



Block Center Learning of Sekolah Penggerak: Portrait of Merdeka Belajar in Kindergarten

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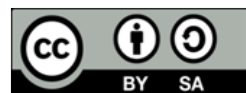
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ABSTRAK

Pembelajaran sentra balok di TK dipengaruhi oleh program pendidikan pemerintah, termasuk program sekolah penggerak sebagai sekolah yang memelopori penerapan kurikulum merdeka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi pembelajaran sentra balok yang terintegrasi program sekolah penggerak. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian lapangan dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Subjek penelitian adalah kepala sekolah, guru, dan siswa sekolah penggerak. Data dikumpulkan melalui teknik wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi yang kemudian dianalisis melalui proses kondensasi, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi pembelajaran sentra balok terdiri dari, pertama, perencanaan dengan merancang modul ajar dan RPPH, menentukan metode dan media, serta pengembangan tema, subtema, dan topik. Kedua, implementasi dilakukan dengan empat pijakan sesuai pedoman pelaksanaan model pembelajaran BCCT dengan sejumlah penyesuaian yang mendukung terbentuknya profil pelajar Pancasila dan mencerminkan merdeka belajar. Evaluasi perkembangan anak dilakukan dengan asesmen menggunakan instrumen catatan hasil karya. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa dukungan pemerintah, sarana dan prasarana, berbagai platform daring, kesiapan pendidik dan tenaga kependidikan, dan penyederhanaan instrumen kurikulum sangat penting untuk mendukung suksesnya implementasi pembelajaran. Faktor penghambat dalam implementasi pembelajaran perlu dimitigasi dengan berbagai kebijakan baik pada level sekolah maupun dari pemerintah sehingga pembelajaran dapat berjalan dengan lebih baik.

ABSTRACT

Block center learning in kindergarten is influenced by government education programs, including the driving school program as a school that pioneered the implementation of the independent curriculum. This study aims to analyze the implementation of block-center learning integrated with the driving school program. This research is field research with a qualitative approach. The research subjects were school principals, teachers, and students of driving schools. Data was collected through interviews, observation, and documentation techniques, which were then analyzed through condensation, data presentation, and conclusion. The study results show that block center learning implementation consists of planning by designing teaching modules and lesson plans, determining methods and media, and developing themes, sub-themes, and topics. Second, implementation is carried out on four bases according to the BCCT learning model guidelines. Several adjustments support forming a Pancasila student profile and reflect independent learning. Child development evaluation is carried out through an assessment using a work record instrument. This study concludes that government support, facilities and infrastructure, various online platforms, the readiness of educators and education staff, and simplification of curriculum instruments are very important to support the successful implementation of learning. Inhibiting factors in the implementation of learning must be mitigated by various policies at the school level and from the government so that learning can run better.

1. INTRODUCTION

The period of 0-6 years is known as the golden period or golden age (Wiyani, 2016). A child undergoes rapid, fundamental, and irreversible growth and development. The development achieved by children at an early age is crucial and will determine their development in the next period (Halimah, 2016).

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Optimizing child development, one of which is through education, is expected to be the answer to creating a generation that can later bring better changes to various aspects of the country's development and create a life that is safe, peaceful, just, and prosperous (Helmawati, 2015). Through good quality education, the possibility of creating a generation that is creative, intelligent, innovative, and of more excellent quality is possible. Education can be translated as a mentoring effort realized by educators to students by involving full awareness, both in the form of physical and spiritual guidance. Education also means a series of actions that aim to improve one's behavior. Several components generally contained in education include activities, people who educate, people who are educated, the goals to be achieved, and the media used (Rosdiana, 2009).

The government has provided a legal umbrella for various educational institutions, including PAUD institutions, by issuing Law no. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System article 1 paragraph 14 concerning Early Childhood Education (Nurhayati, 2020). Based on this Law, the provision of early childhood education is carried out to provide guidance and assistance in developing all of the child's potential so that it experiences optimal changes (Mulyani, 2016). In its implementation, an educator needs to pay attention to a suitable learning model so that teaching and learning activities can be carried out and adapted to the needs of children, one of which is the center-based learning model. The center-based learning model, which is better known as Beyond Center and Circle Time, is carried out in play centers that are equipped with educational game tools needed to stimulate children's development (Mulyasa, 2019). The center-based learning model combines theory and practical experience, which is expected to provide opportunities for children to play an active role in exploring and building their knowledge so that learning activities become more meaningful. There are at least seven types of centers that are generally used in Early Childhood Education, including centers of faith and piety, preparation, blocks, arts and creativity, science and natural materials, role play, and physical activity.

The wooden block center is one of the most important parts of the classroom (Nielsen, 2008). In the center-based learning model, the center of the wooden block is known as the center of the block. Block centers are a type of center that has blocks of various shapes and sizes, accessories, and micro role-playing tools that can give children experience regarding early mathematical concepts, thinking processes, drafting concepts, and problem-solving when constructing buildings (Yulinda & Koearso, 2018). Block centers provide opportunities for children to build concepts, knowledge, and understanding provided by educators in structured development play activities. This center helps children to develop creativity, imagination, communication skills, cooperation skills, the ability to recognize size and shape, as well as skills to control emotions (Ode-alumu et al., 2021).

