

## Improving The Competency of Elementary's Teachers at Cileungsi in Preparing Merdeka Belajar Lesson Plan (RPP) Based on Characters and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received: 5th Feb 2021

Accepted: 20th May 2021

Published: 1st July 2021

#### Keywords:

*The Competence of Elementary School Teachers, Learning Implementation Plan (RPP), Merdeka Belajar Based on Characters and 21st Century Skills.*

### ABSTRACT

*This Community Service Activity (P2M) departs from the problems of teachers' ignorance of the concept of the Merdeka Belajar's Curriculum and its implementation. This P2M activity aims to improve the competence of elementary school teachers in Cinyosog Village, Cileungsi in compiling a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) for Merdeka Belajar based on characters and 21st-century skills. This competency enhancement was carried out through socialization activities regarding RPP Merdeka Belajar based on characters and 21st-century skills, then Training on Preparation for the RPP Merdeka Belajar based on the Characters and Skill of 21st Century for Teachers of SDN 01 Cinyosog by offline and online. This P2M activity was attended by 14 teachers at SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi. This training provided the concept of Merdeka Belajar based on characters and 21st-century skills, then compiled RPP. This RPP is linked to the 2013 SD Curriculum that was applicable during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely the RPP Merdeka Belajar with simplification of KI-KD in the curriculum structure, as well as simplifying the components in the RPP. The lesson plan includes three components, namely learning objectives, learning steps, and evaluation of the learning presented based on the characters and skills of the 21st century. The impact of this activity is the increase in teacher competence, especially in preparing lesson plan (RPP) Merdeka Belajar based on characters and skills of the 21st century. The product of this training activity is a collection of lesson plans compiled by the teachers of SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi and videos of the training activities for the RPP Merdeka Belajar based on the Characters and Skills of the 21st Century which was uploaded on the Youtube channel of the PBSI FBS UNJ Study Program.*

**How to cite:** Lia Marlina, N., Suntari, Y., Utami, S. R., & Oktaviani, R. (2021). Improving The Competency of Elementary's Teachers at Cileungsi in Preparing Merdeka Belajar Lesson Plan (RPP) Based on Characters and 21st Century Skills. *Jurnal Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Madani (JPMM)*, 5(1), 87-106. <https://doi.org/10.21009/10.21009/JPMM.005.1.07>

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, the Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture (Mendikbud) 2019 issued a new policy on school and college curricula. Mendikbud Nadiem Anwar Makarim issued a new policy in the curriculum, namely "Merdeka Belajar" in schools and "Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka" (MBKM). This policy is a new policy program for the Advanced Indonesia Cabinet. The essence of freedom of thinking is preceded by the teacher before teaching the students. Teacher competency at any level without a translation process of the existing basic competencies and curriculum, learning will not occur. One of the things that attracted the most attention of teachers from the concept of Merdeka Belajar was the statement of the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Anwar Makarim regarding the lesson plan (RPP) one sheet. This simplification of the RPP is by Permendikbud Number 14 of 2019, December 13, 2019. This policy is designed to ease the administrative burden on teachers (Solichin, 2018 and Maryam, 2020).

Based on the results of conversations with supervisors, school principals, and teachers on various occasions, many requests for training to make the one sheet RPP. There is a training institution that specifically wants to provide training on the preparation of 1 sheet of lesson plans for teachers without feeling the need to explore what the problem is, and what the policy will aim at. Many school principals never read, let alone supervise their teachers about making lesson plans that can achieve learning objectives. Many supervisors never find out which parts of the lesson plan are the most difficult for the teacher. In other words, so far the preparation and documentation of RPP have only been limited to fulfilling the administration. The interest of the teachers, school principals, and supervisors in the 1-sheet lesson plan policy show a very large bias regarding the essence of the lesson plan simplification. There are at least two very substantive problems that cannot be captured in the making and use of the RPP one sheet; first, the lesson plan should be a well-designed document to achieve learning objectives. Thus what is written in the lesson plan will be implemented in the learning process. With clear and measurable goals, the teacher will be able to see whether the goals that have been formulated can be achieved by all students, most students, only a small proportion of students, or not at all. Second, the lesson plan should be used as reflective material. A good teacher, who has set measurable learning goals and has thought about several teaching and learning activities to achieve them, will know the effectiveness of the lesson scenario designs they make: very effective, partly effective, or not effective at all (Harussusilo, 2020).

