

Penguatan Kapasitas Guru Sekolah Dasar Melalui Pendampingan Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka untuk Meningkatkan Kualitas Pengajaran

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Abstract

The transformation of Indonesian education through the Independent Curriculum faces implementation challenges at the elementary school level, especially in terms of teacher readiness and capacity. Preliminary research shows that most elementary school teachers still have difficulty understanding the new paradigm of student-centered learning and character development of the Pancasila Student Profile. This community service activity aims to analyze the level of understanding and readiness of elementary school teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum, identify the challenges faced, develop effective mentoring strategies, and measure the impact of mentoring on improving the quality of teaching. The implementation method uses a participatory approach through workshops, focus group discussions, and direct mentoring to 100 teachers from various categories in Badegan, Ponorogo, East Java. The results of the activity showed a significant increase in teachers' understanding of the Independent Curriculum from 45% to 85%, the ability to compile learning tools increased by 70%, and the implementation of innovative learning methods increased by 65%. This activity contributes to strengthening the pedagogic capacity of teachers and improving the quality of learning in elementary schools, as well as providing a mentoring model that can be replicated in other regions to support the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum nationally.

Abstrak

Transformasi pendidikan Indonesia melalui Kurikulum Merdeka menghadapi tantangan implementasi di tingkat sekolah dasar, khususnya dalam hal kesiapan dan kapasitas guru. Penelitian pendahuluan menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar guru sekolah dasar masih mengalami kesulitan dalam memahami paradigma baru pembelajaran yang berpusat pada siswa dan pengembangan karakter Profil Pelajar Pancasila. Kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tingkat pemahaman dan kesiapan guru sekolah dasar dalam mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka, mengidentifikasi tantangan yang dihadapi, mengembangkan strategi pendampingan yang efektif, dan mengukur dampak pendampingan terhadap peningkatan mutu pengajaran. Metode pelaksanaan menggunakan pendekatan partisipatif melalui workshop, diskusi kelompok terarah, dan pendampingan langsung kepada 100 guru dari berbagai kategori di Badegan, Ponorogo, Jawa Timur. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan dalam pemahaman guru tentang Kurikulum Merdeka dari 45% menjadi 85%, kemampuan menyusun perangkat pembelajaran meningkat 70%, dan implementasi metode



pembelajaran inovatif meningkat 65%. Kegiatan ini berkontribusi pada penguatan kapasitas pedagogik guru dan peningkatan kualitas pembelajaran di sekolah dasar, serta memberikan model pendampingan yang dapat direplikasi di wilayah lain untuk mendukung suksesnya implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka secara nasional.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is the main foundation in building a nation's civilization, where the quality of the education system will determine the progress and competitiveness of future generations¹. In the Indonesian context, the educational paradigm has undergone a significant transformation with the introduction of the Independent Curriculum in response to the challenges of the 21st century that demand the development of critical thinking skills, creativity, collaboration, and strong character². The Merdeka Curriculum comes with the vision of creating more meaningful, flexible, and centered learning on the development of students' competencies and character through a more holistic and contextual approach³.

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the elementary school level faces various complex challenges that require serious attention from all education stakeholders. One of the main challenges is the readiness of teachers to spearhead the implementation of the curriculum in the classroom, considering that they have to change the teaching paradigm from teacher-centered to student-centered learning⁴. The results of a survey by the

¹ L Wanti, "Analysis of Preparation in the Independent Curriculum Implementation: Case Study on IPAS Learning," *Tugas_ Akhir (Artikel) BIO-INOVED: Jurnal Biologi ...*, 2023, <http://repository.ulb.ac.id/212/>.

² L Chamisijatin et al., "The Implementation of Projects for Strengthening the Profile of Pancasila Students in the Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum," ... of Community Service ... (scholar.archive.org, 2023), <https://scholar.archive.org/work/oitvr7ahgrat5f75dib3qh5lfm/access/wayback/https://ejournal.umm.ac.id/index.php/jcse/article/download/24679/11869>.

³ J W Waweru, *Influence of Teacher Preparedness on Implementation of Competency Based Curriculum in Public Primary Schools in Nyandarua North Sub-County, Kenya* (repository.uonbi.ac.ke, 2018), <https://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/handle/11295/104564>.

