Early Childhood Learning Community: Implementation and Collaboration on the Independent Learning Curriculum

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ABSTRAK

The development of education is experiencing significant changes where there are things related to digital that provide many challenges and bring technological advances for changes in the field of education. Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Culture is improving the performance and competence of teachers in education. One of the interesting things that can help improve teacher competency in the Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar is creating a learning community. The research method is applying a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) that aims to identify, review, evaluate, and interpret all available research on the topic area of an interesting phenomenon, with certain relevant research questions. This research literature search began by searching for articles or data on Google Scholar with the keywords Implementation of PAUD Learning Communities in the Independent Learning Curriculum with journal limits for 2019 - 2024. Based on this research, it was found that learning communities in schools have indeed been implemented but do not have a systematic non-cyclical guide. The teacher community at the cluster level has also been holding regular meetings but it is necessary to increase the involvement of all in order to improve student learning outcomes. Involvement of policy makers in developing program strategies that can improve the competency and quality of teacher learning through learning communities in educational units so that they have an impact on students.

Keywords: Learning community; SLR; Independent Learning Curriculum

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the development of education has experienced significant changes where there are things related to digital and this presents many challenges in various aspects of human life, technological advances have brought changes in the education sector (Marisana et al., 2023). he need for increasing the quality of human resources is now a necessity for every country to fight for its nation's civilization to become more advanced. Then, as a follow-up to the decline in the quality of human resources amidst the acceleration of digitalization, the most appropriate step according to the Ministry of Education and Culture is to improve the performance and competence of teachers in educating (Syifauzakia, 2023).

One of the successes in the learning process of students at the early childhood education level is influenced by the teacher as the main actor, not only teaching ability is a factor that influences the achievement of daily learning activities. (Uzlah & Suryana, 2022). Other things that can support the learning process include interesting teaching materials, interactive-based learning media, and fun learning methods. (Amirudin & Widiati, 2017), The learning process also requires the implementation of inquiry-based interactive learning methods. The development of increasingly modern times like today provides positive benefits where teachers as facilitators can use various kinds of technological and information facilities, which can now be accessed via cyberspace. (Khotimah et al., 2019).

In educational activities, teachers must also have basic competencies, which include pedagogical competence, professional competence, personal competence, and social competence. (Febriana, 2021). According to Mulyasa, there are several elements contained in the competence of an educator, including 1) knowledge and cognitive awareness; 2) understanding and cognitive and



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affective depth of the individual; 3) ability, something that students have to carry out the tasks assigned to them; 4) values, standards of behavior that are believed to be psychologically integrated within a person; 5) attitude, feeling, or reaction to a stimulus that comes from outside; 6) interest, a person's tendency to perform actions (Mulyasa, 2008).

Increasing teacher competency through training activities, assistance, mentoring, coaching, or through learning communities is an alternative for improving teacher performance in the field of education. (Musfah, 2012). Currently, many teachers face major challenges related to decreased motivation in improving their competence in the field of education. The influencing factors are the high demands on the role of teachers in providing assistance to students, such as preparing all forms of administrative equipment in teaching (Anggraena et al., 2022). Based on a study from Kartono, it was explained that teachers complained about the large number of administrative files that had to be completed outside the teaching and learning process in class (Kartono, 2009). Another challenge faced by teachers today is also related to the rapid development of technology and information. In some conditions, teachers benefit from easy access to information, but on the other hand, teachers also have to adapt to the increasingly widespread use of IT, which is not commensurate with the IT facilities they obtained (Ngongo et al., 2019). Some of the teacher problems that are currently occurring do have their own challenges to be resolved. Various efforts have been made starting from the central government level, which has authority in policy, up to the level of educators in schools. One of the interesting things that happens in Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar is creating a learning community (Prawitasari & Suharto, 2020).

The concept of learning through learning communities is based on references developed by Richard DuFour, explaining that learning communities in schools are a place for teachers and education staff to learn together and collaborate regularly to develop education. Activities contained in learning communities ideally have clear objectives with program achievement standards that can be measured. Improving the learning process requires good collaboration and joint commitment between teachers and education staff so that quality learning can be achieved, which has a direct impact on students (DuFour & Eaker, 2016). Based on the Guidebook for Optimizing Learning Communities, a learning community is a group of teachers and educational staff who are willing and have the same mission to collaborate on a scheduled and ongoing basis to improve the quality of learning so that it can have an impact on improving student learning outcomes ('Ferayanti & et all, 2023).