In this way, the teacher can reflect on the design and teaching methods. Teachers like this can certainly be increasingly developed in the way they teach. So, where is the Merdeka? If it is only 1 sheet and contains components of objectives, scenarios, and assessments, that is just a simplification, it does not imply independence. So how can this 1 sheet RPP make it free? Who is free? After reading the basic competencies of the teacher independently, setting the learning objectives according to the context of

the students, different teachers can formulate different goals even the same teacher can formulate different goals for different classes. Is compiling the RPP Merdeka Belajar sufficient if it has not integrated with characters education and 21st-century skills as part of the demands of the current Industrial Revolution 4.0?

Nadiem made a policy of Merdeka Belajar departing from the research Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2019 which showed that the results of the assessment on Indonesian students only occupied the sixth position from the bottom; for mathematics and literacy, Indonesia ranks 74th out of 79 countries (Pratiwi, 2019). In response to this, Nadiem also made breakthrough assessments in minimum abilities, including literacy, numeracy, and character surveys. Literacy not only measures reading ability but also the ability to analyze reading content and understand the concepts behind it. For numeracy skills, what is assessed is not mathematics, but rather an assessment of students' ability to apply numerical concepts in real life. One remaining aspect, namely the Characters Survey, is not a test, but a search for the extent to which students apply Pancasila principles (Adit, 2019).

Characters' education has begun to be encouraged to be instilled and cultivated by students in schools through strengthening character education and character growth. This was initiated by the Minister of Education and Culture (Anies Baswedan) through Permendikbud Number 21 of 2015 concerning Cultivation of Characters (Septiani, 2016) and since then, schools have started to mobilize school literacy and the development of characters in students. Likewise, the RPP Merdeka Belajar policy will not mean anything to students without integrating with characters. Moreover, during the current Industrial Revolution 4.0, 21st-century skills which include critical and innovative, creative, communicative, and collaborative thinking skills are also needed to be integrated into the lesson plans of teachers in this Merdeka Belajar.

Starting from the above problems, community service activities (P2M) were carried out to improve teacher competence in compiling lesson plans based on characters and 21st-century skills. The target of P2M activities is teachers of SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi, Bogor. Based on the results of the analysis of the needs of the teachers in this school, data was obtained that the teachers in this school were not touched by the latest educational socialization. This is based on the results of interviews with school principals and teachers at the school that they have never received any training from any institution, apart from in 2016 the School Literacy Movement Program was carried out and in 2020 regarding this RPP Merdeka Belajar by the same P2M team from Education Study Program Indonesian Language and Literature (PSPBSI), Faculty of Language and Arts (FBS), Jakarta State University (UNJ). Thus, the training for the preparation of RPP Merdeka Belajar based on characters and skills of the 21st century was also carried out for teachers at SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi.

## **2. RPP MERDEKA BELAJAR BASED ON THE CHARACTERS AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS**

The state of the art in this P2M activity is described as follows. In 2016, SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi was involved in the School Literacy Movement Program (GLS) by the same P2M Team from PSPBSI FBS UNJ. The P2M activity was carried out for two months (September-October) with a series of literacy activities, such as GLS socialization, literary reading and writing workshops for teachers, book reviews for teachers and students, teaching competitions for teachers in six elementary schools in the Cileungsi, a review and storytelling competition for students, donations of books to reading corners in each class at SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi, and literacy awards for the Principal of SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi (Marliana, 2016). In this period (from 2016) to 2020, this school has not been touched by the latest information regarding curriculum and learning, especially regarding Merdeka Belajar. Meanwhile, P2M activities were carried out for parents of students in the Cinyosog Cileungsi area. They received Training on Competency Improvement of Cultural Literacy and Digital Media Literacy by the same P2M Team from PSPBSI FBS UNJ in August-September 2018 (Marliana, 2018).

Not many schools know about this Merdeka Belajar policy, especially schools in the regions, such as SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi. At the beginning of the P2M PSPBSI FBS UNJ Team's attendance in 2016, this school did not even have a reading room, let alone a school library. Moreover, the human resources are not touched by training on the latest curriculum and learning. Therefore, the P2M PSPBSI FBS UNJ Team then again made this school the target of P2M activities regarding the preparation of RPP Merdeka Belajar which are integrated with the characters and skills of the 21st century.

The preparation of the RPP Merdeka Belajar is based on the Principles of the Ministry of Education and Culture's Policy, as follows:

1. National Examination (UN) will be replaced by Minimum Competency Assessment and Character Survey. This assessment emphasizes literacy and numerical reasoning skills based on best practice PISA tests. Unlike the National Examination which is held at the end of the education level, this assessment will be carried out in grades 4, 8, and 11. The results are expected to be input for schools to improve the next learning process before students finish their education.
2. The National Standard School Examination (USBN) will be submitted to the school. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, schools are given the flexibility to determine the form of assessment, such as portfolios, papers, or other forms of assignments.
3. Simplification of the RPP (lesson plan). According to Nadiem Makarim, the RPP only needs to be made on one page. Through administrative simplification, it is hoped that the teacher's time in making administration can be diverted for learning activities and increasing competence.