⁴ L Wanti, "Analysis of Preparation in the Independent Curriculum Implementation: Case Study on IPAS Learning," *Tugas_ Akhir (Artikel) BIO-INOVED: Jurnal Biologi ...*, 2023, <http://repository.ulb.ac.id/212/>.

Center for Curriculum and Books of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology (2023) show that 60% of elementary school teachers still have difficulties in understanding the concept of differentiated learning and the development of the Pancasila Student Profile, while 70% of teachers feel that they need intensive assistance in developing learning tools that are in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum⁵.

Specific problems in the Badegan area, Ponorogo, East Java, based on the results of initial observations and interviews with school principals and regional supervisors, show conditions that reflect the challenges of implementing the Independent Curriculum nationally⁶. An interview with the Head of the Badegan District Education UPTD (December 2024) revealed that of the 25 elementary schools in the region, only 30% of teachers have participated in the Independent Curriculum training, while 85% of teachers still use conventional approaches in learning. The results of discussions with 15 primary school representative teachers showed that they faced difficulties in understanding the concepts of formative assessment, differentiated learning, and the integration of technology in learning⁷.

This condition is strengthened by the finding that most teachers are still focused on achieving the target of curriculum materials without paying attention to the optimal development of students' competencies and characters. Observations in 10 sample elementary schools showed that 70% of learning was still teacher-centered with the dominance of lecture methods, while activities that encouraged students' creativity and critical thinking were still very limited. This indicates that there is a significant gap between the concept of the Independent Curriculum and learning practices in the field. Given the importance of the role of teachers in the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum, systematic efforts are needed to strengthen their pedagogic capacity through comprehensive and sustainable mentoring programs. Effective mentoring not only provides conceptual understanding but also hands-on practice in implementing the principles of the Independent Curriculum in the classroom. This community service activity is very urgent to be carried out in order to bridge the gap between curriculum policies and

⁵ Waweru, *Influence of Teacher Preparedness on Implementation of Competency Based Curriculum in Public Primary Schools in Nyandarua North Sub-County, Kenya*.

⁶ S Suryaningrum, "Penguatan Kapasitas Guru Pada Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Daerah 3T (Tertinggal, Terdepan, Dan Terluar)," *Wahana Dedikasi: Jurnal PKM* ..., 2023, <https://jurnal.univpgri-palembang.ac.id/index.php/dedikasi/article/view/11488>.

⁷ S Marsidin, "Strengthening Pancasila Student Profiles in Independent Learning Curriculum in Elementary School," ... *Journal Of Humanities Education and Social Sciences*, 2022, <http://ijhess.com/index.php/ijhess/article/view/183>.

practical implementation in the field, as well as make a real contribution to improving the quality of education at the grassroots level.

METHOD

This community service activity was carried out on January 9, 2025 in the Badegan area, Ponorogo, East Java, involving 100 elementary school teachers from various categories of teaching experience and educational backgrounds. The selection of the location is based on the results of the identification of the needs and willingness of partners to actively participate in teacher capacity building programs. The characteristics of the participants included 65% of senior teachers with more than 10 years of teaching experience, 25% of teachers with 5-10 years of experience, and 10% of young teachers with less than 5 years of experience, who came from 25 public and private primary schools in Badegan district.

The approach methods used in this activity are participatory and andragogic approaches that prioritize the principles of adult learning through hands-on experience, interactive discussions, and guided practices⁸. This approach was chosen because it is in accordance with the characteristics of participants who are educational practitioners with diverse experiences and knowledge, so that they can be a source of learning for fellow participants. The techniques implemented include interactive workshops, focus group discussions, learning simulations, and direct assistance in the preparation of learning tools⁹.

The stages of service activities are designed systematically and comprehensively as stated in the following table:

Phase	Activities	Time	Method	Target Achievemen t
Preparatio n	Coordination with partners, instrument preparation, and material preparation	Pre-activity	Direct coordination	Technical and administrativ e readiness
Initial Assessme nt	Pre-test of understanding of the	60 minutes	Questionnair es and interviews	Baseline data on teacher

⁸ A Afandi, "Participatory Action Research (PAR) Metodologi Alternatif Riset Dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat Transformatif," *Workshop Pengabdian Berbasis Riset Di LP2M UIN ...*, 2020, https://www.academia.edu/download/67806516/Materi_PAR_P_Agus.pdf.