Research on the implementation of block center learning to support children's development in various aspects has been carried out a lot (Aksoy & Belgin Aksoy, 2023; Cai et al., 2021; Isabelle et al., 2021; Schmitt et al., 2018; Tian & Luo, 2021; Zhang et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2021). In the context of Indonesia, research by Zuhairina et al. (2022), which focused on the development of children's mathematical logic, found that the use of scaffolding by teachers in the learning process at block centers strongly supports the development of children's mathematical logic, seen from the increase in the stage of playing blocks and how children are able to solve their own problems while playing. Research by Bastian (2020) revealed that the implementation of inquiry-discovery learning in the block center not only improves children's mathematical and logical intelligence, but also children's creativity and mental abilities. Meanwhile, research by Buandanani and Suryana (2022), which focused on children's language development, reveals that the implementation of block center learning as a stimulation of children's language skills is carried out through the conversation method, assistance (scaffolding) when playing through open questions to children, presentation of building results that have been made by children, and recalling activities which has been done. Research by Widya et al. (2021) focused on collaborative block center learning with the traditional game "Menara" as a technology-based learning innovation in Playgroup or Kindergarten.

In contrast to previous research, this research focuses on block center learning of Sekolah Penggerak as schools that implement block center learning in the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum. As a fairly new program, learning in sekolah penggerak have not been studied a lot, so this is a novelty of this research. The sekolah penggerak program is one of the ten breakthroughs in the Merdeka learning program issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture. This program was launched on February 1, 2021 with Surat Keputusan Menteri Nomor 1177/M/2020 regarding the Sekolah Penggerak Program as a legal umbrella in its implementation (Saragih, 2021). Sekolah Penggerak is defined as a school that focuses on the overall learning outcomes obtained by students in participating in the learning process to help realize the Pancasila student profile (Rahayu et al., 2022). Through increasing existing human resources in sekolah penggerak, it is expected that these schools will be able to mobilize the quality of education in other schools in the vicinity so as to reduce the gap in the quality of education in Indonesia (Marliyani & Iskandar, 2022; Ritonga et al., 2022). In 2021, the sekolah penggerak program was piloted in 2,500 schools throughout

Indonesia (Penulis Sekolah Penggerak, 2021). Therefore, it is necessary to conduct several studies on the application of this program in the learning process, including learning at the early childhood education level.

Based on the problems previously described, the purpose of this study was to describe the implementation of block center learning of sekolah penggerak along with its supporting and inhibiting factors. In addition to the implementation in sekolah penggerak as the novelty of this study, the results of this study are expected to contribute to the best practice of implementing block center learning in Sekolah Penggerak as a reference for other schools, as well as an evaluation for the school and the government. New insights of how the enactment of Merdeka curriculum affect learning implementation would extend previous research in this area, particularly the supporting factors for the successful implementation of learning and the inhibiting factors that need to be mitigated so that the implementation of learning can run well within the framework of the Merdeka curriculum.

2. METHOD

This research is a field research with a qualitative approach (Sugiyono, 2014) which focuses on exploring data related to the implementation of block center learning of Sekolah Penggerak at the Islamic Center Kindergarten Samarinda along with its supporting and inhibiting factors in the three classes that are members of group B. The number of students in the three classes were 71. Group B was chosen because students in this group are in the age range of 5-6 years, which is at the end of their period as children at an early age. Research data was collected using interviews, observation, and documentation in order to gather information from primary and secondary data sources. Primary data sources were the school principal, the curriculum coordinator, teachers in charge of block centers, and class teachers as respondents. This study also used non-participant observation as the primary data source, where the researcher acts as an observer who observes the learning process, the facilities, and infrastructure with the help of observation guidelines and notebooks (Sukmadinata, 2009). In this study, researchers used interview techniques with structured interviews and unstructured interviews (Ambarwati, 2022). Meanwhile, secondary data collection through documentation techniques was carried out by collecting information related to learning tools and documentation during learning. The observation sheet and interview instrument grids were arranged based on the process standard in Permendikbud Nomor 137 year 2014 about National Standard of Early Childhood Education and are presented respectively in Table 1 and Table 2 (Kemendikbud RI, 2014).

Table 1. Observation Sheet Grid

No.	Components	Things to observe
1.	Physical description	Classroom facilities
2.	Learning Planning	RPP Assessment instrument
3.	Implementation of Learning	Steps Learning methods
4.	Evaluation	Assessment of child development

Table 2. Interview Grids

No.	Components	Discussion
1.	Planning	Center learning plan Selection of themes, sub-themes, and topics Selection of methods, media, and assessment instruments
2.	Implementation	Implementation of footholds play in the center
3.	Evaluation	Assessment Implementation Inhibiting and supporting factors

For the data to be valid, it is necessary to test the validity of the data using technical triangulation and source triangulation. After the data obtained were declared valid, then the data were analyzed using the Miles, Hurbeman, and Saldana models (Miles et al., 2014) through the process of data condensation, data display, and conclusions drawing.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Driving school center learning at Samarinda Islamic Center Kindergarten is carried out with a moving class system with a predetermined schedule. Each class enters the beam center every two weeks (not counting during the peak of the theme). Meanwhile, the term "central teacher" has been abolished since face-to-face learning after the pandemic. Such learning makes all teachers at the Samarinda Islamic Center Kindergarten become class teachers (except the tahfiz teacher). Table 3 presents the results of research related to the implementation of learning center blocks at the Samarinda Islamic Center Kindergarten before and after becoming a driving school, both in terms of planning, implementation, evaluation, as well as the factors that support and hinder its implementation.