4. In the admission of new students (PPDB), the zoning system is expanded (excluding the 3T area). For students who go through the affirmation and achievement channels, more opportunities are given from the PPDB system. Local governments are given technical authority to determine these zoning areas. (*kemdikbud.go.id* and Hendri, 2020).

Based on Permendikbud Number 22 of 2016 concerning Basic and Secondary Education Process Standards, the Implementation of RPP is a face-to-face learning activity plan for one or more meetings. RPP is developed from the syllabus to direct the learning activities of students to achieve Basic Competence (KD) (Sudana, 2018). The RPP is now simplified into three core components that can be made on just one page of the paper. The Ministry of Education and Culture will also provide several examples of short lesson plans which are sufficient to do on one page but are still of high quality. The simplification of lesson plans makes teachers free to make, choose, develop, and use lesson plans according to the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, and student orientation.

RPP Curriculum 2013, which has been designed by teachers, contains character education and 21st-century skills. Character education in learning is very important because it aims to shape the character, reason, and other psychological aspects of students (Ratna: 2014, 73). This is by the definition of character education put forward by Hoge, “... *character education as any overt or conscious attempt to affect the development of desirable individual traits or qualities*” (Almeriko: 2014, 2). Based on this opinion, it is said that character education is a real and conscious effort that gives an effect on the development of the desired individual traits and qualities. Learning that instills character values aims so that later students have a positive character. In-Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Article 3 juridically implies that education is expected to have a strong positive character. The next generation of the nation is expected to have an honest character, have a conscience, be moral, wise, and wise (Irawati, 2017).

The National Education Research and Development Center for Curriculum is concerned with developing curricula on character education, formulating eighteen pillars of character values that must be developed in Indonesia, character education values derived from religion, Pancasila, culture, and national education goals. In Yaumi (2014, 82-83), Sarbaitinil explains that the following national character and cultural values are constructed from various sources, including religion, Pancasila, culture, and the goals of national education. The pillars are as follows:

1. Religious: obedient attitudes and behaviors in implementing the teachings of the religion adopted, tolerant towards the practice of other religions, and live in harmony with followers of other religions.
2. Honest: behavior based on efforts to make himself a person who can always be trusted in words, actions, and work.

3. Tolerant: attitudes and actions that respect differences in religion, ethnicity, opinion, attitudes, and actions of others who are different from themselves.
4. Discipline: actions that show orderly behavior and comply with various rules and regulations.
5. Hard work: behavior that shows a genuine effort to overcome various obstacles to learning and assignments, and to complete tasks as well as possible.
6. Creative: thinking and doing something to produce a new way or result from something that was already owned.
7. Independent: attitudes and behaviors that are not easily dependent on others to complete tasks.
8. Democratic: a way of thinking, behaving, and acting that values the rights and obligations of oneself and others.
9. Curiosity: attitudes and actions that always seek to know more deeply and broadly from something that is learned, seen, and heard.
10. National spirit: a way of thinking, acting, and having an insight that places the interests of the nation and the state above the interests of themselves and their groups.
11. Love for the homeland: a way of thinking, behaving, and acting that shows loyalty, concern, and high respect for language, the physical, the social, cultural, economic, and political environment of the nation.
12. Respect achievement: attitudes and actions that encourage him to produce something useful for society, and recognize and respect the success of others.
13. Friendly/communicative: actions that show a sense of pleasure to talk, socialize and cooperate with others.
14. Peace-loving: attitudes, words, and actions that cause others to feel happy and secure in their presence.
15. Likes to read: The habit of taking time to read various readings that are good for him.
16. Care for the environment: attitudes and actions that always try to prevent damage to the surrounding natural environment, and develop efforts to repair natural damage that occurs.
17. Social care: Attitudes and actions that always want to assist other people and communities in need.
18. Responsibility: the attitude and behavior of a person to carry out his duties and obligations, which he should do, towards himself, society, the environment (natural, social, and cultural), the country, and God Almighty.

All of the above characters' items are integrated with 21st-century skills in learning not only in lesson plans but also in their implementation. Education in the 21st century is education that integrates knowledge skills, skills, and attitudes, as well as mastery of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). These skills can be developed through various models of activity-based learning activities by the characteristics of competencies and learning materials. Apart from that, the skills needed in the

world of education in the 21st Century are Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) which are indispensable in preparing students to face global challenges, or in other words, education can create an educated society who in the future can compete with other countries. The 21st-century skills that are integrated into knowledge skills, skills, attitudes, and mastery of ICT can be developed through (1) Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills; (2) Communication Skills; (2) 3) Creativity and Innovation Skills; and (4) Collaboration Skills (Kim, 2019 and Dede (2010)). These four skills have been packaged so far in RPP and the 2013 Curriculum learning process.