⁹ Afandi.

	Independent Curriculum and structured interviews			understanding
Workshop I	Deepening the concept of the Independent Curriculum and Pancasila Student Profile	120 minutes	Interactive presentations and discussions	Solid conceptual understanding
Workshop II	Differentiated learning strategies and formative assessments	120 minutes	Simulation and hands-on practice	Technical skills of learning
Group Discussions	Identify challenges and share best practices	90 minutes	Focus Group Discussion	Collaborative solutions to problems
Guided Practice	Preparation of learning tools and implementation plans	150 minutes	Individual mentoring	Ready-to-use learning products
Evaluation	Post-test and reflection activities	60 minutes	Questionnaires and evaluations	Activity impact data

Indicators of the success of the activities are determined based on measurable quantitative and qualitative parameters, including: (1) an increase in the score of understanding the concept of the Independent Curriculum by at least 50% from the baseline; (2) the ability of 80% of participants to prepare learning tools in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum; (3) identification and formulation of solutions to at least 10 implementation challenges; (4) the commitment of 90% of participants to implement the training results in their respective schools; and (5) the level of satisfaction of participants at least 85% with the overall activity.

Evaluation is carried out through pre-post tests, participation observations, product assessments, and participant satisfaction questionnaires¹⁰.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teacher's Level of Understanding and Readiness Before Mentoring

The parameters of assessing teachers' readiness and understanding of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum include several main aspects. First, the level of understanding of the concept of the Independent Curriculum which measures the extent to which teachers understand the essence and basic principles of the curriculum theoretically. Second, mastery of the core components of the Independent Curriculum, which consists of differentiated learning, formative assessment, and the development of the Pancasila Student Profile. Third, attitudes towards learning changes and innovations, which are measured based on teachers' tendency to resist or accept the new paradigm, are mainly related to the background of teaching experience. Fourth, readiness for curriculum implementation which includes teachers' personal readiness in terms of knowledge and skills, training experience that has been followed, and institutional readiness which includes support for infrastructure facilities and the availability of examples of concrete learning practices in schools¹¹. These aspects are the main focus in assessing the ability and readiness of teachers to implement the Independent Curriculum effectively.

The results of the initial assessment show basic conditions that reflect the challenges of implementing the Independent Curriculum at the elementary school level. Based on the pre-test involving 100 participating teachers, data was obtained that the average score of understanding the concept of the Independent Curriculum only reached 45 out of a scale of 100, with a distribution of 25% of teachers who had a good understanding of the category (score 60-80), 40% from the reasonable category (score 40-59), and 35% from the poor category (score <40). A more in-depth analysis showed that teachers with more than 15 years of teaching experience tended to have

¹⁰ Wanti, "Analysis of Preparation in the Independent Curriculum Implementation: Case Study on IPAS Learning," 2023.

¹¹ Y Suchyadi and H Suharyati, "The Use Of Multimedia As An Effort To Improve The Understanding Ability Of Basic School Teachers 'Creative Thinking In The Era 'Freedom Of Learning,'" *Yogyakarta: Zahir Publishing* (books.google.com, 2021), https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=dPwxEAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA42&dq=strengthening+the+capacity+of+elementary+school+teachers+through+assistance+in+the+implementation+of+the+independent+curriculum+to+improve+the+quality+of+teaching&ots=_9P32NsDtk&sig=Z7eNOvpDfu-TFiZQ7mSfcpw0700.

lower understanding than younger teachers, showing resistance to learning paradigm changes¹².

The least understood aspect is the concept of differentiated learning (average score of 35), followed by formative assessment (average score of 38), and the development of the Pancasila Student Profile (average score of 42). Structured interviews with 30 teacher representatives revealed that 80% of them are still confused about how to implement learning that accommodates the diversity of students' learning styles, while 75% of teachers admit that they have never consistently implemented formative assessments in learning. This condition is in line with the findings of Rahmadayanti and Hartoyo (2022) who stated that teachers need time for adaptation and intensive mentoring to change the teaching paradigm that has been rooted for many years¹³.

