

Analysis of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Learning Evaluation within the Context of the Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum)

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the evaluation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) learning for class VII students in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMPN 3 Payakumbuh. The research method used was descriptive qualitative with class VII student participants. Data was collected through direct observation, especially during the Mid-Term Examination (UTS) on November 29, 2023. Evaluation results include students' average scores and grouping of scores into categories. Analysis shows that a number of students need increased enthusiasm for learning, with the highest percentage in the very high category. The research conclusions emphasize the need for additional guidance and the role of parents in improving student preparation before learning activities. Learning evaluation also highlights that the quality of learning still needs to be considered so that it is in line with the expectations of the Independent Curriculum. Therefore, collaboration between schools, teachers and parents needs to be improved to ensure optimal student preparation and learning outcomes, especially in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum.

1. Introduction

Education serves as the foundation for the comprehensive and high-quality development of individuals [1]. With the advancement of technology, integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into the educational curriculum has become an urgent necessity. In Indonesia, the Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum) initiative represents a bold step toward aligning education with the changing times. This curriculum promotes a learning concept that is contextual, relevant, and adaptive to societal dynamics. Analyzing the evaluation of ICT learning within the context of independent curriculum is essential to ensuring the success of its implementation [2].

With the acceleration of globalization, ICT has become a primary driver of transformation across all aspects of life. In the realm of education, ICT is no longer merely an aid but an indispensable necessity [3], [4]. The use of software, hardware, and networks has shifted the learning paradigm, enabling faster access to information, more dynamic interaction, and the utilization of a wider range of learning resources [5].

A curriculum serves as a systematic guide that organizes and details the instructional plan within an

educational institution [6]. It comprises key components that form the foundation of the learning process, including objectives, learning materials, teaching methods, evaluation, learning resources, and the allocation of instructional time. Educational objectives serve as the starting point, outlining the expected outcomes of the learning process across the domains of knowledge, attitudes, and skills [7].

Curricula vary in type, ranging from national and institutional levels to regional, school-specific, and subject-specific curricula. Although each type has a distinct focus and purpose, they all share a common goal: providing guidelines to achieve expected learning outcomes [8]. Curriculum development faces various challenges, such as maintaining relevance amidst changing times, ensuring flexibility to adapt to change, and balancing academic demands, practical skills, and student character development. Stakeholder involvement including teachers, parents, and the community is also a crucial factor in the development process, ensuring alignment with local needs and supporting the sustainability of learning [9].

The new curriculum introduced by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemdikbudristek) in Indonesia is the Independent Curriculum. The Independent Curriculum is a major

step in efforts to revitalize the education system in Indonesia, which is a holistic approach. It emphasizes developing students' potential by fostering empowerment, diversity, and creativity [10].

The curriculum prioritizes intracurricular learning focused on essential material to enable deeper understanding; it allocates more time for developing competencies and character through group learning and offers flexibility regarding learning achievements by phase and instructional hours [11]. It also supports educators by providing flexible teaching aids and training materials. The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes the development of soft skills and character through projects that strengthen students' profiles based on Pancasila values. Key topics include mental health, culture, entrepreneurship, technology, and democratic living [12].

In this context, ICT integration serves as the foundation for achieving these goals. The application of ICT in learning is expected to provide a deeper, more real-world relevant educational experience [13]. The analysis of ICT learning evaluation in the context of the Independent Curriculum has the main objective of measuring the effectiveness, relevance, and impact of ICT integration in the learning process [14]. This evaluation covers various aspects, such as infrastructure availability, teacher competence, the ICT curriculum, and the student learning experience. Examining these aspects in detail helps identify areas where improvements and further development are needed [15], [16].

Access to ICT hardware and software is fundamental to effective learning. This analysis evaluates the availability of computers, internet connections, and mobile devices. Additionally, server and network infrastructure must be assessed to ensure smooth access to and distribution of learning content [17], [18]. Teachers play a crucial role in the success of ICT-based learning. Therefore, this analysis involves assessing teachers' competence in managing technology, designing interactive learning experiences, and facilitating online discussions. Teachers' understanding of the ICT curriculum is also a key aspect of this evaluation [19].

The analysis also encompasses an evaluation of the adopted ICT curriculum. The alignment of course material with industry needs and the latest technological advancements is a primary focus. Curriculum flexibility specifically the ability to adapt to dynamic changes serves as another important parameter. The quality of the students' learning experience constitutes the ultimate outcome to be evaluated. In the context of the Independent Curriculum, this evaluation includes students' understanding of the use of ICT in completing assignments, critical thinking skills, and creativity in solving problems.

2. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design. A research method that aims to depict, describe, and present a phenomenon or situation in the field exactly as it is without manipulation using data in the form of words, images, or behaviors [20]. The participants consisted of 106 seventh-grade students at SMPN 3 Payakumbuh, observed on November 29, 2023. The research methodology involved specific strategies to gain an in-depth understanding of the subject matter. A qualitative approach was adopted to interpret signs or phenomena in depth through specific data collection techniques.

Data collection was conducted via direct observation during the Mid-Semester Examination (UTS). The study focused on the seventh-grade level, with student observation carried out through direct classroom assessment. The research instrument a tool used to measure the observed academic or social signs or phenomena was the Mid-Semester Examination paper itself. By utilizing a qualitative descriptive approach and the UTS observation technique, this study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the performance of seventh-grade students at SMPN 3 Payakumbuh as of November 29, 2023. Through the analysis of qualitative data obtained via the research instrument, the study seeks to provide rich, contextual insights into the classroom learning environment for seventh-grade students at SMPN 3 Payakumbuh.

3. Result and Discussion

The initial phase of learning is crucial for students, as it can influence the achievement of learning objectives. Factors such as physical, mental, and emotional states, as well as existing knowledge and specific needs, are elements that must be considered to optimize the learning process. Physical condition refers to the student's bodily readiness to engage in learning activities, while mental condition relates to their level of intelligence. The emotional aspect encompasses a student's ability to manage emotions when facing challenges, whereas knowledge reflects their capacity to absorb information provided by teachers at school.

It is also important to understand students' needs regarding learning materials. These needs include a sense of the material's importance—where students perceive each lesson as relevant and necessary for them. In this context, students are expected to manage their time at home, maintain healthy eating habits, and get adequate rest to support their physical well-being.

Learning is defined as a mental or physical activity involving active interaction with the environment. Its goal is to bring about changes in students' knowledge, understanding, skills, and values or attitudes. This learning process tends to be relatively stable and leaves a lasting impact.

From the perspective of needs, students feel a sense of intrinsic motivation to pursue learning beyond mere obligation. This is reflected in school attendance; most students attend almost daily, although some are frequently late. Regarding comprehension, students utilize various resources, including Student Worksheets (LKS) and reference books, as study materials. Despite having access to these resources, some students choose not to use their worksheets and textbooks.

Some students also opt to seek information online using search engines like Google. Even though they have access to learning modules, some students avoid using their worksheets and textbooks. Additionally, some students struggle to grasp the information conveyed by teachers during the learning process.

Results from the Mid-Semester Examination (UTS) involving 106 student respondents show that 49 students achieved scores in the 76–100 range. Individual student scores were recorded prior to their classification into specific categories. Three students (2.80%) fell into the Low category, while 15 students (14.15%) were in the Moderate category. Twenty-nine students (36.80%) fell into the High category, and 49 students (46.25%) were in the Very High category. These results indicate a need to boost students' learning enthusiasm and aim to maximize student learning in the context of the Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum). Data from the Mid-Semester Examination (UTS) are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1. Data from the Mid-Semester Examination (UTS)

Category	Score Range	Number of Students	Percentage	Status
Very High	76–100	49	46.25%	Passed
High	51–75	39	36.80%	Did Not Pass
Medium	26–50	15	14.15%	Did Not Pass
Low	0–25	3	2.80%	Did Not Pass
Total		106	100%	

Student learning outcomes are expected to improve when average scores reach a range of 76 to 100; this represents a projected increase of 28%, bringing the figure to 74.25%. However, survey results regarding student learning readiness indicate that many students still need to improve their preparation before engaging in learning activities. Achieving optimal results requires additional guidance and support. Furthermore, the role of parents is crucial in ensuring their children are prepared before attending school. This entails paying attention to the availability of books, school supplies, and other necessities to ensure the child is truly ready for the classroom learning process. If parents do not pay sufficient attention to this preliminary preparation, the child may struggle to organize everything needed for school learning activities.

Although the learning process plays a vital role in facilitating education and achieving successful outcomes, evaluations of Grade VII students indicate that, overall, learning readiness has not fully met expectations. One factor significantly impacting student learning outcomes is the quality of the instruction itself. Students who are ready to learn from their teachers tend to respond positively to questions or instructions given during the learning process.

4. Conclusion

Adequate student preparation prior to instruction is a key factor in achieving learning objectives. Elements such as physical, mental, and emotional states, as well as prior knowledge and individual needs, play a vital role in optimizing the learning process. Survey results and evaluations regarding Grade VII students indicate a need to enhance preparation, particularly concerning

readiness regarding course materials and the level of parental support. Furthermore, Midterm Examination (UTS) results reflect the students' levels of understanding and academic achievement. While the majority of students attained high scores, there remain some who require additional guidance. Parental support is also a crucial factor in improving student preparation and learning outcomes. Therefore, collaborative efforts between schools, teachers, and parents need to be strengthened to ensure students can optimally engage with learning, particularly in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum.

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