### **3. IMPLEMENTATION METHOD**

The method of implementing this community service activity is carried out through the following stages: 1) preparing a location for community service activities, namely SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi and by zoom to accommodate participants who cannot attend face to face; 2) provide outreach to local education offices and principals whose schools are involved; 3) prepare schedules, equipment, and materials to support program activities for the community; 4) carry out community service activities for two days through the following stages:

- a. conveyed outreach to 14 teachers of SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi regarding the concept and policy of Merdeka Belajar at the beginning of the training by the first resource person, N. Lia Marlina;
- b. carry out training to improve competence in preparing RPP Merdeka Belajar based on characters and 21st Century skills in Cinyosog, Cileungsi for two days, 2x8 hours on 30-31 August 2020 at 08.00-16.00 WIB offline in the Cinyosog SDN classroom 01 and online via zoom. The second resource person gave material regarding the preparation of RPP, namely Yustia Suntari;
- c. receive RPP submissions from participants by email and WhatsApp;
- d. provide electronic certificates of participation to teachers of SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi;
- e. compile reports on community service activities;
- f. presenting the results of community service activities at the Language and Arts Faculty (FBS);
- g. revising reports on the results of community service activities based on suggestions and input from reviewers and Deputy Dean I of FBS;
- h. Submit the results of the revised report on community service activities to the FBS, UNJ.

#### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Training of Preparation of RPP Merdeka Belajar Based on Characters and 21st Century Skills can only be held on 30-31 August 2020, Sunday-Monday, 08.00-16.00 through two media, by online and offline. At first, it was planned to meet face to face at school, but due to the pandemic, it changed to virtual face-to-face via zoom meetings. The day before the training date, the resource person received information from the principal and one of the teachers that the teachers had never used zoom. So far, in distance learning (PJJ), the teachers and students at SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi only use WhatsApp. Finally, it was decided that the resource persons and the committee should come to the school while still observing health protocols. In addition to meeting face to face, this activity is also accommodated by PSPBSI FBS UNJ with virtual face-to-face zoom to accommodate participants who are unable to attend face to face at school so that they take advantage of this zoom from other places and accommodate PBSI Koorprodi giving speeches and opening activities officially from his residence through zoom. Implementation of face-to-face training activities at SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi by utilizing two classrooms to maintain distance between one participant and another. Of the 14 teachers in this school, only 12 teachers can participate as training participants. Meanwhile, two other teachers were taking maternity leave and were present via zoom.

On the first day, Sunday, August 30, 2020, two resource persons and four student committees for the P2M Training of Preparation of the RPP Merdeka Belajar based on Characters and 21st Century Skills at the training location at 08.00. Participants and resource persons first take pictures on the school grounds before the training begins. The school principal and 11 teachers were present and ready to receive training materials in two classrooms that had their dividers opened. The committee arranges the participants' seats to be about 2 meters apart. In addition, all participants are required to wear a mask. However, there was one participant who left his mask behind so that he was lent a face shield by another participant.

Precisely at 09.00, the activity was officially opened by the Koorprodi PBSI FBS UNJ (Dr. Siti Ansoriyah, M.Pd.) and the welcome of the host, the Head of SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi Onong Rohmah, S.Pd. The first resource person, N. Lia Marliana, S.Pd., M.Phil. (Ling.). presented material on the Merdeka Belajar's Curriculum, Character Education, and 21st Century Skills. Because the school did not have an LCD and a screen, the material was sent by the resource person to the participants' WhatsApp. The participants download the material and read it on their respective cellphones and some are using laptops. Likewise, the resource person uses his cellphone to read the material and discuss it with the participants. The resource person invited the participants to take turns reading slides for slides in the material and then discussed them per slide. Participants enthusiastically read slides of material on Merdeka Belajar, character education, and 21st-century skills. The first resource person material session ended at 10.30 WIB. After the question and answer session was finished, the moderator

invited the second resource person, Yustia Suntari, M.Pd. She is a guest speaker from the Elementary School Teacher Education Study Program (PGSD) FIP UNJ. The material presented by the second resource was regarding the simplification of the lesson plans, the preparation of the RPP Merdeka Belajar based on the Characters and 21st Century Skills, and the practice of compiling lesson plans. This activity was continued with a question and answer session and ended at 12.00 WIB.

