LITERATURE STUDY: THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION IN INCREASING MOTIVATION AND LEARNING INDEPENDENCE IN THE INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM ERA

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Abstract . This study discusses educational communication playing an important role in increasing students' motivation and independence in learning in the Merdeka Curriculum Era, using a literature study research method. The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of effective educational communication between teachers and students, in increasing motivation and independence in the learning process in the Merdeka Curriculum Era. In this literature research, using various written sources that are relevant to the focus of this study, including articles, journals, and books. This study focuses on the role of communication by teachers in various learning models to increase student motivation and independence. The results of a literature study of 10 articles from *Google Scholar* as *a database* relevant to the role of educational communication in Increasing Motivation and Independence in Learning in the Merdeka Curriculum Era show that educational communication plays an important role in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum which aims to increase student motivation, creativity, and independence. This curriculum emphasizes a flexible learning approach, providing space for students to explore their interests and develop their potential. Of the 10 articles, it is stated that communication implemented by teachers acts as a facilitator who is able to create conducive two-way interactions, provide encouragement, feedback, and space for students to ask questions, share ideas, and develop critical thinking skills. With open and collaborative communication, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning process, develop self-confidence, and build an independent character. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum with an effective communication approach can create a more dynamic learning atmosphere, where students feel valued and motivated to achieve their academic goals.

Keywords: educational communication; independent curriculum; student motivation; student independence

I. INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Indonesia aims to form students who are independent, competent, and highly motivated in learning. This curriculum offers flexibility, where students can choose a learning path that is in line with their respective interests and abilities. However, this change also requires teachers and educators to adopt more adaptive and participatory communication methods to support student learning motivation and independence. According to Darmawan & Winataputra, Tuerah & Tuerah (2023), the Independent Curriculum aims to strengthen independence and support student-focused learning, with an emphasis on empowerment and development of 21st century skills. Then according to Barlian et al. (2022), the Independent Curriculum is a curriculum that includes various classroom learning with topics that are optimized so that students have enough time to explore concepts and build competencies.

Teachers have the flexibility to choose a variety of teaching tools to adjust the learning process to the needs and interests of students. The Merdeka Curriculum is part of the learning recovery effort, previously known as the prototype curriculum, and has now developed into a more flexible curriculum framework. This curriculum remains focused on essential material while developing students' character and abilities.

Educational communication plays a central role in creating a strong relationship between teachers and students, resulting in a conducive learning environment. According to Sukitno in Dirman & Juarsih (2014), educational communication is the interaction or relationship between educators and students during the learning process, or can be called an active two-way relationship between educators and students. Meanwhile, according to Ujang (2021), Communication in education, it can play an important role in explaining and providing understanding of the material presented to students. In fact, the interactions that occur during the learning process will be more dynamic by involving all parties involved. This communication has a very large role in determining the success and achievement of goals in education.

Heryanto (2008), said that a person's interaction in education is not just a two-way reciprocal communication, but

must reach a higher level, namely human interaction. This means that a person or student is encouraged to educate themselves through personal relationships between individuals (high-level interactions) and the existence of affective intrapersonal relationships between "me" and "myself" *(the self)*.

Effective communication can increase student interest, help them understand learning objectives better, and reduce discomfort in the learning process. In the context of the Independent Curriculum, teachers are expected not only to be information providers, but also to be facilitators who guide students to learn independently.

In its implementation, the Independent Curriculum brings various impacts, both positive and challenging. The Independent Curriculum, which gives more freedom to students and teachers in the teaching and learning process, produces many diverse results in the teaching and learning process. In a study conducted by Dian et al. (2024), on the Influence of the Independent Curriculum on the Quality of Elementary School Students' Learning, it was stated that the Independent Curriculum does have positive and negative influences in improving the quality of student learning. The positive influence is that students become creative and innovative with the support of *project learning*. However, there are many cases of students being promoted to the next level, because the Independent Curriculum policy does not have students who are held back a class. So the negative influence of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is that smart students will become smarter, and those who are left behind will be left behind even more.