Learning communities are very important to be applied in the world of education because this program can create joint collaboration between teachers and educational staff so that the success of the teaching and learning process comes from shared responsibility. Learning communities can also be a means of neutralizing competency gaps between educators so that students can gain the same learning experience. Apart from that, with a learning community, teachers also have the opportunity to learn from fellow teachers and the results of the learning process can be put into practice in their respective classes even with limited facilities. Dufour explained that there are three big ideas in running a learning community as follows: 1) focus on learning; 2) cultivating collaboration and collective responsibility; 3) results-oriented (student learning) (DuFour & Eaker, 2016).

Based on several topic explanations regarding efforts to improve teacher competency by synergizing teachers, educational staff, and parents, it is necessary to have the role of stakeholders so that this learning community can grow and develop. The roles of stakeholders involved include central government, regional government, technical implementation units, supervisors/supervisors, foundations, supporting partners, and parents (committee). Each stakeholder carries out their respective roles in helping the learning community process and develop, which ultimately aims to improve student learning outcomes.

Based on an explanation of efforts to increase teacher competency through learning communities, this article will examine several research results that discuss teacher strategies for increasing their competency through learning communities and small groups. So far, learning communities at the pre-school education level have been "*Kelompok Kerja Guru*" (KKG); currently, learning communities through small groups in schools and between schools have become an alternative for increasing the competence of teachers and educational staff in providing education.





RESEARCH METHODS

The research method for journal articles uses Systematic Literature Review (SLR). The Systematic Literature Review method refers to a specific research or research methodology and development carried out to collect and evaluate research related to a particular topic focus. The aim of this method is to identify, review, evaluate, and interpret all available research on the topic area of an interesting phenomenon, with certain relevant research questions (Lusiana & Suryani, 2014). SLR is also often needed to determine a research agenda, as part of a dissertation or thesis, and is part of a complete research grant application (Rosmilawati, et al., 2014).

This research began by collecting articles related to this research topic. Several stages carried out in this research include:

[1] Formulate the problem. At this stage the author writes a formulation of the problem to be discussed. The problem formulation obtained is "How is the implementation of the PAUD learning community in the Independent Learning Curriculum?"

[2] Search for literature (identification). After formulating the topic and formulation of the problem to be raised or researched, the next stage is to search for relevant articles or what is commonly known as process search. This research literature search began by searching for articles or data on Google Scholar with the keywords Implementation of PAUD Learning Communities in the Independent Learning Curriculum with journal limits for 2019 - 2024.

[3] Selecting literature search results. Researchers have found 25 articles related to early childhood learning communities, which were then selected according to the research studied, resulting in 10 articles. Then the 10 articles were studied in detail so that 7 articles were found that were in line with the topic of discussion of this research which would be used as an SLR review.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The curriculum is the lifeblood of education so that education can run. The education curriculum in Indonesia always changes from time to time. According to Sadewa in (Munawar, 2022), changes to the curriculum in education cannot be avoided or rejected so they must be implemented and adapted to needs. In 2022, education in Indonesia will be given a choice of three types of curriculum to be applied to its education units. These curricula include the 2013 Curriculum, the Emergency Curriculum (a simplification of the 2013 curriculum) and the Merdeka Curriculum.

The independent curriculum is the latest curriculum that has been socialized by the Ministry of Education and Culture since 2022 and will now become the national curriculum in 2024. The Independent Learning Curriculum provides diverse intracurricular learning where the content will be more optimal so that students have enough time to deepen concepts and strengthen competencies. Educators are given freedom in choosing teaching tools so that learning activities can be tailored to the learning needs and interests of students.

Whether we like it or not, whether we like it or not, the implementation of the independent learning curriculum must be followed by all educational units without exception, including Early Childhood Education (PAUD). Freedom to learn in early childhood education is known as freedom to play, which is in accordance with the hashtag, namely playing while learning and learning while playing.