On the second day, 31 August 2020, the training participants continued to prepare the RPP Merdeka Belajar. Some participants started sending their lesson plans from morning to evening. Then, the second resource person provides input and revised notes on the participant's lesson plan, such as the following example:

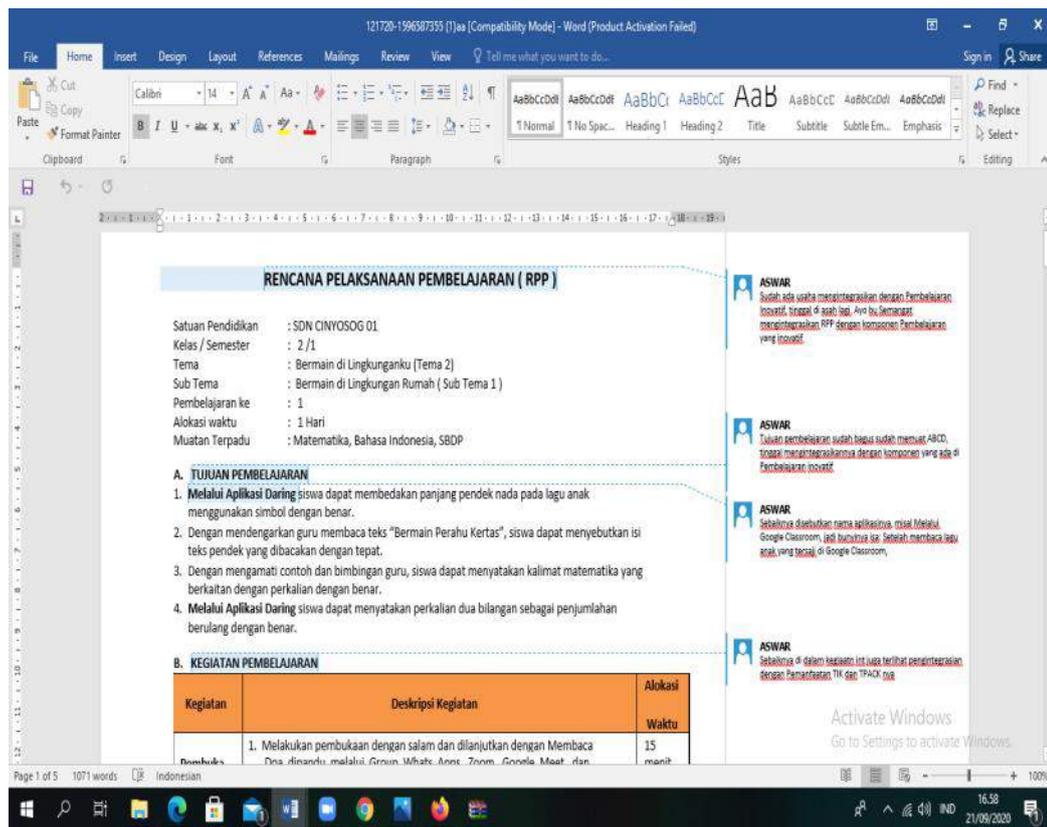


Figure 1.1. Example of Participant’s RPP (Mrs. Dwi)