Table 3. Research Results

No.	Components	Before	After
1.	Planning	Daily lesson plans are mandatory by containing 13 components, KD and KI, as well as six aspects of development. Themes are selected and developed based on the themes offered in the 2013 curriculum.	Daily lesson plans are not mandatory, teachers are required to make teaching modules containing three components and three learning outcomes. Themes are selected and developed based on the four major themes offered by the Merdeka curriculum.
2.	Implementation	Using four bases that are in accordance with the guidelines for implementing learning with the BCCT model.	Using four bases that are in accordance with the guidelines for implementing learning with the BCCT model with a number of developments and adjustments so that learning can support stimulation of the development of the Pancasila Student Profile.
3.	Evaluation	Using an assessment instrument in the form of a checklist with observation techniques.	Using assessment instruments in the form of notes on work with documentation, observation, question and answer, and conversation techniques.
4.	Supporting factors	Handbooks and training from the government, Merdeka Mengajar platforms, simplification of daily lesson plans, readiness of educators and education, classroom facilities and infrastructure, and children's imagination.	
5.	Obstacle factor	Limited time, limited block units and accessories, no real examples of the implementation of the Sekolah Penggerak program that are considered successful, and the lack of educators' understanding of the Merdeka curriculum concept in the Sekolah Penggerak program.	

Regarding planning of learning, the principal of the Islamic Center Kindergarten Samarinda said in an interview as follows:

“Sebenarnya kalau perencanaan sama saja seperti biasa, ada Kurikulum Operasional Satuan Pendidikan sebagai ganti dari KTSP, hingga pada modul ajar dan RPPH. Tapi, ketika kita membahas salah satu sentra secara khusus, berarti lebih fokus ke RPPH-nya. Hanya saja, ketika sekarang sudah menjalankan Program Sekolah Penggerak, guru diarahkan membuat modul ajar, kalau RPPH sudah tidak diwajibkan. Meski begitu, kami tetap membuat RPPH agar lebih memudahkan.”

(Planning is actually the same as usual, there are an Education Unit Operational Curriculum instead of KTSP, teaching modules and daily lesson plans. However, when we discuss one center in particular, it means more focus on the lesson plan. It's just that, now that the sekolah penggerak Program has been implemented, teachers are directed to make teaching modules, while daily lesson plans are no longer mandatory. Even so, we still make the daily lesson plan to make it easier.)

From the interview excerpts, it can be seen that technically there are differences in lesson planning before and after becoming a driving school. Previously teachers were required to make daily lesson plans, now teachers are more directed to make teaching modules even though the daily lesson plan is still made. The preparation of the teaching modules and daily lesson plans as part of the learning planning for the

learning center is also supported by the statements of the curriculum coordinator and person in charge of the learning center as follows:

"Untuk perencanaan sentra secara umum ada namanya modul ajar per tema yang dibuat oleh guru yang tergabung dalam tim per PJ Untuk perencanaan khusus di sentra balok pasti dengan menyiapkan RPPH khusus untuk sentra balok. Dulu, modul ajar benar-benar kami yang membuat formatnya, kalau sekarang kami hanya mengembangkan format modul ajar dari pemerintah."

(For center planning in general, there are teaching modules per theme which are made by teachers who are members of a team per persons in charge For specific planning in block centers, it is by preparing specific lesson plans for block centers. In the past, we made the format for teaching modules by ourselves, now we only develop teaching module formats from the government.)

"Sebelum diadakan aktivitas pembelajaran di sentra balok, kami pasti menyiapkan modul ajar dan RPPH dulu. Kalau modul ajar itu isinya informasi tentang kelas, tema, subtema, topik, instrumen untuk asesmen, dan kumpulan RPPH selama satu subtema. Nah, didalamnya itu salah satunya ada RPPH untuk sentra balok..."

(Before holding learning activities at the block center, we definitely prepare teaching modules and daily lesson plans first. The teaching module contains information about classes, themes, sub-themes, topics, instruments for assessment, and a collection of daily lesson plans for one sub-theme. So, inside one of them is the daily lesson plan for block centers...)

In addition, several differences were found related to the planning of block center learning in terms of simplifying the daily lesson plan and giving teachers freedom in determining learning activities. This is in accordance with the statement of the curriculum field coordinator as follows:

"Kalau perencanaan dalam artian proses menentukan tema, subtema, membuat modul, dan RPPH itu untuk TK Islamic Center sendiri tidak banyak perubahan. Tapi kalau mau dilihat dari hasil RPPH-nya sebelum menjadi sekolah penggerak dibedakan mau berapa halaman, yang penting memuat hal-hal yang memang harus ada di RPPH, tapi kalau sudah sekolah penggerak, RPPH-nya disederhanakan jadi hanya satu atau dua lembar saja. Selain itu, dalam Program Sekolah Penggerak ini ada kebebasan untuk gurunya, dalam artian kalau dulu ada KD yang belum diambil, gurunya harus memikirkan, mau dibuat kegiatan seperti apa. Tapi kalau di sekolah penggerak, yang penting dalam kegiatannya nanti sudah memuat pembelajaran yang menstimulasi munculnya capaian pembelajaran pada anak..."

