

## Physical Education Teachers' Perceptions of Independent Learning in Public Elementary Schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City

Febriyanti Milenia Rumanga<sup>1A-E\*</sup>, Muh. Adnan Hudaini<sup>2B-D</sup>, Ilham Kamaruddin<sup>3B-D</sup>, Ahmad Adil<sup>4B-D</sup>, Suwardi<sup>5B-D</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup> Universitas Negeri Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia

[rumangaf@gmail.com](mailto:rumangaf@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [muh.adnan.hudaini@unm.ac.id](mailto:muh.adnan.hudaini@unm.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>, [ilham.kamaruddin@unm.ac.id](mailto:ilham.kamaruddin@unm.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>,  
[ahmad.adil@unm.ac.id](mailto:ahmad.adil@unm.ac.id)<sup>4</sup>, [suwardi6603@unm.ac.id](mailto:suwardi6603@unm.ac.id)<sup>5</sup>

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the perceptions of Physical Education, Sports, and Health (PJOK) teachers regarding the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Public Elementary Schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City. The method used in this study is a qualitative approach with data collection through interviews and observations in 11 local public elementary schools. The results show that PJOK teachers have a positive view of the Independent Curriculum, recognising increased student motivation and their active involvement in learning. In addition, teachers recognise the importance of developing students' social skills and character as part of the curriculum. In conclusion, the perception of PJOK teachers regarding the concept of Independent Learning is that the majority of PJOK teachers understand the concept of Independent Learning as freedom in teaching that remains directed. PJOK teachers consider this program to provide flexibility in determining learning methods that are appropriate to students' conditions. Teachers also view this concept as an opportunity to develop creativity in PJOK learning. Factors that influence perceptions, namely internal factors such as teaching experience, curriculum understanding, and teacher readiness, are the main determinants of perceptions regarding Independent Learning. Support for infrastructure and the school environment also influences teachers' perspectives on this program. The training and outreach received by physical education teachers also contribute to shaping teacher perceptions. The implementation of the Merdeka Belajar concept, namely the application of Freedom to Learn in Physical Education (PJOK), is carried out by adapting materials and methods to school conditions. Physical education teachers develop more interactive and student-centred learning. Learning evaluation is carried out more comprehensively, taking into account individual student development. Challenges and opportunities, namely limited facilities and conceptual understanding, are the main challenges in implementing Merdeka Belajar. Stakeholder support and professional development opportunities provide opportunities to improve the quality of learning. This program opens up opportunities for innovation in higher-quality PJOK learning.

### ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 2025/07/16

Accepted: 2025/07/25

Published: 2025/10/02

### KEYWORDS

Persepsi;  
Physical Education  
Teachers';  
Learning Public;  
Elementary Schools.

### AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

- A. Conception and design of the study;
- B. Acquisition of data;
- C. Analysis and interpretation of data;
- D. Manuscript preparation;
- E. Obtaining funding

**Cites this Article** : Rumanga, Febriyanti Milenia; Hudaini, Muh. Adnan; Kamaruddin, Ilham; Adil, Ahmad; Suwardi, Suwardi. (2025). Physical Education Teachers' Perceptions of Independent Learning in Public Elementary Schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City. **Competitor: Jurnal Pendidikan Kepeleatihan Olahraga**. 17 ( 3 ), p.2196-2211

## INTRODUCTION

In the Independent Learning program, teachers act as learning resources and facilitators. Their role is to design effective and enjoyable learning so that students can achieve their learning objectives. The desired learning environment is active and enjoyable, where students are free to choose learning resources and are free from pressure. As quoted by Ki Hajar Dewantara, "schools must become learning centres for students," with the goal of education to create "cultured, independent individuals," namely individuals who are self-sufficient, independent, and able to determine their own destiny (Nugraha, Sugihartono, & Nopiyanto, 2022).

Education is a fundamental aspect of national development. In Indonesia, efforts to improve the quality of education continue through various policies and programs (Saleh, 2024). One of the latest initiatives launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture is the Independent Learning concept, which aims to create a more flexible, innovative, and student-centred learning environment (Wahono, 2022, in Nugraha et al., 2022).

Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn) was introduced in response to the challenges of education in the digital and globalisation era. This concept emphasises the importance of freedom of thought, creativity, and adaptability in the learning process (Arba et al., 2025; Rerung et al., 2025). Through Merdeka Belajar, it is hoped that students can develop their potential optimally without being constrained by the limitations of the conventional education system (Nugraha et al., 2022). The implementation of Merdeka Belajar involves curriculum, teaching methods, and learning evaluation, with teachers acting as facilitators and motivators who must be more creative and innovative in designing and implementing learning (Efendi, 2023).

