

Behavior Culture Teacher Learning and Challenge Implementation Deep Learning Approaches in Schools Base Interior Subdistrict Boyan Tanjung, Kapuas Hulu Regency

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study is motivated by the persistence of a conventional and administratively-driven teacher learning culture in remote elementary schools of Kapuas Hulu, which remains misaligned with the Deep Learning orientation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The research problem concerns the limited transformation of teachers' mindsets and instructional practices toward Deep Learning, compounded by competence disparities, infrastructure limitations, and administrative workload. Therefore, this study aims to analyze teachers' learning culture behaviors and identify key challenges in implementing the Deep Learning approach in two remote elementary schools, as a basis for designing contextual transformation strategies. The study was conducted in two schools involving 13 teachers selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered through classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, and were analyzed thematically. Findings reveal a predominant administrative-oriented conventional teaching paradigm, with four major challenges: (1) significant teacher competence disparity, (2) inadequate technology infrastructure, (3) limited use of contextual learning environments, and (4) excessive administrative burdens. The study concludes that mindset transformation through professional learning communities, applied training, and creative technology integration is essential for achieving equitable education quality in remote areas.

Keywords: teacher learning culture, deep learning, remote schools, merdeka curriculum, educational challenges

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Indonesia as the National Curriculum marks a paradigmatic breakthrough in the national education system. A fundamental shift occurs from a content *-based learning approach to student -centered competence -based learning*.¹ The core of this change lies in the application of the *Deep Learning* approach, a concept developed within the *New Pedagogies for Deep Learning* (NPDL) framework.² This approach is oriented towards learning that not only pursues material mastery but also develops 21st-century competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and character through three main cognitive processes: understanding, applying, and reflecting. The National Curriculum with a *Deep Learning approach* directs the educational process towards achieving the eight dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile— faithful and pious, civic, creative, independent, communicative, critical reasoning, healthy, and collaborative. The process of achieving this profile requires *joyful, mindful, and meaningful learning* so that the learning experience becomes relevant, contextual, and meaningful for students. The

operational framework of the curriculum is supported by four strategic pillars, namely: (1) in-depth and differentiated pedagogical practices, (2) an empowering learning environment, (3) the use of digital technology, and (4) strong learning partnerships with parents and the community. However, there is a significant gap between the normative expectations of the curriculum and the reality of its implementation on the ground, particularly in the 3T (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost) regions. Curriculum transformation demands a paradigm shift and a shift in teacher *mindset*, but this shift has not yet been fully realized. Although some teachers have participated in the Independent Curriculum training, changes in values, beliefs, and teaching habits within the teacher learning culture remain fundamental issues. *The teacher-centered paradigm*, textual learning, and high administrative burdens still dominate practices in remote schools. This phenomenon is evident at SDN 06 Nanga Sangan and SDN 04 Serai Wangi in Boyan Tanjung District, Kapuas Hulu. Both schools have a heterogeneous teacher composition (senior civil servants, P3K, and honorary), which creates significant variation in pedagogical capacity. Senior teachers tend to be resistant to new learning approaches and still maintain a rigid lesson plan format. In contrast, junior teachers are relatively open to innovation and technology but have limitations in developing systematic and meaningful learning flows. This condition aligns with previous research findings that teachers often experience difficulty operationalizing curriculum principles into concrete, contextual learning, these challenges are further exacerbated by limited facilities, access to technology, and minimal use of the environment as a contextual learning resource. High administrative burdens also divert teachers' focus from designing meaningful learning experiences to completing procedural tasks. Consequently, the ideal learning ecosystem for realizing *Deep Learning* is difficult to achieve.

Research Gap

Although various studies have examined the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and its pedagogical challenges in 3T (third-to-third) regions, empirical research specifically examining teachers' learning cultures in implementing *Deep Learning* in the context of remote elementary schools remains very limited. Few studies have analyzed how teachers' values, beliefs, habits, and work practices interact with the demands of the new curriculum, and how the dynamics of teacher capacity with varying experience backgrounds influence the quality of *Deep Learning* implementation.

This gap is crucial to fill because teachers' learning culture is a fundamental factor in the success of curriculum change. Policy change will be meaningless without a transformation in work culture, professional collaboration, and reflective teacher practice.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a multiple case study design or multiple case study research pattern ^{7,8} to investigate in depth the behavior of teacher learning culture and the implementation of Deep Learning in two remote elementary schools. The selection of SDN 06 Nanga Sangan (6 informants) and SDN 04 Serai Wangi (7 informants) was done purposively *based* on the following criteria: remote location, heterogeneous teacher composition (ASN, P3K, Honor), and limited facilities.