(In planning in terms of the process of determining themes, sub-themes, making modules, and the daily lesson plan for the TK Islamic Center itself, not much has changed. But if we want to look at the results of the daily lesson plan before becoming a sekolah penggerak, the daily lesson plans consist of many pages as the teacher wants, the important thing is that it contains aspects that really should be in the daily lesson plans, but after becoming a sekolah penggerak, the daily lesson plan is simplified to only one or two sheets. Apart from that, in the Sekolah Penggerak Program there is freedom for the teacher, in the sense that if in the past there was a basic competence that had not been taken, the teacher had to think about what kind of activity to make. But in driving schools, the important thing is that the activities will contain learning that stimulates the emergence of learning outcomes in children...)

Regarding determining the theme in the learning planning of driving schools, the following is the result of interviews with school principals:

"Tema itu dipilih dengan berdasarkan pengalaman pada K13, kemudian di Program Sekolah Penggerak ini juga ada tema, tapi temanya tema besar. Dari tema yang besar itu, baru kami pecah kembali ke tema-tema yang lebih kecil, ke subtema, dan topik yang dipilih menyesuaikan kondisi lingkungan sekitar dan kurikulum operasional satuan pendidikan juga."

(The theme was chosen based on experience in the curriculum of 2013, then in the Sekolah Penggerak Program there is also a theme, but the theme is a big one. From that big theme, we just break into smaller themes, into sub-themes, and the topics chosen adjusted to the surrounding environmental conditions and the educational unit operational curriculum as well.)

One of the class teachers added information about determining specific themes at the block center as follows:

"...Pemilihan topik untuk masing-masing sentra juga disesuaikan dengan pengalaman main yang ingin dicapai di setiap sentra, misalnya di sentra balok lebih diarahkan untuk membangun, jadi topiknya diambil tentang tempat atau lokasi."

(...The selection of topics for each center is also adjusted to the playing experience to be achieved in each center, for example in block centers it is more geared towards building, so the topic is taken about places or locations.)

Regarding the use of methods and media in learning in the block center, the person in charge of the block center conveys the following:

"...Kalau di balok karena mau melihat suasana bangunannya, jadi dipilihlah media video dengan metode ceramah, demonstrasi, dan tanya-jawab."

(...In the block center, because we want to see the atmosphere of the building, video media is chosen using the lecture, demonstration and question-and-answer method.)

The results of observations carried out by researchers also indicate the existence of learning media that can support the implementation of the block center learning model with the topic of water reservoirs in the form of media images and learning videos.

In the implementation of the block center learning model, research results were obtained related to four platforms, namely play-environmental step, pre-playing step, while-playing step, and post-playing step. Based on the results of observations, the play-environment is based on the management of the play environment and play equipment. The results of this observation are in accordance with the statement of Mrs. Diyah as the teacher in charge of the block center as follows:

"Kalau pijakan lingkungan main sendiri ada yang dilakukan per tim, ada juga per ibu guru. Yang per tim itu waktu menyiapkan aksesoris tambahan dan memilih video yang mau dipertontonkan ke anak. Ini biasanya disiapkan dari lama, paling lambat tiga hari sebelum topiknya ganti. Tapi, kalau pijakan lingkungan lainnya seperti menyiapkan laptop, speaker, meletakkan alas main, membuka rak balok, menyalakan lampu dan AC, menyiapkan perlengkapan untuk aktivitas keaksaraan dan menggambar bangunan itu dilakukan oleh masing-masing ibu guru di pagi hari."

(The play-environmental step, some are done per team, some are per teacher. The time for each team is to prepare additional accessories and choose the video that they want to show the children. These are usually prepared long ago, no later than three days before the topic changes. However, other environmental steps, such as preparing laptops, speakers, putting play mats, opening block shelves, turning on lights and air conditioning, preparing equipment for literacy activities and drawing buildings are done by each teacher in the morning.)

Based on the results of observations, the pre-playing steps are carried out by first positioning the teacher and students in a position to form a circle. When the teacher asks the children to sit in a circle, the teacher catches the children's attention by singing a song that contains lyrics inviting the children to sit in a circle. The teacher also asks the children to sit in a circle by using a sentence that asks students' readiness to learn. After the position of the teacher and students both form a circle, the teacher begins to greet and pray together. After that, teachers invite children to recite surahs, hadiths, and prayers. Based on a documentation study, memorizing surahs, hadiths and daily prayers is part of an effort to realize one of the educational goals at TK Islamic Center Samarinda. The next pre-playing step is to check the presence of children. Based on the results of observations, attendance check was carried out using various techniques such as filling alms boxes, singing, and counting. In order to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile, teachers and students also recite Pancasila together and sing a national obligatory anthem. After that, the teacher conducts questions and answers by getting the children to associate Pancasila values with everyday life and learning topics. The next part of the pre-playing steps is inviting the children to say the yells of the block center, introducing the day and date, briefly introducing the theme, sub-theme, and topic, as well as conveying information related to the topic. For the implementation of the core learning activities in the block center, the children were divided into two groups which took turns carrying out the core activities in the block center or the Qurán recitation and literacy activities.