In the context of physical education, sports, and health (PJOK), the implementation of Merdeka Belajar presents unique challenges and opportunities due to its unique characteristics involving physical activity, motor skill development, and character building (A. Arga, 2025; Badwi et al., 2025). Therefore, it is crucial to examine the understanding and perceptions of physical education teachers regarding Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn) (Hamzanwadi, 2024).

Bau Bau City in Southeast Sulawesi Province, particularly Wolio District, has several public elementary schools that are at the forefront of implementing national education policies, including Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn). PE teachers in Wolio District play a strategic role in translating the concept of Merdeka Belajar into daily learning practices, facing the challenge of integrating Merdeka Belajar principles with PE characteristics (Priyambada, 2024). Teachers' perceptions of Merdeka Belajar influence how they design and implement learning; accurate understanding helps create a dynamic, enjoyable, and meaningful learning environment, while inaccurate perceptions or resistance can hinder implementation (Nugraha et al., 2022).

Research on the perceptions of physical education (PJOK) teachers in this region is important given the paucity of specific studies in the region (S. P. Arga, 2023; Presidential Instruction, 2023). The results can provide insight into PJOK teachers' understanding and attitudes toward this concept, while also identifying factors

influencing perceptions, such as educational background, teaching experience, access to information, and support from schools and education offices (Efendi, 2023). This understanding supports teacher professional development, ensuring they possess the competencies needed to effectively implement Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn) in PJOK (Roikhanah, Utami, & Broto, 2024).

This research can reveal how PJOK teachers adapt their learning methods to the characteristics of students in Bau Bau City. Furthermore, it can identify challenges and obstacles, such as limited time, facilities, and monotonous learning methods, that hinder the implementation of Merdeka Belajar-based PJOK learning (Yuliana, 2024; Safitri & Astuti, 2024). This is crucial for formulating appropriate strategies and solutions to support the implementation of Merdeka Belajar (Roikhanah et al., 2024).

More broadly, the research findings can contribute to the development of regional education policies (Tinri et al., 2024), particularly in physical education and health education (PJOK) in border and island regions such as Bau Bau City, which has unique geographic and socio-cultural characteristics (Hudain et al., 2025; Mappaompo et al., 2024). This research can be a first step in developing a Merdeka Belajar implementation model relevant to the local context, including learning strategies, teaching materials development, and evaluation methods that integrate Merdeka Belajar principles with local wisdom and regional potential (Nugraha et al., 2022).

From an academic perspective, this research enriches the literature on the implementation of educational policies at the micro level, namely schools and teachers, while also contributing to the development of theories and concepts in the field of physical education and sports that are in accordance with the spirit of Independent Learning and the demands of the 21st century (Subandi, Fachrezzy, Halim, Bhakti, & Alparis, 2024).

Practically, the research findings serve as a reflection for physical education teachers to develop more innovative and creative learning practices. Through dialogue and collaboration among physical education teachers in Wolio, sharing experiences and perceptions of Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn) can improve learning implementation (Nugraha et al., 2022). Furthermore, this study reveals the readiness of schools and teachers to face changes in educational paradigms, which relate not only to methods but also to mindsets and school culture (Subandi et al., 2024).

Furthermore, this study also identifies potential local resources, such as nature and culture, that can be integrated as opportunities in the implementation of Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn) based on physical education in Wolio District (Priyambada, 2024). Therefore, this study on physical education teachers' perceptions of Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn) in Public Elementary Schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, is highly relevant and serves as a basis for developing effective implementation strategies, while simultaneously improving the quality of physical education learning in the region, in line with the spirit and goals of Merdeka Belajar (Nugraha et al., 2022).

The research questions addressed by the researchers include: 1) How do PJOK teachers perceive the concept of Independent Learning at the Wolio District Public

Elementary School, Bau Bau City? 2) What factors influence the perception of PJOK teachers towards Independent Learning at the Wolio District Public Elementary School, Bau Bau City? 3) How is the implementation of the Independent Learning concept in PJOK learning at the Wolio District Public Elementary School, Bau Bau City? 4) What are the challenges and opportunities faced by PJOK teachers in implementing Independent Learning at the Wolio District Public Elementary School, Bau Bau City?