Similar things were also conveyed by Ningtyas et al. (2022)the research on the Impact of Implementing the Independent Curriculum on the Development of Student Potential. This approach requires good support and cooperation from educators and parents. To optimize the impact of the independent curriculum, it is important for schools and the government to continue to develop infrastructure and resources that support the implementation of this approach. Proper training for educators so that they can teach students more effectively in utilizing the learning freedom provided by the independent curriculum.

Therefore, the curriculum that encourages a more flexible and student-centered approach, through good communication, teachers can help students understand learning objectives, provide clear directions, and support critical thinking processes. Teachers can also motivate students by providing positive feedback, building more personal relationships, and creating a learning environment that supports active participation. This open and constructive interaction builds students' confidence to take an active role in learning.

With the optimal role of educational communication, students are encouraged to be more independent and motivated in exploring their knowledge and skills. This is important to prepare them to face the ever-growing challenges, both in academic and real-life environments.

Role Theory *is* a theory that is a combination of theory, orientation and discipline. Apart from psychology, role theory originates from sociology and anthropology. In these three

sciences, the term "role" is taken from the world of theater. In theater, an actor must play as a certain character and in his position as a character he is expected to behave in a certain way. The position of the actor in the theater (play) is then analogous to a person's position in society. As in theater, the position of a person in society is the same as the position of the actor in theater, namely that the behavior expected of him does not stand alone, but is always in relation to the presence of other people who are related to the person or actor. It is from this perspective that role theories are formulated. Role theory assumes that a person's role is the result of interaction between oneself and position (status in society) and with roles (concerning norms and values).

The important thing in this role theory is the actor (perpetrator) and the target (target). Role is a dynamic process of position (status) when someone carries out his rights and obligations according to his position, he carries out a role. The difference between position and role is for the sake of science. Both cannot be separated because one depends on the other and vice versa. In an organization, each person has various characteristics in carrying out tasks, obligations, or responsibilities that have been given by each organization or institution. These tasks are the limitations of a person to carry out the work that has been given based on the regulations of the organization or institution so that all work can be neatly arranged and can be accounted for by each employee (Soekanto, 2009).

In addition, roles also have several parts, namely:

1. *Anacted Role* (real role) is a way that someone actually carries out a role.
2. *Roles* are the way society expects us to carry out certain roles.
3. *Role* Conflict is a condition experienced by someone who occupies one or more statuses that demand expectations and role goals that conflict with each other.
4. *Role Distance* (Role Gap) is the emotional implementation of roles.
5. Role Failure is a person's failure to carry out a certain role.
6. *A role model* is someone whose behavior we emulate, imitate, and follow.
7. *Role Set* (Series or scope of roles) is a person's relationship with other individuals when he is carrying out his role.
8. *Role Strain* is a condition that arises when someone experiences difficulty in fulfilling the expectations or goals of the role being played due to inconsistencies that conflict with each other. The role referred to in this study is a person's behavior according to their status in society.

Role theory is used in the study because the actor (perpetrator) in this study is Educational/Teacher communication and the target (target) in this study is to improve student learning motivation and independence. In this case between Educational/Teacher Communication and Students Both cannot be separated because one depends on the other and vice versa.