In delivering the material, the teacher first asked the children about the water reservoirs that the children knew about. From the answers and experiences that the child has, the teacher directs the conversation to the topic to be discussed. The teacher invites the children to observe the pictures of reservoirs, dams and lakes. Delivery of material is carried out using the method of observing pictures, lectures, questions and answers, and video media. While watching the video, occasionally the teacher stops the video to show important points in the video. After that, the teacher again invites the children to discuss the information the children get from the video to strengthen children's knowledge. Through the discussion process the teacher directs the conversation by introducing buildings that children can make. The teacher also shows blocks in the form of pyramids, balls, tubes and cubes. Then the children were again divided into smaller groups to discuss the rules of the game.

At the while-playing step, the teacher starts by giving children the opportunity to discuss. The opportunity for discussion is not at a specific time, but goes together when the child is doing the building construction process. The while-playing step is also done with the teacher who goes around to communicate, observe, record, and document children's playing activities; provide opportunities for

children to build positive social relationships; and improve the child's sentence structure through two-way communication. The entire series of block playing activities was carried out for 40-45 minutes.

The results of a documentation study from the daily lesson plan at the post-playing step show that this stage is carried out by tidying up playing tools through the process of classifying blocks according to shape and size, as well as a form of support given to children to recall their playing experiences by telling each other playing activities, thanking to God, as well as reading a prayer to close the learning activity. The results of the documentation study were strengthened by the observation results where after all the blocks were tidied up, the teacher and children sat back in a circular position. The teacher starts by using clapping and singing. The activity was continued by asking the child's feelings, asking about the shape of the blocks used, asking about the building the child had made, inviting the child to recall the topic being studied, and praying.

Based on the results of the interviews, one part of the learning evaluation is an evaluation of the progress of the child's development which is carried out by means of an assessment. Evaluation of learning in the block center is carried out through an assessment process that lasts throughout the lesson. In this case, the teacher does not only make observations on the results of the buildings that have been made by children, but also observes the process of children building. The results of interviews with school principals are as follows:

"Evaluasi pembelajaran yang kami lakukan disini bertahap, mulai dari asesmen harian, mingguan, triwulan, dan semesteran. Kalau yang triwulan itu biasanya berbentuk portofolio, kalau yang per semester itu bentuknya rapat."

(The learning evaluation that we do here is gradual, starting from daily, weekly, quarterly, and semester assessments. The quarterly ones are usually in the form of a portfolio, while the semester ones are in the form of reports.)

Meanwhile, daily assessments are carried out and arranged according to the format of the Sekolah Penggerak assessment, one of which is children's work. There are differences in the assessment before and after becoming a driving school as stated by one of the class teachers as follows:

"Perbedaan yang paling terlihat itu di asesmen. Kalau sebelum jadi sekolah penggerak itu asesmennya lebih mudah, tinggal ceklis di BSH, BSB, MB, atau BB. Dokumentasinya juga lebih sedikit, dalam artian kalau sehari anak mainnya tiga kegiatan, foto hanya satu itu bukan masalah. Kalau di sekolah penggerak ini, guru lebih dituntut untuk sadar dengan tanggung jawab dalam mengamati anak selama melakukan aktivitas pembelajaran. Ini juga dikarenakan asesmennya mengarah ke deskriptif yang lebih mendetail dengan tuntutan foto di setiap kegiatan main yang anak ambil di hari itu. Hal-hal yang dideskripsikan juga sesuai dengan apa yang kita lihat dan kita dengar tanpa unsur melabeli anak. Setelah itu, instrumen penilaian yang digunakan ada empat jenis, yaitu catatan anekdot, hasil karya, foto berseri, dan ceklis. Masing-masing sentra menggunakan instrumen penilaian yang berbeda."

(The most visible difference is in the assessment. Before becoming a sekolah penggerak the assessment was easier, all you had to do was check the criteria "Developed as Expected", "Developed Very Well", "Starting to Develop", or "Not Yet Developed". There is also less documentation, in the sense that if a child plays three activities a day, only one photo is not a problem. As a sekolah penggerak, teachers are more required to be aware of their responsibilities in observing children while carrying out learning activities. This is also because the assessment leads to a more detailed descriptive with the demands of photos in every play activity that the child takes that day. The things that are described are also in accordance with what we see and hear without labeling children. After that, four types of assessment instruments were used, namely anecdotal notes, works, photo series, and checklists. Each center uses a different assessment instrument.)

For supporting factors, based on the results of interviews with school principals, it was found that one of the supporting factors for the implementation of the learning process in the block centers with the Sekolah Penggerak Program was the support from the government and the commitment made between the school principal and teaching staff. Meanwhile the curriculum coordinator added the following:

"Faktor pertama dan utama pasti kesiapan ibu guru. Selanjutnya juga didukung penyederhanaan RPPH, yang sebelumnya komponennya banyak, sekarang jadi lebih sederhana."