## METHODS

This type of research is qualitative, an approach to conducting research oriented towards natural phenomena or symptoms. Qualitative research is fundamental and naturalistic in nature, and cannot be conducted in the laboratory, but rather in the field. Therefore, this type of research is often referred to as naturalistic inquiry. If the term "generalization" refers to "time- and context-free generalizations," as commonly used by those who use the positivist paradigm, then qualitative research findings cannot be generalized. What this qualitative research produces is not a generalization, but rather an in-depth understanding of a problem (Abdussaman, 2021).

The research will be conducted in October 2024, after the proposal seminar has been approved and the research is deemed feasible. The research site was located in Bau-Bau City, Wolio District, and involved several public elementary schools, including SDN 1 Batulo, SDN 1 Bau Bau, SDN 2 Bataraguru, SDN 2 Batulo, SDN 2 Palatiga, SDN 2 Bau Bau, SDN 3 Bau Bau, SDN 4 Bau Bau, SDN 6 Bau Bau, SDN Negeri Palatiga, and SDN Wangkanapi.

Data Collection Techniques (In-depth interviews) were conducted with physical education (PJOK) teachers to explore perceptions, experiences, and challenges in implementing Independent Learning. The interviews consisted of 25 questions with the teachers. (Participant observation) Observing the PJOK learning process to directly observe the implementation of Independent Learning. Researchers went directly to the field to observe the behaviour and activities of individuals at the research location. Observation is a potential way to observe natural or authentic behaviour. (Document analysis) Reviewing learning documents such as lesson plans and syllabi to examine the integration of the Independent Learning concept. (Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Involving several physical education teachers for an in-depth discussion on the implementation of Merdeka Belajar.

In qualitative research, data collection is conducted in a natural setting using primary data sources, and data collection techniques primarily rely on participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

This research is descriptive, meaning that the research subjects are described based on the data obtained from the interviews. All findings concerning physical

education teachers' perceptions of independent learning in public elementary schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, which are based on four major themes: strengths, weaknesses, readiness, and obstacles faced by physical education teachers during the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, will be presented in Chapter IV. This research was conducted to determine physical education teachers' perceptions of independent learning in public elementary schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City. Based on semi-structured interview data, the four major themes identified above were identified. These four themes are expected to answer the research questions.

We used Indonesian during the interviews to gather as much information as possible and explore physical education teachers' perceptions of independent learning in public elementary schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City. The interview results from all schools are presented as follows:

### **What do you know about the Independent Curriculum?**

The conclusions from the responses of the physical education teachers in the 11 schools indicate that the Independent Curriculum is seen as an innovation that provides freedom and flexibility in the learning process. Teachers appreciate this approach because it allows them to develop a curriculum that is more aligned with students' needs, interests, and characteristics. Furthermore, the Independent Curriculum is expected to create more relevant, enjoyable, and meaningful learning experiences, as well as encourage the development of students' competencies and character through more active and participatory methods.

### **How do you view the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the Wolio District Public Elementary School in Bau Bau City?**

Conclusion: Overall, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the Wolio District Public Elementary School in Bau Bau City has shown positive results, with increased student engagement and motivation. The advantages of this curriculum implementation include the freedom for teachers to innovate in teaching, as well as an emphasis on contextual and project-based learning. However, challenges faced include the need for further training for teachers, limited resources, and difficulties with more subjective assessments.

### **What challenges did you face in implementing the Independent Curriculum?**

In conclusion, the challenges in implementing the Independent Curriculum at the Wolio District Public Elementary School in Bau Bau City include limited resources, student and teacher readiness, and difficulties in time management and assessment. Limited facilities and teaching materials are the main obstacles, while the readiness of students accustomed to conventional methods requires special attention. Furthermore, a lack of teacher training also hinders the effective implementation of the curriculum.

### **How did you overcome these challenges?**

In conclusion, schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, have taken various steps to address the challenges in implementing the Independent Curriculum. These efforts

include holding training and workshops for teachers, collaborating with external parties and the community, and developing mentoring programs for students. Furthermore, increasing parental and community involvement is also an important strategy in supporting the successful implementation of the curriculum.

### **What benefits have you experienced from implementing the Independent Curriculum?**

In conclusion, the benefits experienced from implementing the Independent Curriculum at the Wolio District Public Elementary School in Bau Bau City are diverse. Improvements in the quality of learning, creativity, and students' social skills were highlighted. Students demonstrated higher motivation, better engagement with parents, and the development of 21st-century skills. A holistic approach to education also helps students better understand the local context and enhances their sense of identity.