Implementing the Independent Learning curriculum in Early Childhood Education has its own challenges, where educators are given access to develop teaching modules in accordance with competency standards stated in the child's developmental achievement level. Teachers can develop independently or collaborate with colleagues from the same school or other schools within the same area (Retnaningsih & Khairiyah, 2022). The independent curriculum in early childhood education units prioritizes fun learning experiences and play to help children gain knowledge, skills and positive attitudes. The goal is the desire to make learning fun for everyone involved in the process (Nafisa & Fitri, 2023).

One effort that can be made to develop teacher competence is to create a learning community. A learning community is a group of teachers, educational staff and other educators who have the same



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enthusiasm and concern for the transformation of learning through regular interaction in a forum where they actively participate. In implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, the learning community supports teachers, education staff and other educators to be able to discuss and resolve various learning problems faced during the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Harlita & Ramadan, 2024). Through learning communities, teachers can share experiences, knowledge and skills, creating collaboration that encourages teacher quality to become professional. The expected results from the learning community can have a positive impact on teacher quality in improving teacher pedagogical skills and overall, improving the quality of education at the Early Childhood Education level.

Based on the 7 articles that have been determined and analyzed, information on research results is obtained as presented in Table 1 below.

Curriculuii				
Researcher and Year	Journal	Research Result		
(Munawar, 2022)	TINTA EMAS: Journal of Early Childhood Islamic Education	This research discusses the role of the learning committee in implementing the independent curriculum in PAUD. The learning committee is a team at the educational unit level consisting of the school supervisor, school principal, and teachers selected by the school principal. The elements in the learning committee at PAUD are the head of the education unit, supervisor/ superintendent, and 2 educators. The learning committee in PAUD plays a role in conducting learning implementation training, training principals, supervisors and teachers, analyzing learning needs, and conducting coaching programs. The committee can also organize in-house training, analyze teacher learning needs and mobilize a community of practitioners in their schools, facilitating regular monthly meetings for the learning planning process for PAUD teachers. Organizing in-house training related to learning with a new paradigm for teachers in schools.		
(Daulay & Fauziddin, 2023)	Golden Age Anthology Journal (BRUE)	Based on this research, information was obtained that the main characteristics of the independent curriculum in PAUD units include: strengthening meaningful play activities as a learning process, strengthening the relevance of PAUD as a foundation phase, strengthening the love of literacy and numeracy from an early age, the existence of a project to strengthen the Pancasila student profile, the learning process and a more flexible assessment, the results of the assessment are used as a basis for teachers to design play activities and parents to encourage children to play at home, strengthening the role of parents		

 Table 1. Research result on Implementation and Collaboration in the Independent Learning

 Curriculum





		The sector of
(Giyanto et al., 2023)	Journal of Development and Public Administration	as unit partners. The structure of learning activities in the Independent Curriculum in Early Childhood Education is divided into three elements of learning outcomes, the implementation of which is carried out in an integrated manner in playing while learning activities. There are three elements of learning outcomes (CP) in early childhood education, namely, religious values and character, identity and the basics of literacy, mathematics, science, technology, engineering and art. Teachers must be prepared to implement the independent curriculum. This readiness includes knowledge, skills and likes and must undergo training. This is because teachers must be able to present interesting learning situations according to students' talents and interests. Teachers must also be able to reflect to adjust their thinking to changes in achieving goals. This research discusses the implementation of learning communities in the independent learning curriculum in Indonesia. The learning community policy in the implementation of the learning process of teachers or teaching staff so that they can improve the quality of learning so that it has an impact on student learning outcomes. Several variables that influence the implementation process of the Merdeka Belajar policy, especially in the "Learning Community", include: implementation activities and communication between organizations, characteristics and agents of the implementer/implementor. However, in its implementation there are still several obstacles, including: the facilities owned by the members of the learning community are inadequate, the lack of motivation of the teaching staff to join the learning community, the support of the school principal is not yet real, there is no clarity on the topic
		lack of motivation of the teaching staff
		support of the school principal is not
		community meeting, yet there is a
		periodic evaluation of the learning community.
(Latif et al., 2023; Sartika et al.,	Journal of Obsession: Journal	This research aims to analyze the