(The first and main factor is definitely the readiness of the teacher. Furthermore, it is also supported by the simplification of daily lesson plans, which previously had many components, now it is simpler.)

In addition, facilities and infrastructure in schools are also supporting factors in the learning process. Based on observations, the block central room has a number of facilities such as air conditioning,

lockers, shelves, blackboards, stationery, paper, play platforms, books, a number of educational games, and good lighting. Based on the results of interviews with several class teachers, learning activities at the block center can run smoothly because there is good cooperation between teachers and children, and children who show imagination, creativity, innovation, and responsibility in making buildings.

As for the inhibiting factors, based on the results of interviews and observations, time constraints, limited block units and accessories, there is no real example of the implementation of the block center learning model in the Sekolah Penggerak Program which is considered successful, and the lack of teachers' understanding of the Merdeka curriculum concept in the Sekolah Penggerak Program becomes a challenge for the implementation of the block center learning of Sekolah Penggerak at the Samarinda Islamic Center Kindergarten.

Discussion

The implementation of block center learning is carried out based on process standards in Permendikbud Number 137 of 2014 concerning National Standards for Early Childhood Education. The process standards include planning, implementation, and evaluation processes (Kemendikbud RI, 2014).

Planning

The learning planning for the block center of sekolah penggerak consists of preparing teaching modules and daily lesson plans, as well as developing themes, sub-themes and learning topics. Teaching modules and daily lesson plans are prepared in a format adapted from the Sekolah Penggerak Program. The daily lesson plan made refers to the teaching modules of the Merdeka curriculum and the Education Unit Operational Curriculum which had previously been prepared with an emphasis on the main goal, namely the realization of the Pancasila Student Profile. The Education Unit Operational Curriculum is the term used to refer to the KTSP in the 2013 curriculum (Supangat, 2022). Meanwhile, the teaching module is a new term in the world of education as a substitute for the Lesson plan in the Merdeka curriculum (Maulida, 2022). The teaching module is structured as a complete planning document which includes objectives, implementation steps, media, and assessments needed to review the realization of learning outcomes in a learning topic (Kemendikbudristek RI, 2022). Teaching modules were developed with the aim of improving the quality of learning tools so that teachers can have a more qualified reference for carrying out the learning process. As a learning planning document, teachers have two choices in developing teaching modules, namely compiling teaching modules based on examples provided by the government or developing them independently as an effort to adapt teaching modules to the needs of students and educational units (Kemendikbud RI, 2022; Maulida, 2022).

Based on the results of the study, deficiencies were found in the teaching modules prepared by educators at the Samarinda Islamic Center Kindergarten, namely the teaching modules did not contain trigger questions which were one part of the core components in the teaching modules (Kemendikbud RI, 2022; Maulida, 2022). Meanwhile, the simplification of the daily lesson plan can be seen in reducing the number of components which previously consisted of 13 components to only three components, namely objectives, implementation steps, and assessment (Kemendikbud RI, 2016; Sekretariat GTK, 2020). The simplification of the daily lesson plan is to lighten the administrative burden of teachers, which can contribute to higher opportunities for teachers to be more focused in preparing and implementing the learning process (Maulida, 2022). Not only that, in the daily lesson plan of block central learning of sekolah penggerak there is also no term Basic Competence, but Learning Outcomes are used instead. Learning Outcomes are religious and ethical values, identity, as well as the basics of literacy, science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (Rahardjo & Maryati, 2021). The daily lesson plan of the Sekolah Penggerak Program does not bring up the formulation of Learning Outcomes again. This also contributes to the difference between the daily lesson plan in the Merdeka curriculum and the 2013 curriculum (Rahardjo & Maryati, 2021). Block center learning planning is also inseparable from the determination of the media and methods used to support the achievement of learning objectives contained in the teaching module. Learning methods can be used to convey information to students so that learning objectives can be achieved (Viridyna, 2019). Just like learning methods, the determination of learning media also needs to be done to achieve goals and improve the quality of learning (Safira, 2020).

Implementation

In the implementation, the methods used in the block center learning model are demonstration, question-and-answer, lecture, conversation, and singing methods. These methods are used by teachers to convey material, and as an effort to increase the child's development. However, in practice, these methods are part of the plan which may not be implemented due to time constraints and other things (Narsi et al., 2014). Regarding the planning of the block center learning model, one of the things that makes it different is the Standard Operational Implementation which requires a process of classifying the blocks that children use through the process of tidying up the blocks by rearranging them onto shelves. This aims to support the

benefits of playing with blocks, namely to help children learn patterns; both size, color and shape (Nurani, 2016). The learning media used to support the implementation of the block center learning model are images and audio-visual (video) adapted to the learning topic. In addition, the creation and provision of additional media such as a number of supporting accessories are also carried out to support the learning process. The learning media prepared is used to help realize the Learning Outcomes; both religious and ethical values, identity, as well as the basics of literacy and STEAM (Hachey, 2020; Helista et al., 2021; Lindeman et al., 2014). In addition, the media provided in the classroom must also be in accordance with the play activities that children do, so that they can support the implementation of the learning process properly (Suryawati & Akkas, 2021).