This research is expected to provide deeper insight into effective educational communication in the context of the Independent Curriculum. In addition, the results of this study are expected to be a practical guide for teachers in maximizing the role of communication to increase student motivation and learning independence, in order to form a generation that is ready to face future challenges.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a literature study research method (*Literature Review*). The literature search strategy in this study uses *Google Scholar* to access various articles, journals, and various scientific works relevant to this study. The literature study search was carried out using the keywords "The Role of Educational Communication" found 10 relevant articles, "Motivation and Learning Independence in the Era of the Independent Curriculum" with these keywords found 9 relevant articles, and a search using a combination of these two keywords found 0 relevant articles. The total number of articles obtained was 19 articles, but of all the articles found that fell into the exclusion criteria, there were 10 articles. These articles include sections such as abstract, introduction, methods, results and discussion. The article search was limited from 2019 to 2024.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Sumbawa in Siagian et al. (2023), said learning or teaching and learning process is considered as a two-way interaction or communication process involving educators as material providers and students as recipients. Communication is basically impossible without the use of language symbols that facilitate interaction between speakers and listeners.

Based on Annisa et al. (2019),Communication is divided into two types: verbal and nonverbal communication. In verbal or direct communication, spoken language is used, for example when the teacher delivers material directly, as well as written language, such as when the teacher gives assignments with written instructions. Meanwhile, nonverbal communication includes the use of voice intonation controlled by the teacher when explaining, a tone of voice that can be loud or soft, gestures such as putting a finger on the lips to ask students to be quiet, body movements that reinforce the explanation, and facial expressions that show emotions, such as when a teacher frowns to express sadness when seeing students.

Independent Curriculum Creates Motivation and Independence

The Independent Curriculum, delivered by Yuliana (2023),with its various characteristics, is one of the options that can be applied in learning. This curriculum is able to increase students' motivation, independence and creativity, and plays an important role in helping students develop ideas, concepts, self-confidence, courage to appear, and the ability to solve problems independently.

In the research conducted Ma'ruf (2024),on the Independent Curriculum in Improving Student Learning Independence, there are several factors that influence the effectiveness of the Independent Curriculum in achieving this goal. Factors such as teacher competence in implementing the Independent Curriculum approach, adequate support and infrastructure, active involvement of students in learning, development of students' metacognitive skills, and support and involvement of parents and the community have an important role in the success of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Which means that educational communication will be effective and run if all these factors can be resolved properly. In line with the research conducted, Nuriah et al. (2023),the Independent Curriculum shows that students in education have higher creativity and independence compared to students in the conventional or previous curriculum.

This curriculum helps students find new ideas, develop those ideas, and encourage them to have self-confidence, honesty, responsibility, and the courage to perform. This is an encouragement for teachers and instructors to be more dynamic in the teaching and learning process. Teachers must also be able to develop ideas so that students can be triggered, so that they can follow the learning process in class well and optimally. This means that through active and collaborative communication, students learn to be responsible for their thoughts, show honesty in the learning process, and have the courage to share ideas in public. This forms the foundation of communication that is important for their character development and academic success.

Educational Communication Encourages Students to be More Active

In a study conducted by Hartatik (2022),on the Application of *Problem Based Learning* in Improving Student Motivation and Learning Outcomes, it was found that low learning motivation has an impact on the quality of student learning outcomes. This model encourages students to actively participate during the learning process through group work and the provision of case studies by teachers. This makes students interested in participating in learning activities as a whole. This interest then motivates students to learn independently, so that they can more easily understand all the materials or concepts taught. This means that the role of educational communication, in a learning model that encourages students to play an active role through group discussions and case studies increases their interaction and involvement in class.

When students work together, they exchange ideas, learn to listen to others, and develop interpersonal communication skills. The teacher acts as a facilitator who guides the discussion and provides feedback, creating a conducive two-way communication environment. Through this active communication, students are not only interested in engaging in learning, but are also more motivated to explore the material independently, which ultimately facilitates their understanding of the concepts being taught. Along with research conducted by on Usman (2019),*Blended Learning -*

Based Educational Communication in Forming Learning Independence. In its implementation, active involvement and participation of students in *Blended Learning* can increase their responsibility. In addition, the interaction in this model encourages students' motivation to compete positively in learning. *Blended Learning* allows effective two-way communication between students and teachers, which strengthens the sense of responsibility and builds competitive motivation. Through this interaction, students are trained to convey ideas and receive feedback, which are important elements in educational communication.