The selection of subjects also ensures the representation of each category of teachers based on status and experience. Data collection was carried out triangulation through: Passive participant observation of teaching practices in the classroom, Semi-structured interviews to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences, Documentation study of lesson plans and student work results. Data were analyzed interactively using thematic analysis model ¹⁰, which includes six stages: data familiarization, coding, theme search, theme review, theme definition, and report preparation. Data validity (*trustworthiness*) was maintained through triangulation , *member checking* , and *peer debriefing* .

RESULTS OF RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

1. Teacher Teaching and Learning Profile and Culture Table

Table 1. Profile Interview Results Culture Study Teaching Teacher

No.	Question	SDN 04 Serai Wangi Teacher's Teacher) 06 Nanga Sangan Teacher)	Answer from Teacher of SDN Answer (ASN Senior (Honorary Young)
1	"What do you think about new learning methods such as project-based learning in the Independent Curriculum?"	This lecture and drill method has been proven for decades. As long as children can read, write, and count and pass exams, that's already good. If the projects are complicated, lacking equipment, and taking too long, there's a risk of not completing the material."	"I was intrigued by the idea of project-based learning, but I was confused about how to get started, especially in lower grades. Also, there were no real- life examples from senior teachers here. Finally, yes follow the way that has been There is just "
2	" According to Sir / Madam, what the most ideal role of a teacher in class?"	" It's the teacher's job , yeah? teaching . Giving clear explanation, ensuring children discipline , and guide they For Can do questions with right . Teachers must become source knowledge main ."	I really want to be a teacher who can guide students to be active and creative, not just listen. However, I lack the confidence to manage a class that way. I have no experience, and I'm afraid of being seen as disobedient by more senior
3	What constraint the biggest one that you are feel If want to change style teach become more innovative ?"	"Change doesn't need to be forced. The existing methods are effective and practical. Too much innovation actually hinders curriculum goals. We must complete all existing material; that's a priority."	"There are many obstacles. From myself, not enough experience. From the environment, there is no clear technical guidance and there seems to be no support for trying new methods. Finally more safe follow habits that have been well established

Interview findings show that the learning culture in both schools is still dominated by a *teacher-centered paradigm*, with an emphasis on lectures, memorization, and *drills* focused on basic skills such as reading, writing, and arithmetic. Challenges of Deep Learning Implementation

The challenges of implementing Deep Learning in both schools are mapped into four main pillars: pedagogical challenges, learning environment, digital technology, and partnerships.

Table 2. Results Observation Challenge Implementation of Deep Learning in Schools Base

Aspect Observation	Results Observations at SDN 04 Serai Wangil	Results Observations at SDN 06 Nanga Sangan
a. Challenges Pedagogical	Teachers (especially P3K) experience difficulty substantive in designing question lighter , task performance and learning differentiation . RPP is prepared as formality administrative with mismatch between goals , activities , and assessment .	Honorary teacher young tend copy the RPP formal from existing examples without understanding deep . They acknowledge that the RPP was made For interest inspection supervisor , not as guide meaningful learning .
b. Challenges Environment Learning	The physical classroom environment is traditional and controlled. Teachers are concerned about management difficulties and security risks, so the use of the natural environment as a learning resource is minimal . learning seldom reach stage implementation And reflection .	Teachers experience similar difficulties in designing activities that challenge students to apply their knowledge. Concerns about managing students outside the classroom are a primary reason for continuing to use lectures and practice exercises in class.
c. Challenges in Utilizing Digital Technology	Infrastructure limitations (electricity, internet, devices) are a real barrier. Technology utilization is minimal and not integrated into collaborative learning or digital product creation.	Young teachers demonstrated sporadic initiative (e.g., using PowerPoint presentations and videos from their personal phones), but were hampered by data costs and a lack of school support. Student enthusiasm was evident, but this had not yet been incorporated into formal planning.

d. Challenges Partnership Learning	Partnerships with parents/communities are transactional and formalistic (only during report card distribution). Schools struggle to bridge the gap in perceptions about education among parents with farming/laboring backgrounds.	Partnerships are at a very weak level. Parents are perceived as busy with work and communication is often disconnected, leaving schools without effective strategies to meaningfully involve them in the learning process.
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A young honorary teacher added: *"We often copy the format... the important thing is that it's complete when checked"* (Teacher HNR-N06).

This finding shows that learning planning has not led to the construction of an in-depth understanding, so that teaching practice remains in the nature of information transmission.

a. Challenges of the Learning Environment

The classroom environment remains the primary learning space, even a pedagogical "prison," due to a lack of courage and instructional design that utilizes the surrounding context. Nine out of 13 teachers acknowledged difficulties designing application-based and reflection-based activities.