2024)	of Farly Childhood Education	implementation of collaborative
2024)	of Early Childhood Education	implementation of collaborative strategies between PAUD institutions and parents in the digital era through parenting programs. The Parenting Program as a form of strategic collaboration between PAUD institutions and parents in this digital era provides a positive response because they can see their children directly doing learning activities in the PAUD unit and also gain useful knowledge in caring for and guiding their children. The Parenting Program consists of providing guidance and counseling to parents of students in PAUD units. The advantages of the parenting program by the Ibnu Hasan PAUD unit include 1) It is held regularly every month, 2) The resource persons involved come from elements who are competent in their fields, 3) The basic material for parenting is varied and adapted to parents' learning needs, 4) Parenting program funded by the foundation.
(Sartika et al., 2024)	Journal of Obsession: Journal of Early Childhood Education	This research discusses the readiness of study groups in implementing the independent curriculum. Early Childhood Education Institutions in implementing the Independent Curriculum are important because this curriculum is expected to strengthen the quality of education in Indonesia. Selecting the Independent Curriculum at the Independent level is a challenge in itself for managers and teachers in the Smart Learning Group. Smart Learning Group managers and teachers need to prepare several documents that have not been specifically described in the 2013 Curriculum so that they can support learning outcomes in the Independent Curriculum such as literacy, numeracy, science, technology and engineering competencies. The Merdeka Curriculum consists of intracurricular learning and projects to strengthen the Pancasila student profile. The Merdeka Belajar Curriculum for Early Childhood Education emphasizes meaningful play activities as a learning process, relevance in forming children's character and personality, strengthening literacy, numerical abilities and Pancasila values, as well as a more flexible learning and assessment process.





(Aslindah & Sari, 2021)	JECIE (Journal of Early	This research aims to determine the
(Asindan & San, 2021)	Childhood and Inclusive	learning methods applied by teachers at
	Education)	the Insan Cita Madani Samarinda
		Kindergarten during the Covid-19
		pandemic and the collaboration
		patterns between teachers and parents
		during carrying out learning at home
		during the pandemic. There are two
		methods used by teachers in
		implementing learning during the
		Covid-19 pandemic, namely: 1) Online
		(on the network) via Zoom or using
		WhatsApp, 2) Offline (outside the
		network) in the form of picking up
		children's worksheets, these two
		methods are combined adapted to
		security and comfort conditions during
		the pandemic. Meanwhile, the pattern
		of collaboration between teachers and
		parents during learning during this
		pandemic is as facilitators, as
		accompanying teachers, as motivators
		in creating fun learning for children.
		Implementing learning at home during
		the pandemic, whether using online or
		offline methods, requires collaboration
		between parents and teachers so that
		the learning process can run well in order to build a pleasant learning
		atmosphere and make the learning
		process easier.
(Mariyani et al., 2023)	Journal of Nonformal	The aim of this research is to examine
(11111) uni et uni, 2020)	Education	assistance in implementing the Project-
		based Learning model through learning
		communities for PAUD educators. The
		process of assisting the implementation
		of the Project-based Learning model in
		the Bruno Learning Community is
		carried out with facilitators. The
		mentoring process is carried out by
		identifying the learning needs or
		problems faced by the mentoring
		participants. In the mentoring process
		there are inhibiting and supporting
		factors that can influence the
		performance of mentoring provided by
		facilitators to PAUD educators as
		mentoring participants. The result of
		mentoring is that it is hoped that PAUD
		educators, after following the stages of
		mentoring, will be able to provide updated learning materials that are
		adapted to the Independent Curriculum
		and the needs of early childhood
		children.
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Discussion

Based on the results of research studies from seven studies that have been analyzed, it can be seen that learning communities can help teachers improve their teaching skills. Collaborating between







teachers, educational staff, school principals, supervisors and partners can help the effectiveness of learning in the classroom. Research result (Latif et al., 2023) explained that implementing collaborative strategies in teaching can improve teachers' abilities in identifying children's development problems and adapting learning materials to suit students' learning needs. Another learning approach used to increase student learning participation through collaboration strategies is the use of project based learning, where this method directly involves educators and students in the classroom. Teachers must have strong intuition to develop interactive learning methods so that learning becomes more enjoyable (Mariyani et al., 2023).