The selection of themes refers to the four major themes provided by the government. These themes can be presented and developed independently by educational units (Sulistiyati et al., 2021). In this case, theme "Aku Sayang Bumi" (I Love the Earth) presented by title Masdarul Hayah (Source of life) with subthemes *Sungai Mahakam* (Mahakam River). Learning topics are divided into six taking into account the focus of each center. The topic chosen for the learning that takes place in the center of the block is attempted in the form of topics related to buildings and locations, so the topic chosen is a Water Reservoir. Regarding topic determination, The TK Islamic Center is still not in accordance with the directions in the driving school program because the teacher determines the learning topics independently. In fact, in the driving school program, students have the opportunity to be involved in determining the topic (Rahardjo & Maryati, 2021). This means that the teacher is allowed to prepare learning topics, but when during the learning process it turns out that students have more interest in different topics, the teacher can change learning topics to accommodate children's interests, ideas and opinions.

Block center learning focuses on learning with the student center type. This gives an understanding that learning that takes place in the center of the block stimulates children to be active, independent, and creative in participating in learning activities through play (Aksoy & Belgin Aksoy, 2023; Harlistyarintica, 2019) as well as develops critical thinking and problem solving (Isabelle et al., 2021). While students play an active role in the learning process, an teacher acts as a motivator as well as a facilitator (Arviansyah M. R. & Shagena, 2022). Both roles are carried out by using four steps or known as scaffolding. The four steps consist of play-environmental steps, pre-playing steps, while-playing steps, and post-playing steps. Each step is unique so that in the end the learning process can become more systematic, organized, and able to achieve the learning objectives that have been set (Erdiyanti et al., 2019). The learning process is carried out with a number of developments to realize the Pancasila Student Profile. The intended development is strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile and realizing freedom to play. Freedom to play means that children are given space to be more free to move, explore, and interact. Merdeka learning in play can be done by giving space for children to play without being coerced (Marlina et al., 2020). Freedom to play for children is more visible because children are given more freedom to make buildings without thinking whether or not the buildings are appropriate to the topic as the center of the building. This is different from building activities when it is not Sekolah Penggerak curriculum, where buildings related to the topic must be the center of the building.

The Pancasila Student Profile is formulated into six dimensions, namely faith in and piety to God Almighty; creativity; critical reasoning; independence; global diversity; and collaboration (Rahardjo & Maryati, 2021). These six dimensions have actually appeared before becoming sekolah penggerak, but when the school became sekolah penggerak there was a special session conducted to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile, namely by inviting children to recite Pancasila and sing the obligatory anthem before playing. The Sekolah Penggerak program which is integrated into the block center learning model aims to form a Pancasila Student Profile that is in line with the benefits of playing in the block center. This alignment is linked to the learning outcomes contained in the Sekolah Penggerak Program. Children are able to show emotions and manage their emotions well, learn to understand and respect the opinions of friends, while still showing interest and self-confidence which is indirectly built in the learning process is part of the achievement of identity development (Helista et al., 2021). Communication, collaboration, appreciating the work of friends, while still pouring ideas into concrete building forms during the learning process are part of the learning outcomes of the basics of literacy and STEAM. Likewise, when children learn symbols, patterns and signs, and use blocks and various accessories to express ideas and thinking, think critically and creatively which are also part of the learning outcomes of the basics of literacy (Rodriguez Leon, 2021) and STEAM (Başaran & Bay, 2022; Erol et al., 2022; Magnusson & Bäckman, 2023; Nikolopoulou, 2022; Rahardjo & Maryati, 2021; Wan et al., 2021). The benefits of learning carried out in the center of the block can also be seen in its relation to stimulating the achievement of learning outcomes of religious values and ethics through prayer activities, support and opportunities for children to show commendable behavior, such as patience, courtesy and honesty, as well as the use of Islamic language such as *thayyibah* sentences and Asmaul Husna (Rahardjo & Maryati, 2021).

Evaluation

Evaluation of the block learning center is carried out through assessments that take place throughout the lesson with observation, documentation, question-and-answer, and conversation techniques. Assessment is carried out to give meaning to a series of learning activities so that information is obtained related to the stage at which students achieve learning objectives and determine decisions taken for subsequent learning (Rahardjo & Maryati, 2021). In this case, the teacher does not only observe the results of the buildings that have been made by the children, but also observes the process of the children building. Aspects that need to be recorded and documented during the data collection process are related to children's words, works, and how children express and behave in building social interactions and communication with the environment, or other things that indicate learning outcomes (Rahardjo & Maryati, 2021). Also in the evaluation process, an teacher uses the results of a developmental assessment that shows the level of learning achievement, character, and needs of students that reflect the uniqueness of each student as material for designing the next lesson (Sehan Kenanga et al., 2022). Through this process, it is expected that subsequent learning can facilitate each student according to their respective needs, character and uniqueness or what is also known as teaching at the right level (Supangat, 2022).