Teacher Communication Skills Increase Student Motivation and Independence

Research conducted by Warsidah et al. (2022), which raised the issue of Implementation of Independent Curriculum-Based Learning for Students, found that numeracy and literacy learning based on the independent/driving curriculum at SDN No. 16 Siantan Pontianak Utara was applied to grade 4 students, supervised by trained grade 4 teachers and principals, the learning process with several characteristics of the independent curriculum, including learning focused on individual students based on their respective characters. This shows that the success of the driving school in implementing Independent Curriculum-based learning, which focuses on developing student personality to achieve the Pancasila student profile, is highly dependent on the skills and abilities of the school in communicating in all aspects, including the role of the principal, teachers in the pilot project class, as well as support from the school environment such as parents, the community, and the availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure to support these learning activities.

Still in line with previous research, Permana (2023), it was found in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum Concept and Open Learning Tools. That in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and Open Learning Tools, it creates an environment that supports active interaction and constructive dialogue between students, teachers, and fellow students. An open learning approach allows students to more freely explore their interests and talents, so that they are more involved in the communication process in learning. Collaboration with peers and an active role in organizing learning strengthen communication skills, critical thinking, and increase student motivation and engagement. Previous research shows that this approach has a positive impact on achieving these goals, supporting effective communication as an integral part of learning.

It is always mentioned that teachers and school staff are the spearheads in the implementation of this Independent Curriculum. It is not surprising that teacher competencies will be tested and must be developed in this Independent Curriculum era, they are encouraged to be more flexible in the teaching and learning process. In a study conducted by Anggreini & Narimo (2023), Teachers in the Independent Learning Curriculum Era at SMK Muhammadiyah 3 Gemolong, it was found that mastery of skills is needed to

innovate in creating effective and meaningful learning. A teacher also needs to have the confidence to develop quality talents and apply ethics and moral values as a guide in supporting student development during the learning process.

With good communication skills, teachers can more effectively deliver materials and build positive relationships with students, which helps facilitate collaborative learning. In line with research conducted by Daga (2022), on Strengthening the Role of Teachers in the Implementation of the Independent Learning Policy in Elementary Schools. The results showed that the role of teachers in the Independent Learning policy is very diverse, including as role models in freedom of thought, as mediators, inspirators, motivators, as well as providers of appreciation and trust to students, and facilitators in forming independent characters. In classroom learning, teachers need to ask students questions more often to obtain input in determining learning steps, provide quality readings, provide opportunities to explore the surrounding environment, analyze quality readings, and collaborate and discuss between students.

Communication is the main key to the success of the Merdeka curriculum in being implemented, because in reality teachers and students are invited to interact more intensely with each other, in order to realize the goal of the Merdeka curriculum which gives freedom to students.

Ultimately, the Independent Curriculum emphasizes a flexible learning approach, where students are given space to explore their interests and develop their unique potential. Through effective communication, teachers can better understand students' needs and aspirations, so they can provide relevant support, encouragement, and feedback. Open interaction between teachers and students encourages students to dare to express opinions, ask questions, and take initiatives in their learning process. With conducive communication, students feel valued and motivated, which ultimately strengthens their independence in managing the learning process and achieving academic goals.

IV. **CONCLUSION**

Educational communication plays a very important role in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, which aims to increase student motivation and independence. This curriculum emphasizes learning flexibility that gives students the opportunity to develop their interests and potential more independently. In this context, teachers as facilitators must be able to manage effective two-way communication, both verbally and nonverbally, to create constructive interactions and support student development. Through open and collaborative communication, students are not only encouraged to express their ideas and opinions, but also to take an active role in the learning process, which in turn increases their self-confidence, responsibility, and critical thinking skills. With adequate support from teachers, the school environment, parents, and the community, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum can successfully create a conducive learning atmosphere, where students feel valued and more motivated to learn independently.

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