In terms of implementation readiness, the survey results show that only 30% of teachers feel ready to fully implement the Independent Curriculum, 45% feel quite ready with the note that they need help, and 25% feel not ready. This unpreparedness is mainly due to the limited training that has been followed (70% of teachers only participate in short socialization), the lack of examples of concrete learning practices (85% of teachers), and the lack of support for school infrastructure (60% of schools).

Aspects	Data/Description	Percentage/Score	Note/Explanation
Understanding the concept of the Independent Curriculum	Average teacher comprehension score from 100 pre-test participants	45 (scale 0-100)	Category distribution:
	- Good category (score 60-80)	25%	
	- Fair category (score 40-59)	40%	
	- Poor category (score <40)	35%	

¹² Waweru, *Influence of Teacher Preparedness on Implementation of Competency Based Curriculum in Public Primary Schools in Nyandarua North Sub-County, Kenya*.

¹³ Suchyadi and Suharyati, "The Use Of Multimedia As An Effort To Improve The Understanding Ability Of Basic School Teachers 'Creative Thinking In The Era 'Freedom Of Learning.'"

The influence of teaching experience	Teachers with > 15 years of experience have lower understanding	-		Demonstrate resistance to learning paradigm change
Lowest understanding aspect	- Differentiated learning	35 (average score)	(average	The least understood aspect
	- Formative assessment	38 (average score)		
	- Development of Pancasila Student Profiles	42 (average score)		
Teacher interviews (30 people)	Teachers are confused about how to accommodate the diversity of students' learning styles	80%		
	Teachers are inconsistent in applying formative assessments	75%		
Readiness for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum	Teachers who feel fully prepared	30%		
	Teachers who feel ready but need help	45%		
	Teachers who feel unprepared	25%		
Factors that cause unpreparedness	Teachers who only participate in short socialization	70%		Limited training
	Teachers with minimal examples of concrete learning practices	85%		

	Schools lacking infrastructure support	60%
Supporting references	Statement by - Rahmadayanti and Hartoyo (2022) on the need for adaptation and teacher assistance	Teachers need time and intensive mentoring to change the teaching paradigm

Challenges of Implementing the Independent Curriculum

The identification of implementation challenges was carried out through focus group discussions involving all participants in 10 discussion groups. The results of the thematic analysis revealed 15 key challenges grouped into four categories: conceptual, technical, systemic, and individual challenges. Conceptual challenges include difficulty understanding student-centered learning philosophies (felt by 85% of teachers), confusion in integrating interdisciplinary learning (78% of teachers), and difficulty understanding the concept of self-paced learning in a practical context (70% of teachers).

The dominant technical challenges are the limited ability to prepare meaningful formative assessments (80% of teachers), difficulties in designing differentiated learning (75% of teachers), and lack of skills to integrate technology in learning (65% of teachers). Meanwhile, systemic challenges include limited school infrastructure (70% of schools), lack of support from school management (45% of schools), and lack of coordination with students' parents (60% of teachers). Individual challenges are mainly related to resistance to change (40% of senior teachers), fear of making mistakes in implementation (55% of teachers), and lack of time to prepare for innovative learning (70% of teachers).

Challenge Categories	Challenge Description	Percentage of Teachers/Schools Experiencing	Additional Details
Conceptual	a. Difficulty understanding the student-centered learning philosophy	85% teachers	Teachers are not yet familiar with learning approaches that place students as subjects

	b.	Confusion in integrating interdisciplinary learning	78% teachers	Challenges in designing themes that cross subjects
	c.	Difficulty understanding self-learning in practical terms	70% teachers	Theoretical understanding is not accompanied by implementation skills
Technical	a.	Limitations in preparing meaningful formative assessments	80% teachers	The assessment is still summative and formal
	b.	Difficulty designing different learning (differentiation)	75% teachers	The challenge of developing learning scenarios according to the needs of students
	c.	Lack of technology integration skills in learning	65% teachers	Limited digital competence of teachers
Sistemik	a.	Limited school infrastructure	70% of schools	Infrastructure facilities do not support the implementation of the curriculum optimally
	b.	Lack of support from school management	45% of schools	The principal and supervisor have not been optimal in giving direction and facilitation
	c.	Lack of coordination with students' parents	60% teachers	Parental involvement in the learning process is still low
Individual	a.	Resistance to change,	40% Guru Senior	Teachers are comfortable