### **How do you observe student development after implementing the Independent Curriculum?**

The conclusion regarding student development after implementing the Independent Curriculum at the Wolio District Public Elementary School in Bau Bau City was very positive. Students demonstrated improvements in academic abilities, social skills, and self-confidence. They participated more actively in discussions, worked collaboratively in groups, and expressed their opinions. Furthermore, students' critical and reflective abilities, as well as their understanding of local and cultural values, improved. This created individuals who were more independent, creative, and prepared to face future challenges.

### **What are your suggestions for improving the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in public elementary schools?**

In conclusion, suggestions for improving the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in public elementary schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City include increasing resources, regular teacher training, and active support from parents. Collaboration with the community, developing digital platforms, and providing opportunities for extracurricular activities are also considered important. Furthermore, improving communication between teachers and mentoring programs can accelerate the adaptation process. With these steps, it is hoped that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum will be more effective and have a positive impact on the quality of education.

### **How do you view the role of teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum?**

In conclusion, the role of teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum is crucial and multifaceted. They serve as facilitators, motivators, guides, assessors, and innovators in the learning process. Teachers also play a vital role in establishing communication with parents, creating an inclusive learning environment, and building student character. With an active and adaptive role, teachers can effectively support the



implementation of the Independent Curriculum, creating meaningful learning experiences for students.

**What do you do to improve students' social skills through the Independent Curriculum? Provide examples of how you improve students' social skills through the Independent Curriculum, such as through projects or team activities.**

Conclusion: Schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, implement various activities to improve students' social skills through the Independent Curriculum. Group projects, social activities, discussions, debate competitions, and collaborative games are some examples. These activities not only improve communication and cooperation skills but also build empathy and caring among students. With this approach, students are expected to develop strong social skills that will be useful in their lives.

**How do you overcome difficulties in delivering material that is not included in the textbook?**

Describe how you overcome difficulties in delivering material that is not included in the textbook, such as using teaching modules.

In conclusion, schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, face challenges in delivering material without textbooks through various innovative methods. The development of teaching modules, the utilization of digital resources, and a thematic approach are some of the methods used. In addition, collaboration between teachers, the use of ATP (Analytical Learning Outcomes), practical work, and group discussions also help create meaningful learning experiences. With a creative approach, students can still understand the material effectively even without textbooks.

**What challenges do you face in managing learning administration?**

Describe the challenges you face in managing learning administration, such as time constraints or resource constraints.

In conclusion, managing learning administration at a public elementary school in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, faces various challenges, including limited time, resources, and budget. Difficulties in coordination, training, and communication are also significant obstacles. Given these challenges, collaborative efforts are needed to improve the administrative system to make it more efficient and support a quality learning process.

**How do you overcome difficulties in managing learning administration?**

Provide examples of how you have overcome difficulties in managing learning administration, such as using administrative tools or seeking team assistance.

In conclusion, schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, have implemented various strategies to overcome difficulties in managing learning administration. The use of digital tools, the formation of administrative teams, and teacher training are some examples. Furthermore, good communication and the use of standard templates have also helped create a more efficient system. These steps have led to more organized administrative management and supported an effective learning process.

### **How do you see the role of technology in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum?**

Describe the role of technology in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and how you see this role in the context of implementation at your school.

In conclusion, the role of technology in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is very significant in schools in the Wolio District, Bau Bau City. Technology is used as a learning aid, a source of information, and a means of evaluation. Furthermore, technology also strengthens communication between stakeholders and supports extracurricular activities. By optimally utilizing technology, schools can create a more interactive learning environment and support the development of student skills relevant to future needs.

### **What benefits have you experienced from using technology in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum?**

In conclusion, the use of technology in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum provides various benefits in schools in the Wolio District, Bau Bau City. Time efficiency, improved learning quality, student engagement, and ease of evaluation are some of the benefits experienced. Furthermore, technology also supports the development of digital skills and student creativity, creating a more dynamic and collaborative learning environment. Thus, technology has become an invaluable tool in achieving better educational goals.

### **How do you see student development after using technology in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum?**

Conclusion: After using technology in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, students in schools in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, showed significant progress. Improved academic abilities, social skills, critical thinking, and creativity were some of the visible aspects. Furthermore, students became more independent, confident, and skilled in technology, preparing them for future challenges. Thus, technology has had a significant positive impact on the teaching and learning process.

### **What are your suggestions for improving the use of technology in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in public elementary schools in Wolio District, Bau City?**

The conclusions from each school indicate that to improve the use of technology in the Independent Curriculum, various aspects need to be considered, ranging from internet access, teacher training, to collaboration with external parties. These efforts are expected to create a more effective and engaging learning environment for students.