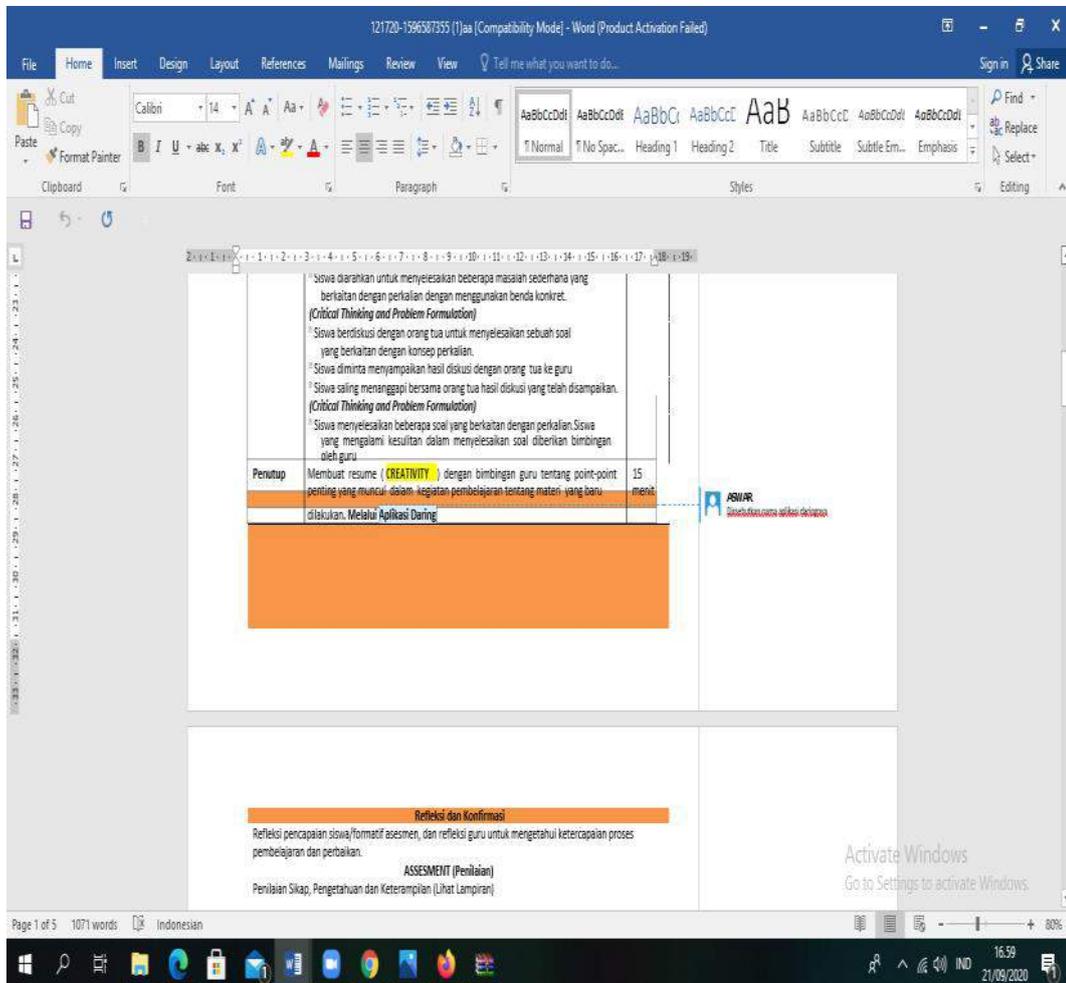


Figure 1.2. Example of Participant's RPP (Mrs. Dwi)

Of the 12 registered participants, only 7 participants sent the RPP Merdeka Belajar on time on the second day. Meanwhile, the other 5 participants were two days late in sending them to the second source. The notes on the lesson plans of all participants are generally due to their inability to formulate learning objectives correctly. For example, not using operational verbs, not containing ABCD (audience, behavior, condition, degree), and learning steps not yet containing TPACK, characters, and 21st-century skills.

On the second day, a participant's feedback questionnaire was sent regarding the Training of Preparation of RPP Merdeka Belajar Based on Characters and 21st Century Skills. Following are the results of the feedback questionnaire distributed to 12 trainees and 11 participants who filled it out. The following is the list of questionnaires that the participants have filled in.

Based on the pie chart in Figure 2., it can be seen that 90.9% (10 participants) answered that they had never known before about the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum and 9.1% (1 participant) said they already knew. The meaning is, almost all teachers just know about this Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. The Merdeka Belajar curriculum is considered as something new knowledge.



Figure 2. Circle Diagram of Participants' Knowledge about KMB

Based on the pie chart in Figure 3., it can be seen that 54.5% answered agree with the existence of the RPP Merdeka Belajar and 45.5% stated that they did not agree with the implementation of the RPP Merdeka Belajar. This is because the teachers are not familiar with the lesson plans. This becomes something new knowledge for them.



Figure 3. Participants' Opinion Circle Diagram on RPP MB



Figure 4. Pie Chart of Participants' Understanding of the Content of the Training Material

The pie chart above shows that 81.8% of the teachers answered that it was very easy to understand the content of the RPP Merdeka Belajar based on Characters and 21st Century Skills and 18.2% answered that it was normal to understand it. The training material is presented through attractive PowerPoint media and is equipped with illustrations so that participants can easily understand it.

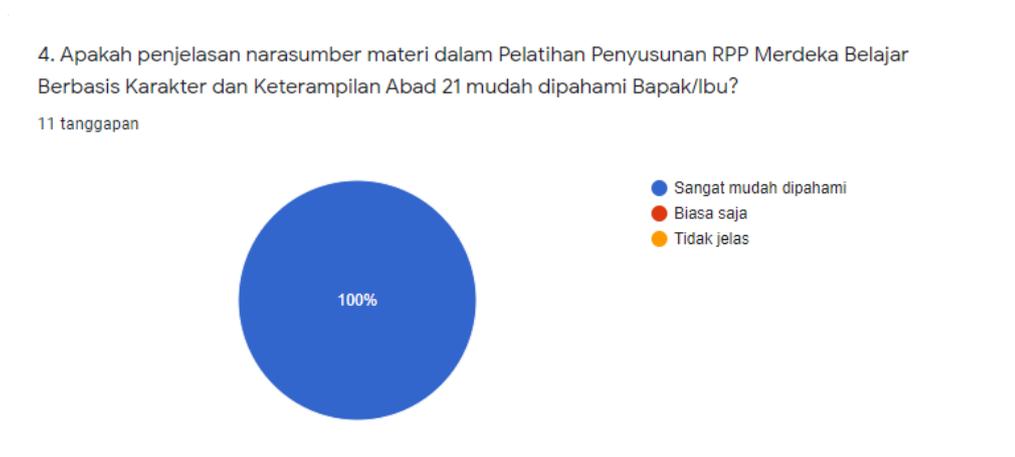


Figure 5. Pie Chart of Participants' Understanding of the Explanation of the Resources