The difference between the assessment before and after becoming sekolah penggerak can be seen from the assessment instruments used, the assessment process, and the way it is presented. Before becoming sekolah penggerak, the assessment instruments used were checklists and anecdotal notes. The assessment is carried out by giving ratings in the form of BB, MB, BSH, and BSB on a number of indicators covered in several Basic Competencies. Assessment is carried out based on the results of observations, questions and answers, and conversations, while documentation is only used as daily reports to parents. After becoming sekolah penggerak, the assessment instruments used for block center learning at the Islamic Center Kindergarten Samarinda are students' works. The results of the assessment are described in descriptive form, side by side with photos, and linked to learning outcomes instead of basic competencies. Assessment of learning outcomes needs to be done to find out which elements the child has achieved, and which elements need to be strengthened. A rating system like this seeks to provide an objective assessment without labeling a child (Rahardjo & Maryati, 2021).

Supporting factors

The implementation of the Sekolah Penggerak Program that uses the Merdeka curriculum in block center learning is inseparable from a number of supporting factors. One of them is government support in the form of provision of teacher guidelines, training, and simplification of the daily lesson plan. The guideline do not specifically discuss the implementation of the block center learning model, but they form the basis of guidelines for integrating the Sekolah Penggerak Program into the learning process (Kemendikbudristek RI, 2022). Intensive training and mentoring programs by expert trainers facilitated by the Ministry of Education and Culture are also provided to school principals, supervisors, inspectors, and teaching staff (Javanisa et al., 2021; Patilima, 2021). Spaces for learning, discussing, and seeking information are part of the digital technology-based facilities provided by the government to support the realization of learning that is in accordance with the Merdeka curriculum used by sekolah penggerak (Priantini et al., 2022). This space is called the Merdeka Mengajar Platform. Subsequent support comes from the readiness and commitment of all teaching and educational staff at the Islamic Center Kindergarten Samarinda in carrying out the Sekolah Penggerak program. This relates to the responsibilities of teachers and educational staff as a party that plays an important role in creating an educational ecosystem in order to achieve the goal of improving the quality of education (Nugraha, 2022; Zamjani et al., 2020). All teaching and educational staff need to collaborate to maintain harmony, conduciveness and continuity of learning that supports the implementation of the concept of Merdeka Belajar that is carried out in the Sekolah Penggerak Program (Sumarsih et al., 2022). Facilities that support the creation of a safe, comfortable and enjoyable learning environment are also a supporting factor in the implementation of the block center learning model. The block central room has a number of facilities such as air conditioning, lockers, shelves, blackboards, stationery, paper, play platforms, books, a number of educational games, and good lighting. These things support the creation of a safe and comfortable environment to carry out the learning process. Supporting factors also come from children who show imagination, creation, innovation, and responsibility in making buildings. Imagination is the basis of a child to show creativity and innovation. Through imagination, a child is able to solve the problems faced (Mulyasa, 2019).

Inhibiting factor

Not only supporting factors, the implementation of block center learning that are integrated with the Sekolah Penggerak Program also has a number of inhibiting factors, including the block centers that have an insufficient number of block units and accessories to be used by dozens of children because each child should have the opportunity to use at least 100 pieces of blocks to realize his imagination (Kasali, 2019). This imbalance in the number of children and play equipment also affects the amount of time

available (Narsi et al., 2014). Teachers' incomplete understanding of the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum used by sekolah penggerak in determining learning topics is part of the inhibiting factor (Jannah et al., 2022). Regarding determining the topic, Islamic Center Kindergarten still could not follow the directions in the Sekolah Penggerak Program because the teacher determines the learning topic independently. Whereas, in the program, students should have the opportunity to be involved in determining the topic (Rahardjo & Maryati, 2021). The next obstacle is the absence of real examples showing how the integration of the Sekolah Penggerak Program in the implementation of the block center learning model results in teachers having to keep trying to find the best way to implement it. This process involves the stages of trying, finding problems, and finding solutions independently (Zamjani et al., 2020). To overcome this, teachers and school principals hold discussions and take advantage of briefing moments to share problems encountered and find solutions.

It is important to recognize that this study was only carried out in only one kindergarten of sekolah penggerak and that findings are not generalizable. Findings should be interpreted within the scope of this study as a basis for exploring the implementation of block center learning in sekolah penggerak. Future research involving more sekolah penggerak needs to be conducted with different focuses and approaches to add new insights and perspectives.

4. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the block learning center of sekolah penggerak is carried out based on a standard process consisting of planning, implementation and evaluation processes. In these three processes, there were several differences between the block center learning before and after becoming sekolah penggerak that implements the Merdeka curriculum. The entire learning process is expected to support the formation of a Pancasila student profile and reflect Merdeka Belajar. The results of this study have implications that government support, adequate facilities and infrastructure, the availability of various online platforms, the readiness of teachers and educational staff, and the simplification of curriculum instruments such as the daily lesson plan, have a critical role in supporting the successful implementation of learning. Meanwhile, factors such as time constraints, limited unit blocks and accessories in schools, the need for real examples of successful implementation of the Sekolah Penggerak Program, and the lack of teachers' understanding of the concept of the Merdeka curriculum need to be mitigated by various policies both at the school level and from the government, so that implementation of learning can run better. It is recommended that future studies could involve more early childhood educational institutions of sekolah penggerak and explore the learning implementation of other centers beside block centers.

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