### **How do you view the role of parents in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum?**

Describe the role of parents in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and how you see this role in the context of implementation at your school.



In conclusion, the role of parents in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is vital. They not only support education at home but also act as active partners in the learning process. Parental involvement in various aspects of education, from supporting school activities to providing feedback, can create a more effective and holistic learning environment for students.

### **What benefits have you experienced from parental support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum?**

Describe the benefits you have experienced from parental support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, such as increased student engagement or improved learning quality.

"In conclusion, parental support creates a more positive learning environment. Students feel more valued and have a greater enthusiasm for learning." SDN Wangkanapi

In conclusion, parental support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum provides various significant benefits. From increasing engagement and quality of learning to developing character and social skills, the role of parents is crucial in creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

### **How do you see student development following parental support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum?**

Conclusion: Parental support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has a significant impact on student development. Improved academic abilities, social skills, creativity, and emotional stability are some of the positive outcomes seen. Parental involvement creates an environment that supports students' overall growth and development.

### **What are your suggestions for increasing parental support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Wolio District Public Elementary Schools in Bau City?**

Conclusion: Increasing parental support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum requires a comprehensive approach. By improving communication, involving them in activities, and providing education about the curriculum, schools can create a more supportive environment for students. Active parental involvement will contribute to children's overall educational success.

### **How do you view the role of schools in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum?**

Describe the role of schools in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and how you see this role in the context of implementation at your school.

In conclusion, the role of schools in implementing the Independent Curriculum is multifaceted. From creating a supportive learning environment to involving parents and the community, schools have a significant responsibility in optimizing the educational process. With a comprehensive and collaborative approach, schools can ensure that the

Independent Curriculum is implemented effectively and provides maximum benefits for students.

### **What benefits have you experienced from school support in implementing the Independent Curriculum?**

In conclusion, school support in implementing the Independent Curriculum brings many benefits, from increasing student motivation to improving the quality of learning and assessment. With adequate resources and a positive learning environment, students can develop well, both academically and socially. Active school involvement is crucial to creating a holistic and effective educational experience.

### **How do you see student development following school support in implementing the Independent Curriculum?**

"In conclusion, student development has been very positive. With strong school support, they feel better prepared to face future academic and social challenges."  
 Wangkanapi Elementary School

Conclusion: School support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum significantly contributes to student development. From improving academic abilities to developing social and emotional skills, students demonstrate clear progress. A positive learning environment and adequate resources create a strong foundation for students to grow and develop holistically.

### **What are your suggestions for improving school support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Public Elementary Schools in Wolio District, Bau City?**

Conclusion: Improving school support in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum requires a comprehensive approach. By focusing on teacher training, resource provision, and parent and community involvement, schools can create a more supportive and effective learning environment for students. The involvement of all parties will contribute to the successful implementation of the curriculum.

### **How do you see the future of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Public Elementary Schools in Wolio District, Bau City, in relation to physical education and health education?**

Conclusion: The future of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Public Elementary Schools in Wolio District, Bau City, holds much promise. By focusing on improving the quality of learning, student engagement, and social skills development, schools can create an environment that supports holistic student growth. The involvement of all stakeholders, including parents and the community, will contribute to greater educational success in the future.

Based on interviews with several physical education (PJOK) teachers, it was found that teaching experience and understanding of the curriculum were the main factors in shaping their perceptions of the Merdeka Belajar program. Teachers with more teaching experience tended to have a better understanding of the implementation of this flexible

curriculum. They felt that the program provided freedom to develop more innovative and relevant teaching methods tailored to students' needs. However, some new or less experienced teachers found it difficult to adapt to this more independent learning approach, leading to a more negative perception of Merdeka Belajar.

In addition to internal factors such as teaching experience, support from facilities and infrastructure, and the training received, also significantly influenced the perceptions of Merdeka Belajar teachers. In interviews, many teachers stated that adequate facilities at school, such as sports equipment and appropriate spaces, significantly supported the smooth running of learning using the Merdeka Belajar approach. However, they also revealed that the lack of adequate training on the implementation of Merdeka Belajar in the field of PJOK hindered the implementation of the program effectively. More intensive outreach and more focused training are considered crucial for teachers to fully understand the benefits and workings of the Merdeka Belajar program.