The pie chart above shows that 100% of the teachers answered that it was very easy to understand the explanation of the two resource persons for the Training of Preparation of Free Learning Based on Characters and 21st Century Skills. The provision of training material is delivered using an andragogical approach by the resource person with a contextual approach as the closest example so that participants can easily understand it.



Figure 6. Pie Chart of Participants' Opinions about the Training

The pie chart above shows that 100% of the teacher participants answered that it was very useful to take part in the Training of Preparation of The RPP Merdeka Belajar Based on Characters and 21st Century Skills. This was because they had never previously received information about Merdeka Belajar.



Figure 7. Pie Chart of Participants' Opinions on Training Time

Based on the pie chart above, it appears that 90.9% of the participants answered that the two days of Preparation Training the RPP Merdeka Belajar based on Characters and 21st Century Skills period was sufficient to produce RPP Merdeka Belajar products. Meanwhile, 9.1% answered that it was quite adequate. The preparation of the RPP Merdeka Belajar is billed on the second day of training and during the PJJ time for these teachers, they try to spend their time compiling the RPP Merdeka Belajar.



Figure 8. Pie Chart of Participants' Input to the Training

The pie chart above shows that 100% of the teacher participants answered that there was no input or suggestion for the committee and resource persons regarding the Training of Preparation of the RPP Merdeka Belajar Based on Characters and 21st Century Skills. This can be an indicator that the training is being carried out very well and is successful.

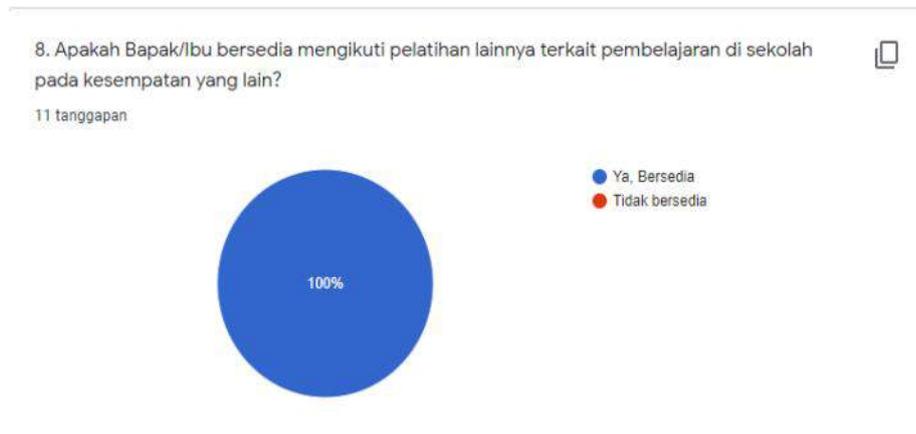


Figure 9. Participants' Willingness Circle Diagram

Based on the pie chart above, it can be described that shows that 100% of the teacher participants answered that they were willing to take other training related to learning at school on other occasions. This indicates the high interest of teachers in developing self-quality and improving the quality of learning in schools.