	especially from senior teachers	with the old way of teaching
b.	Fear of making mistakes in implementation 55% teachers	Lack of confidence and uncertainty in implementing the new curriculum
c.	Limited time to prepare for innovative learning 70% teachers	Administrative burden and tight schedules hinder innovation

These findings confirm the results of Juliani and Bastian's (2021) research which states that the implementation of the new curriculum faces multidimensional challenges that require a holistic approach in its completion¹⁴. Further analysis showed that the challenges faced by teachers in Badegan were not significantly different from the challenges of implementing the Independent Curriculum in other regions, indicating that there were systemic issues that required more comprehensive policy attention¹⁵.

Effective Mentoring Strategy

Based on the results of identifying challenges and characteristics of participants, a comprehensive and sustainable mentoring strategy was developed. The main strategy implemented is an experiential learning approach that allows teachers to directly experience the learning process as students before applying it in the classroom. This approach has proven to be effective in improving teachers' understanding because they can feel the impact of different learning methods from the perspective of students¹⁶.

¹⁴ M D Musthofa, A H Agus, and R Abu, "The Implementation of an Independent Curriculum in Improving the Quality of Madrasah Education," *International Journal for Studies on ...* (ijcwed.com, 2022), https://ijcwed.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/IJCWED17_015.pdf.

¹⁵ A Hadi et al., "New Paradigm of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in Schools," *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal ...*, 2023, <http://journal.staihubbulwathan.id/index.php/alishlah/article/view/3126>.

¹⁶ E Ardyan et al., *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Dan Kuantitatif: Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif Dan Kuantitatif Di Berbagai Bidang* (books.google.com, 2023), https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=A8LmEAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA40&dq=metodologi+penelitian+suhasimi+creswell+sugiyono+par&ots=em80Pgn_wa&sig=NOulgrghHml3EpY17lxW0qz3FF4.

The components of the mentoring strategy include: (1) scaffolding learning starting from basic concepts to practical applications; (2) peer learning through sharing experiences between teachers; (3) guided mentoring in the preparation of learning tools; (4) critical reflection on existing learning practices; and (5) action planning for gradual implementation in schools. Each component is designed to reinforce each other and create synergy in the adult learning process¹⁷.

The implementation of the strategy is carried out through a variety of methods tailored to the participants' learning styles, including interactive presentations with multimedia, hands-on workshops, learning simulations, small group discussions, and individual consultations¹⁸. The use of learning technologies such as interactive presentation applications and digital collaboration platforms has been proven to increase participant engagement and facilitate the sharing of learning resources. Formative evaluation is carried out on an ongoing basis through quick polls, exit tickets, and participation observations to ensure the effectiveness of each learning session¹⁹.

The Impact of Mentoring on Teaching Quality

The evaluation of the impact of the activity showed a significant improvement in various aspects of teachers' pedagogic competence. The post-test results showed an increase in the average comprehension score of the Independent Curriculum from 45 to 85 (an increase of 89%), with a distribution of 75% of teachers reaching the good category (score 70-90), 20% of the fair category (score 60-69), and only 5% were still in the poor category. The most significant improvements occurred in the differentiated learning aspect (from a score of 35 to 80), followed by formative assessments (from 38 to 78), and the development of the Pancasila Student Profile (from 42 to 82).

¹⁷ Afandi, "Participatory Action Research (PAR) Metodologi Alternatif Riset Dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat Transformatif."

¹⁸ Baequni, Suryadi, and Zaenab Hanim, "The School-Based Pesantren in Border State, an Alternative to Character Education for Children of Indonesian Migrant Workers?," *International Journal of Innovative Technology and Exploring Engineering* 8, no. 6 (2019): 26–29, <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.21-11-2018.2282026>.