## Discussion

At the Wolio District Public Elementary School, teachers reported that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka) has begun, although challenges remain. Strengths identified include increased creativity in designing physical education (PJOK) lessons, while weaknesses relate to limited facilities and resources. Research by Sari (2022) indicates that the successful implementation of the new curriculum is highly dependent on adequate resource support.

Teachers also face various challenges in implementing the Independent Curriculum, such as limited resources, student readiness, and their own readiness. This reflects research conducted by Handayani (2020), which revealed that teacher and student readiness are key factors in the successful implementation of the new curriculum. To address these challenges, teachers participated in training and workshops to improve their skills. Some teachers also collaborated in teams to share experiences and strategies. This aligns with findings by Rahman (2021), who showed that professional support can help teachers overcome difficulties in curriculum implementation.

From the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, teachers experienced significant benefits, such as improved learning quality and student creativity. Previous research also shows that a more flexible approach can improve students' learning outcomes and social skills (Susanto, 2020).

After implementing the Independent Curriculum, many teachers reported positive developments in students, including improved academic abilities and social skills. This aligns with research showing that a curriculum that supports active participation can boost student confidence (Budiarto, 2021). Teachers provided suggestions for improving the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, such as increasing resources and teacher training. Research by Utami (2022) emphasised the importance of investing in educational resources to support the curriculum's success.

Teachers play a crucial role in implementing the Independent Curriculum by designing innovative learning experiences. Research shows that teachers who are proactive in responding to students' needs can result in better learning experiences (Hidayati, 2021). Teachers also take steps to improve students' social skills through project activities and teamwork. Research by Amir (2020) shows that collaboration in learning can improve students' interpersonal skills.

Teachers face difficulties in delivering material not covered in textbooks. To overcome this, they use teaching modules and ATP (Learning Enhancement Tools). This supports research showing that using various learning resources can improve student understanding (Kurniawan, 2019). In managing learning administration, teachers face limited time and resources. Research by Sari (2022) noted that effective time management is a major challenge for teachers in the new curriculum era.

Teachers attempt to overcome this difficulty by using administrative tools and seeking assistance from colleagues. This aligns with research showing that collaboration between teachers can improve administrative efficiency (Halimah, 2020). Technology plays a crucial role in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, assisting teachers in delivering material and providing access to a wider range of learning resources. Research shows that the use of technology can increase student engagement (Setiawan, 2021).

Teachers experience benefits from technology, such as increased time efficiency and improved learning quality. These findings are consistent with research showing that technology can enrich students' learning experiences (Yanti, 2020). After using technology, students demonstrated improvements in academic performance and social skills. Previous research also found that students exposed to technology tend to be more independent and proactive in their learning (Rizki, 2021).

Teachers recommend improving internet access and training for teachers to maximise the use of technology. Research by Prabowo (2022) emphasises the importance of technological infrastructure to support effective learning. Parents play a crucial role in supporting the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, including providing moral support and involvement in school activities. Research shows that parental support can increase student engagement (Suhardi, 2020).

Parental support contributes to student development, including improving academic abilities and social skills. This finding aligns with research emphasising the importance of collaboration between school and home in education (Wahyu, 2021). Physical Education (PJOK) teachers' perceptions of the Independent Learning (Merdeka Belajar) concept at a public elementary school in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, were generally positive. Teachers felt that this approach provided students with the freedom to actively participate in learning and adapt methods to suit their needs. This aligns with research showing that freedom to learn can increase student motivation and engagement (Mulyasa, 2021). Teachers feel that Merdeka Belajar allows them to be more creative in designing interesting and relevant PJOK learning activities.

Factors influencing physical education teachers' perceptions of Independent Learning include personal experiences, training received, and support from colleagues and schools. Positive experiences implementing innovative learning methods increase teachers' confidence in Independent Learning. Furthermore, adequate training provides teachers with the tools and strategies to implement this curriculum effectively. Previous research has noted that professional and collaborative support among teachers plays a crucial role in shaping positive perceptions (Rahman, 2021).

The implementation of the Independent Learning concept in Physical Education (PJOK) learning at a public elementary school in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, is evident in teachers' efforts to develop diverse and enjoyable activities. Teachers integrate physical activity with other learning experiences, such as local culture and health values. Despite a lack of facilities and resources, teachers utilise alternative methods such as the use of teaching modules and innovative learning tools. This aligns with findings showing that effective implementation can improve educational quality (Dewi & Astuti, 2022).