9. Apakah ada usulan pelatihan lainnya yang ingin Bapak/Ibu ikuti yang diselenggarakan UNJ? 

11 tanggapan

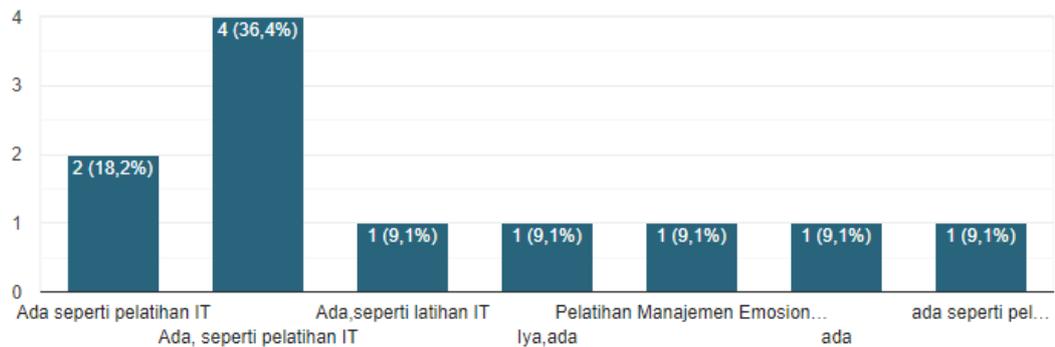


Figure 10. Bar Chart of Proposed Training

Based on the bar chart above, it can be seen that as many as 36.4% of the participants answered the other training proposals that were being held by UNJ were information technology (IT) training. The next figure emotional management training. Teachers are very aware of the need for ICT skills to be improved during this pandemic and distance learning. In addition, they also need to be trained in patience and other skills in managing their emotional self in dealing with the a priori attitudes of parents who tend to blame the teacher. This is based on what the teachers said during the question and answer session on the first day of training.

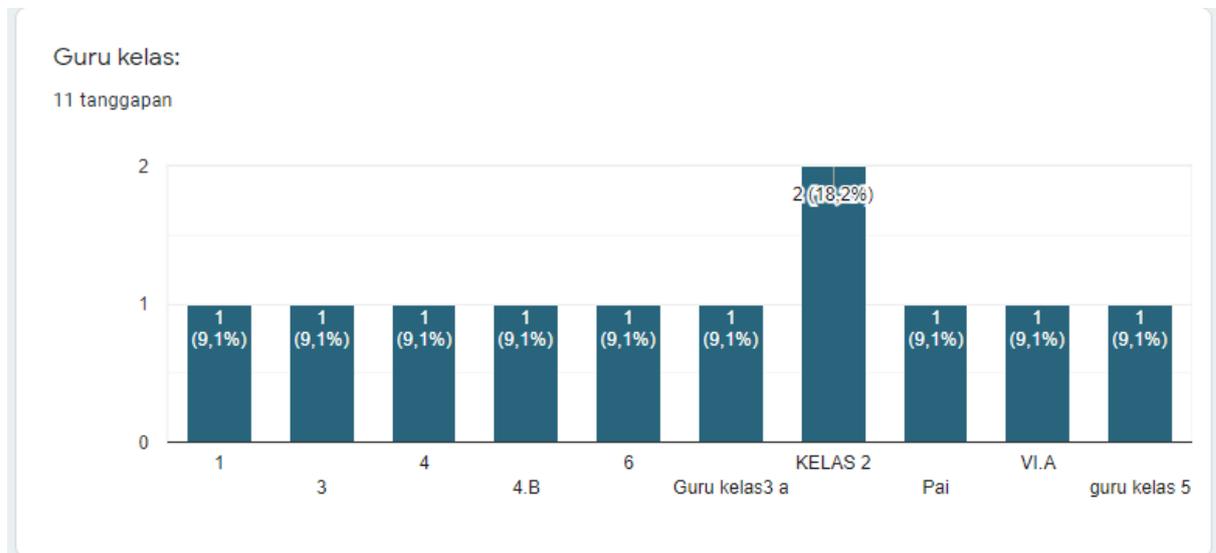


Figure 11. Bar Chart of Participant Teaching Position

Based on the bar chart above, it appears that the training participants are teachers in grades 1-6 and the other two trainee teachers are grade 2 at SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi.

Thus, based on the results of a questionnaire distributed to the participants in Preparation Training of the RPP Merdeka Belajar based on Characters and the 21st Century Skills, it can be concluded that the participant's interest in the training that had been carried out was very large. The participants got a lot of benefits regarding the concept and preparation of RPP Merdeka Belajar based on Characters and 21st Century Skills.

## 5. CONCLUTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the explanation and exposure of the implementation Preparation Training of the RPP Merdeka Belajar based on Characters and 21st Century skills, it can be concluded that this training is the first activity they have participated in and this training provides enormous benefits for increasing competence in compiling the RPP Merdeka Belajar based on Characters and 21st Century skills in their school. Moreover, the RPP was prepared according to the current situation and conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, which requires students to study at home and teachers to teach at home. The material and its explanations by two sources were considered to be very easy to understand and it was proven by the results of the RPP Merdeka Belajar based on characters and 21st Century Skills that were successfully compiled by the teachers. However, their initial knowledge of the curriculum and the preparation of learning tools is still something new for those who have been accustomed to receiving ready-made learning tools from schools.

The Preparation Training Activity of The RPP Merdeka Belajar based on Characters and 21st Century Skills is the next stage of the journey of community service activities that have been carried out at SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi. Therefore, based on the results of the participant questionnaire, it is suggested that the next P2M activities at SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi will focus on curriculum development and its implementation in the classroom for teachers at SDN Cinyosog 01 Cileungsi and its surroundings.

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