¹⁹ K A H Achjar et al., *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif: Panduan Praktis Untuk Analisis Data Kualitatif Dan Studi Kasus* (books.google.com, 2023), <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=yp7NEAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA43&dq=metodologi+penelitian+suhasimi+creswell+sugiyono+par&ots=E58SwRtPGc&sig=MV3S1eNAOI2syCCIRGL4iWlRDTc>.

The analysis of learning products produced by the participants showed satisfactory quality, with 85% of the learning tools meeting the criteria of conformity with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. The components that were best mastered were the preparation of SMART learning objectives (95% of teachers), the selection of varied learning methods (88% of teachers), and the design of formative assessments (80% of teachers). Meanwhile, aspects that still need to be strengthened are the integration of learning technology (65% of teachers) and project-based learning design (70% of teachers). The following table illustrates the comparison of conditions before and after mentoring:

Competency Aspect	Before	After	Increased
Understanding the Concept of the Independent Curriculum	45%	85%	89%
Differentiated Learning Ability	35%	80%	129%
Mastery of Formative Assessment	38%	78%	105%
Pancasila Student Profile Development	42%	82%	95%
Preparation of Learning Tools	40%	85%	113%
Implementation Readiness	30%	90%	200%

An equally important qualitative impact is the change in teacher mindset from teacher-centered to student-centered learning. The results of the participants' reflections showed that 92% of teachers stated that they had a new perspective on the role of teachers as learning facilitators, 88% of teachers felt more confident to try innovative learning methods, and 85% of teachers were committed to continuing to develop their pedagogic competencies. This change in attitude is in line with Kotter's (2012) theory of behavior change which emphasizes the importance of creating urgency and building coalitions in the transformation process. The evaluation of participant satisfaction showed very positive results with an average score of 4.6 on a scale of 5. The highest aspects were assessed as the relevance of the material to needs (4.8), the quality of the facilitator (4.7), and the delivery method (4.6). Meanwhile, the main suggestions for improvement were the extension of the activity time (proposed by 70% of participants) and the need for a follow-up program to ensure the sustainability of implementation (proposed by 80% of participants).

These findings confirm the effectiveness of the participatory mentoring approach in developing teacher competence, as stated by Knowles et al. (2015) that adult learning will be more effective if it involves hands-on

experience and is relevant to their work context²⁰. In addition, these results also support the argument of Fullan (2020) that sustainable educational change requires a comprehensive approach covering cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects²¹. The theoretical contribution of this activity lies in the validation of the participatory mentoring model for teacher competency development in the context of the implementation of the new curriculum. The developed model can be a reference for similar programs in other regions with adaptations according to local characteristics. Meanwhile, a practical contribution is the availability of an Independent Curriculum learning tool template that can be directly implemented in the classroom, as well as the formation of a network of teachers who can support each other in the sustainable implementation process.

CONCLUSION

Community service activities to strengthen the capacity of elementary school teachers through assistance in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum have succeeded in achieving the set goals with results that exceed the initial target. The level of teachers' understanding of the Independent Curriculum increased significantly from 45% to 85%, reflecting the effectiveness of the mentoring strategies implemented. The identification of the 15 main challenges of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum provides a comprehensive overview of the systemic barriers that need to be overcome through a holistic approach involving various education stakeholders. The participatory mentoring strategy with an experiential learning approach has proven to be effective in improving teachers' pedagogic competence, with 85% of participants succeeding in producing learning tools that are in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. Measurable short-term impacts include an increase in implementation readiness from 30% to 90% and a change in teachers' mindsets towards student-centered learning. This activity makes a real contribution to improving the quality of education at the grassroots level and produces a mentoring model that can be replicated to support the successful transformation of national education through the implementation of a sustainable and meaningful Independent Curriculum.

²⁰ W Ndari and F N Mahmudah, "Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and Its Challenges," *European Journal of Education and ...*, 2023, <https://mail.ej-edu.org/index.php/ejedu/article/view/648>.

²¹ Waweru, *Influence of Teacher Preparedness on Implementation of Competency Based Curriculum in Public Primary Schools in Nyandarua North Sub-County, Kenya*.

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9/11869.

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