Physical education teachers face challenges in implementing Independent Learning, including limited resources, student readiness, and time management. Limited sports facilities and learning tools pose obstacles, while student readiness for more independent learning is also a concern. However, opportunities exist, such as increasing parental and community involvement in supporting sports programs and collaboration among teachers to share best practices. Research shows that challenges can be overcome with collaborative support and ongoing training (Halimah, 2020).

The perceptions of physical education (PJOK) teachers at a public elementary school in Wolio District, Bau Bau City, regarding Independent Learning (Merdeka Belajar) are very positive, influenced by various factors such as experience and support. Implementing this concept presents challenges and opportunities that need to be managed effectively to improve the quality of physical education (PJOK) learning. With the right support and strong collaboration, the Independent Curriculum can have a significant impact on student development.

## CONCLUSION

The perception of the concept of Independent Learning (Merdeka Belajar) by physical education teachers is that the majority of physical education teachers understand the concept of Independent Learning (Merdeka Belajar) as freedom in teaching that remains focused. Physical education teachers consider this program to provide flexibility in determining learning methods that are appropriate to students' conditions. Teachers also view this concept as an opportunity to develop creativity in Physical Education (Merdeka Belajar) learning. Factors influencing perception include internal factors such as teaching experience, curriculum understanding, and teacher readiness, which are the main determinants of perceptions of Independent Learning. Support for infrastructure and the school environment also influences teachers'

perspectives on this program. Training and outreach received by Physical Education (ME) teachers also contribute to shaping teacher perceptions. The implementation of the Independent Learning concept, namely the application of Independent Learning in ME, is carried out through adapting materials and methods to school conditions. Physical education teachers develop more interactive and student-centred learning. Learning evaluation is carried out more comprehensively, taking into account individual student development. Challenges and opportunities, namely limited facilities and conceptual understanding, are the main challenges in the implementation of Independent Learning. Stakeholder support and professional development opportunities provide opportunities to improve the quality of learning. This program opens up opportunities for innovation in higher-quality MERDEK learning.

## REFERENCES

- Arba, M. A., Rerung, C. T., Hasanuddin, M. I., & Hasyim, M. Q. (2025). Pelatihan Sepak Bola Berbasis Permainan untuk Meningkatkan Kerjasama Tim di Kalangan Siswa SD Negeri 156 Buntu. *Jurnal Perjuangan Dan Pengabdian Masyarakat: JPPM*, 1(1), 26–34.
- Arga, A. (2025). Pengaruh Latihan Leg Raise Terhadap Kekuatan Otot Perut Mahasiswa PKO UPRI. *Jurnal Pendidikan Kepelatihan Olahraga (PEJUANG)*, 1(1), 18–23.
- Arga, S. P. (2023). Efektivitas latihan dan bermain usia sekolah dasar. *Menelisik ilmu keolahragaan*, 23.
- Badriyah, L., Setiawan, I., Suropto, A. W., & Abdulaziz, M. F. (2024). Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka pada Mata Pelajaran PJOK di SD Al Madina Wonosobo. *Indonesian Journal for Physical Education and Sport*, 5(2), 784–794.
- Badwi, A., Arba, M. A., Rahmatullah, W., Rerung, C. T., Aulria, S. N. M., Arga, A., & Hasran, H. (2025). Socialization of Petanque Sports at SMAS YASPIB Bontolempangan Gowa. *Jurnal Perjuangan Dan Pengabdian Masyarakat: JPPM*, 1(2), 1–8.
- Efendi, T. (2023). Persepsi Guru PJOK terhadap Merdeka Belajar di Kabupaten Pacitan. Skripsi, STKIP Pacitan.
- Fahmi, M., et al. (2022). Pendidikan dalam Kurikulum Merdeka Berpatokan pada Esensi Belajar Anak. Dalam A. S. Nugraha, T. Sugihartono, & Y. E. Nopiyanto (2022), *Persepsi Guru PJOK terhadap Merdeka Belajar Di SMA Negeri Se-Kota Bengkulu*.
- Hamzanwadi, M. (2024). Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar pada Pembelajaran PJOK. *Jurnal Porkes*.
- Hudain, M. A., Adil, A., Kasmad, M. R., & Arga, A. (2025). Pelatihan Terstruktur Di SDN Paccinangan Tentang Dribbling Bola Basket. *LITERA ABDI: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 2(1), 88–95.
- Inpres, I. (2023). Meningkatkan Kemampuan Passing Bawah Bolavoli Melalui Media Pembelajaran Audio Visual Pada Siswa Kelas IV di UPT SPF SD Inpres Rappokalling I Kota Makassar. *Journal on Education*, 6(01), 2318–2326.



