2021; Schott, C., van Roekel, H., &Tummers, L. G., 2020). Teachers who have broad insight will make students the basis for designing learning so that teachers can choose learning models and methods according to student characteristics (Sudargini, Y., &Purwanto, A., 2020; Malmia, W., Makatita, S. H., Lisaholit, S., Azwan, A., Magfirah, I., Tinggapi, H., &Umanailo, M. C. B., 2019).

Teacher's Understanding Of The Concept Of Mobile Teacher

Based on the data obtained through the questionnaire, the dimensions of the teacher's concept by answering strongly agree 54.27%, agree 44.56%, disagree 1.15% and strongly disagree 0%.

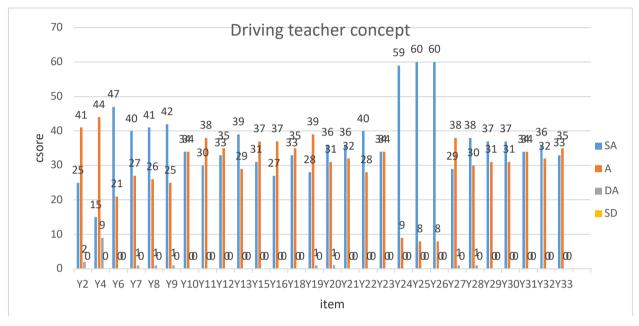


Figure 7. Driving teacher concept

Figure 7, it is illustrated that out of 33 items there are 28 valid ones which describe teacher leadership insights, items 2, 4 and 16 still need to be considered for follow-up. Item 2, namely changes to the curriculum made to suit the competency needs of graduates which is in line with the concept of higher education responding to the competencies needed in the global era. This is in line with the research results of Abdullah, M., Chamid, N., &Khamim, K. (2021, February) reorientation of the andragogy concept and its relevance to higher education in Indonesia for answering the global era of information. Item 4, namely curriculum changes are made because of learning loss and item 16, namely during the learning process students listen to the teacher's explanation. The role of the teacher as a driving teacher is increasingly important to motivate students and teachers so that they both move towards making changes (Sibagariang, D., Sihotang, H., &Murniarti, E., 2021). This is in line with Amalia, R., Nurbayani, S., &Malihah, E. (2023) and Yanna, D., Domes, A., Meriana, T., &Sihotang, H. (2021) that an independent curriculum with innovation character education in overcoming learning loss during the transition period of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Implementation Of The Independent Curriculum

Based on the data obtained through the questionnaire, the dimensions of independent curriculum implementation by answering strongly agreed 67.6%, agreed 32.26%, disagreed 0.14% and strongly disagreed 0%. It can be interpreted that in general, the driving teacher has been able to implement the independent curriculum.

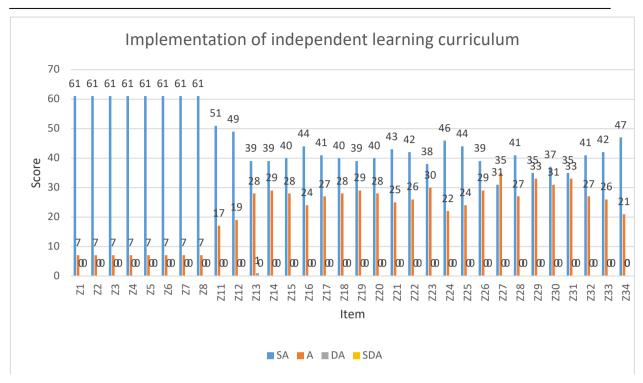


Figure 8. Implementation of independent learning curriculum

Figure 8, out of 34, there are 32 items that describe the implementation of the independent learning curriculum, item 27 still needs attention to be followed up to reduce and even eliminate. The items that are of concern and are followed up are: Item 27, teachers collaborate with other subject teachers as project facilitators (Pitkänen, K., Iwata, M., &Laru, J., 2019; Nuñez Enriquez, O., & Oliver, K. L., 2021). The results of previous research on teacher collaboration provide benefits for students (Hargreaves, A., 2019; Van Leeuwen, A., & Janssen, J., 2019). Qualitative data were obtained through interviews to strengthen quantitative data in discussion.

The results of interviews with school principals, vice principals in the field of curriculum, and teachers provide an overview of the urgency of implementing the independent curriculum that the implementation of the independent curriculum answers the challenges of the times (Sa'diyah, M., Nurhayati, I., Endri, E., Supriadi, D., &Afrianto, Y., 2022; Simanjuntak, M. B., Suseno, M., Setiadi, S., Lustyantie, N., &Barus, I. R. G. R. G., 2022). Times change, so students must also be prepared to answer these challenges. The principal informant (YP) conveyed the same thing that the independent curriculum answered the challenges of a developing world, especially in the field of information and communication technology. The independent curriculum invites teachers to adapt learning to current conditions to prepare students for the era of society 5.0. The informant continued (YP) said that the independent curriculum focused more on how students could use technology to make life easier and have good character. In contrast to the 2013 curriculum which is still too focused on curriculum completeness to complete the targeted material content every year, students who are able to complete it are said to be smart students. Although according to (YP) the independent curriculum needs to be perfected.