Research that has been carried out by (Munawar, 2022) is that there is collaboration involved consisting of school supervisors, teachers, principals selected by the principal. In this case, the committee provided recommendations to organize in-house training to analyze teacher learning needs and mobilize the practitioner community in schools. The committee facilitates regular monthly meetings for the learning process for early childhood education teachers.

Based on the Guidebook for Optimizing Learning Communities prepared by the Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel, there are four cycles that can be implemented by teachers in developing learning communities in schools. First, initial reflection, at this stage the teacher discusses the analysis of children's learning outcomes based on learning outcomes assessment data. The teacher reflects and determines the agenda that the learning community wants to discuss. They also determine goals and targets that are associated with improving children's learning ('Ferayanti & et all, 2023).

The second stage is planning. At this stage teachers can collaborate to develop learning plans by reviewing previously prepared learning plans. The four key questions in developing effective learning planning are 1) whether there are abilities that students want to achieve, 2) how do we know that students have achieved these abilities, 3) if the child is not yet able to achieve these abilities then what do we do? needs to be done, and 4) if the child has achieved the learning goals, then what abilities can provide stimulation for development in subsequent learning. All of these four questions do not have to be answered or can be done in a different order in one discussion session ('Ferayanti & et all, 2023).

The third stage is implementation. At this stage, the teacher's role is to practice the lesson planning that was discussed in the planning session. When conducting learning, teachers also directly carry out formative assessments to determine students' learning progress. Implementation of learning planning can also be done in one class with one model teacher. Other teachers in a study group can make observations regarding the ongoing learning process ('Ferayanti & et all, 2023).

The fourth stage is evaluation. After the teacher carries out the learning in class and is seen directly by other study group members, the teachers will also discuss the learning outcomes in each class again. each member of the learning community reflects together on ongoing learning activities. This aims to find out what weaknesses and strengths occur in each member when teaching. This reflection is used for improvement at the next stage. This stage will continue to repeat itself until the learning objectives can be achieved ('Ferayanti & et all, 2023).

All stages in this cycle are carried out by integrating steps that are key in establishing an effective learning community program. The duration of the inquiry cycle is adjusted to the teacher's learning needs. The matters discussed during the learning community discussion process within the school are student-centered. Learning communities cannot only be carried out within the scope of one school, but can be carried out between schools from various and similar backgrounds. Learning communities aim to establish broad collaboration. The form of this learning community is in the form of PKG (*Pusat Kegiatan Gugus*/Cluster Activity Center), organic learning community, and others according to the level of education.

(Sartika et al., 2024) explain that Smart Learning Group managers and teachers need to prepare several documents that have not been specifically described in the 2013 Curriculum so that they can support learning outcomes in the Independent Curriculum such as literacy, numeracy, science, technology and engineering competencies. This is in accordance with the guidebook for optimizing learning communities, that in the latest curriculum teachers must be able to adapt with skills in utilizing technology and information. This can help teachers plan learning activities with the learning





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community boldly. Even teachers can utilize digital learning resources in carrying out learning in class ('Ferayanti & et all, 2023).

(Giyanto et al., 2023) explained that this research discusses the implementation of learning communities in the independent learning curriculum in Indonesia. The learning community policy in implementing the independent curriculum is a forum for the learning process of teachers or teaching staff so that they can improve the quality of learning so that it has an impact on students. This is also in line with the guidelines for optimizing learning communities. The role of stakeholders in managing a learning community is very important to the sustainability of this learning community. Stakeholders who can be involved include the central government, regional government, technical implementation units, supervisors/supervisors/foundations, related partners, and also parents (committee). The role of stakeholders at the central level is expected to support learning community programs up to the educational unit level. because with the right regulations in place, this learning community can become a forum for teachers to improve their competence by collaborating between educators ('Ferayanti & et all, 2023).

Conclusions

Based on the results of a literature review conducted based on several articles, it can be concluded that learning communities in schools have indeed been implemented but do not have a systematic non-cyclical guide. The teacher community at the cluster level has also been holding regular meetings but it is necessary to increase the involvement of all in order to improve student learning outcomes. Participation from school principals, teachers, educational staff, supervisors, parents and partners can continue to increase involvement. The role of education experts in developing planning, implementation and evaluation is important so that all aspects of education can be improved. What is no less important is the involvement of policy makers in developing program strategies that can improve teacher competency through learning communities in educational units.

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