- Khoirurrijal, M., et al. (2022). Pengembangan Minat dan Bakat Siswa dalam Kurikulum Merdeka. Dalam A. S. Nugraha, T. Sugihartono, & Y. E. Nopiyo (2022).
- Mappaompo, M. A., Aprilo, I., Arfanda, P. E., & Arga, A. (2024). Shooting Accuracy of Sports Coaching Education Students: Goaling Game Practice. *ETDC: Indonesian Journal of Research and Educational Review*, 3(3), 204–210.
- Muliadi, et al. (2022). Pemanfaatan Sarana Prasarana Sederhana dalam PJOK. *Jurnal of Sport Education*.
- Nugraha, A. S., et al. (2022). Pengintegrasian Sumber Daya Lokal dan Kearifan Daerah dalam Pembelajaran PJOK Berbasis Merdeka Belajar. *Gymnastics Journal*.
- Nugraha, A. S., et al. (2022). Persepsi Guru PJOK terhadap Kebebasan Merancang Pembelajaran dalam Kurikulum Merdeka. *Gymnastics Journal*.
- Nugraha, A. S., Sugihartono, T., & Nopiyo, Y. E. (2022). Persepsi Guru Pendidikan Jasmani Olahraga dan Kesehatan terhadap Merdeka Belajar. *Gymnastics Journal*, 4(1), 78–83.
- Priyambada, R. R. (2024). Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka pada Pembelajaran PJOK di SD Negeri se-Kecamatan Mungkid. Skripsi, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta.
- Priyambada, R. R. (2024). Strategi Menghadapi Tantangan Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar pada PJOK. Skripsi, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta.
- Ramzy, R. P. (2024). Strategi Menghadapi Tantangan Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka di SMA Negeri 6 Yogyakarta. Skripsi, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta.
- Rerung, C. T., Aulria, S. N. M., Hudain, M. A., & Mappaompo, M. A. (2025). Pelatihan Teknik Dasar Taekwondo untuk Meningkatkan Motorik dan Percaya Diri Siswa SDN Inpres 127 Moncongloe. *Jurnal Perjuangan Dan Pengabdian Masyarakat: JPPM*, 1(1), 35–42.
- Roikhanah, I., Utami, N. S., & Broto, D. P. (2024). Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka dalam Pembelajaran PJOK di SD Negeri Bligo 1 Kecamatan Ngluwar: Perspektif Sumber Daya dan Komunikasi. *Majalah Ilmiah Olahraga (MAJORA)*, 30(2), 103–111.
- Safitri, F., & Astuti, D. (2024). Tantangan Guru PJOK dalam Pembelajaran Abad Ke-21. *Jurnal Kolibi*, 4(2), 112–120.
- Saleh, M. S. (2024). Keterampilan Kids Athletics Siswa UPTD SD Negeri 164 Barru Kecamatan Pujananting Kabupaten Barru. *Journal Physical Health Recreation (JPHR)*, 4(2), 532–538.
- Setiawan, I., Mulyadi, A., Nurharsono, D. (2016). Sarana Prasarana Pendidikan dalam Pembelajaran PJOK. *Jurnal of Sport Education*.
- Subandi, O. U., Fachrezzy, F., Halim, A., Bhakti, M. W., & Alparis, L. (2024). Penguatan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Guru PJOK Desa Bobojong Kabupaten Cianjur. *Jurnal Perduli*, 5(1), 19–24.
- Susanto, P. (2024). Kendala Guru PJOK terhadap Pelaksanaan Kurikulum Merdeka. *PEAR Journal*, 5(2), 333–340.
- Tinri, M. D. N., Anas, F., Arga, A., Rahmatullah, W., & Aulria, S. N. M. (2024). Penyuluhan Pengelolaan Konflik Sosial Masyarakat Rentan: Membangun Keluarga yang Sehat

dan Produktif di Kecamatan Tallo Kota Makassar. Bima Abdi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat, 4(4), 291–298.

Wahono, B. (2022). Tujuan Kurikulum Merdeka dalam Pengembangan Karakter Anak. Dalam A. S. Nugraha, T. Sugihartono, & Y. E. Nopiyanto (2022).

Yuliana, R. (2024). Analisis Hambatan dan Tantangan Guru dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar pada Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Jasmani di SMAN 1 Sikur.

Zen, E. (2024). Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka pada Mata Pelajaran PJOK di SDN Tanggungkramat Ploso. Jurnal of Sport, 6(2), 130–147.