The urgency of implementing the independent curriculum according to the vice principal for curriculum is related to government regulations regarding their implementation to accelerate digitalization, especially in the current global era that requires digitization. So that students must be prepared in the digital era because if they are not equipped according to today's times then they will not be able to compete. Furthermore, according to the informant (RI), in terms of student character according to Pancasila students profile, it is decreasing, especially intolerance so the implementation of the independent curriculum is expected to be minimized. The implementation of the independent curriculum focuses on strengthening character. An understanding similar to that of the informant (YP) was also conveyed by (RI) that regarding competence so far it has been too hard on the target so we don't care that the student's competence is deep because it is just completing all competencies without caring about the depth of the material. Whereas the opinion of the informant deputy head of school in the field of curriculum (ATY) is that the implementation of the independent curriculum follows educational developments and like it or not this curriculum must be implemented because if it is not implemented today it must be followed next year. Continued (ATY) said that the implementation of the

independent curriculum followed the development of the curriculum, the idea was very changed and positive compared to the current curriculum because it was truly student-centered. Not completing curriculum achievements but meaningful learning targets. Existing content focuses more on recognizing children's potential so teachers explore the potential to deliver children to their maximum potential. Even though according to the informant (ATY) it is not easy to change the old pattern to a new paradigm, it must be done for better education.

Meanwhile, according to the teacher informant (HP) who is a teacher, with this independent curriculum, students learn more independently and are more able to explore themselves/their potential. The teacher changes the teaching paradigm from teaching to facilitator and administration is lighter and the teacher has space to explore learning. The teacher informant (GSM) also said that when issuing policies, the government must have reviewed them before implementing them, especially in adjusting to the times. The potential of students is maximized. Wahyudi, I., & Ahmad, R. (2021) state that the independent curriculum accommodated more of what Ki HajarDewantara understood, namely guiding children according to their nature to the fullest.

Based on the results of the study above, it can be concluded that the implementation of this independent curriculum is very urgent to do because this curriculum is expected to be able to answer the current challenges of Indonesian education which have not yet found a way. It means that our education is still unable to compete with the education of other countries in the world. This is because so far the curriculum has only focused on administration and has not found the right way to implement education that is under the teachings of KihajarDewantara. The 2013 curriculum expected student-centered education, but there was still a rigidity where teachers were required to provide various administrative tools that teachers might not necessarily be able to implement. Therefore, this independent curriculum is said to be a curriculum which is a refinement of the previous curriculum (Chiu, T. K., & Chai, C. S., 2020; Neff, J., Holmes, S. M., Knight, K. R., Strong, S., Thompson-Lastad, A., McGuinness, C., & Nelson, N.,2020). The independent curriculum encourages teachers and students to be creative and innovative in learning while still emphasizing character values that need to be instilled in students.

The independent curriculum also emphasizes character values through the Pancasila students profile which consists of (1) faith and fear of God Almighty and noble character, (2) global diversity, (3) critical thinking, (4) mutual cooperation, (5) independent, (6) creative (Rohmah, N. D., &Fuadi, D., 2022; Komalasari, M. D., &Apriani, A. N., 2023; Armadi, A., &Kumala, R. S. D., 2023). This is expected to be able to answer the current challenges where many people are smart but do not have a good character so this has an impact on cases that break the law such as corruption, collusion, nepotism, intolerance and various immoral cases.

The independent curriculum provides space for students to further explore the material being taught besides that the independent curriculum also adapts to the times when teachers must be able to use technology to assist learning (Simamora, R. M., De Fretes, D., Purba, E. D., &Pasaribu, D., 2020; Yusuf, N.,2021). Likewise, students must be able to take advantage of technology to assist them in learning (Ferri, F., Grifoni, P., &Guzzo, T., 2020; Maatuk, A. M., Elberkawi, E. K., Aljawarneh, S., Rashaideh, H., &Alharbi, H.,2022). This has been implemented in one of the research location schools where most of the classes no longer use manual blackboards in learning but use touchscreen boards in learning. The independent curriculum also focuses on developing the potential of students holistically so that in this way, students can choose and develop their potential or talents which can then be further developed later through college (Rebele, J. E., & Pierre, E. K. S., 2019; Yulianti, T., &Sulistyawati, A., 2021).

Conclusions

Fundamental Findings: The basic findings of this study are (1) the urgency of implementing an independent curriculum in schools, (2) Leadership insights and the concept of thetransformational teacher are related to the implementation of an independent curriculum. Implications: (1) based on research data, teachers must improve their leadership insights by opening their hearts and being willing to learn (2) Teachers are given regular opportunities to take part in teacher mobilization concept training so that they prepare themselves to take part in the driving teacher program (3) Teachers are accompanied and motivated to implement an independent curriculum. Limitations: This research is limited to only reviewing leadership insights and knowledge of the concept of driving teachers in the implementation of the independent curriculum. Future Research: The results of this study can be used as a reference in conducting subsequent research by examining other factors that teachers must have in implementing the independent curriculum.

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