Analysis of the lesson plans showed that only 3 of the 13 documents attempted to link learning to real-world contexts, and none explicitly planned for a reflection stage.

One teacher stated: *"It is difficult to create implementation activities... there is often no time for the reflection stage"* (P3K-S04).

This condition causes learning to stop at the memorization level and has not touched the essence of Deep Learning.

b. Challenges in Utilizing Digital Technology

Technological challenges pose a major obstacle. Limited infrastructure—minimal internet access, unstable electricity, and limited devices—prevents technology from being integrated into learning.

Young teachers have shown initiative in using videos or PowerPoint presentations on their personal phones, but the essence of this isn't included in formal planning. *"I could make a PowerPoint presentation... but the power goes out. My quota runs out... so I rarely use it"* (Informant HNR-N06).

As many as 12 of the 13 lesson plans do not utilize local context or technology as a varied learning resource.

c. Challenges of Learning Partnerships

The school-parent partnership is transactional and only occurs during report card distribution. The principal acknowledged the lack of parental involvement: *"It's already difficult to get parents to come... the language often doesn't connect ."*

Schools lack a systematic collaboration strategy. Parents' perceptions of education

and economic conditions hinder their involvement in learning.

1. Administrative Burden

Table 3. Administrative Burden: Barriers to Pedagogical Reflection

No.	Question Interview	Answer (Senior Teacher)	ASN/P3K SDN 09 NANGKA BANGAN
1	What is your experience	"Preparing lesson plans is actually more complicated now. The format is lengthy and requires writing learning objectives in specific words. This wastes time that could be spent preparing simple teaching materials. Ultimately, the important thing is that the documents are available and complete when reviewed."	"We received a lot of templates from the training, but they all seemed difficult and time-consuming. I often copied or copied from other teachers or the internet to get things done quickly. I rarely read the documents again while teaching, because the important ones had already been submitted."
2	"In your opinion, does administrative burden affect the time and energy available for reflection innovation	"Of course. A lot of time is spent filling out journals, completing lesson plans, and other reports. All that energy is used up. There's no time left to think about innovation or evaluate old teaching methods. What's important is... class walk fluent And task administrative finished"	" Very influence . Creative ideas from training want to I try , but after finished look after administration , fatigue And remaining time very little Finally , innovation only become discourse . We are trapped in the completion cycle document , not think about quality learning ."
3	" What hope Mother / Fatherto system administration learning to in front of it ?"	"I hope the administration is truly simplified. Let teachers focus on teaching in the classroom. Isn't the important thing that students understand the lesson? Planning should be a concise and practical guide, not a document merely to fulfill supervisory formalities."	"I hope administration isn't just a formality. I hope there will be training that focuses on how to create truly practical and easy- to-implement plans, not just complicated theories. The system needs to understand the real-world conditions of teachers, especially our time constraints."

The administrative burden of preparing lesson plans, class journals, and various reports is a major obstacle for teachers in reflecting and innovating. Both senior and junior teachers view planning documents as a formal obligation. Teachers stated that time was spent on administrative tasks, leaving no room for analyzing practices or

trying new approaches. *"My energy is used up on that. I don't have time to think about innovation anymore."* (ASN-S04 Teacher). Young teachers felt the same way.

These findings indicate an imbalance between administrative demands and substantial pedagogical needs.

B. DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that the learning culture of teachers in remote schools is still in the early stages of development and has not yet achieved the characteristics of a reflective, collaborative, and sustainable professional learning culture as required by 21st century learning¹¹ (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018). Conventional *teacher-centered teaching practices* dominate, so the Deep Learning process—which demands critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and reflection—has not been able to grow optimally¹² (Hattie, 2021; Fullan & Quinn, 2016).

In line with the theory of implementation of educational innovation, this finding confirms that the success of learning reform is largely determined by the capacity and especially the mindset of teachers.² (Fullan, 2023). In remote areas, shifting the mindset from instructor to facilitator is the most fundamental challenge. Decades-old ingrained learning cultures cannot be changed through short training sessions but require ongoing coaching, mentoring, and support within a community of practitioners.

The disparity between senior and junior teachers, which initially appears to be an obstacle, can actually be interpreted as an opportunity for collaboration. Senior teachers can play a role in transferring local wisdom and classroom management skills, while junior teachers contribute digital literacy and openness to innovation. This kind of collaboration can create synergy that accelerates the transformation of learning culture more organically.

Technological limitations don't have to be a major barrier. *Low-tech* or *no-tech approaches* based on local potential are actually effective solutions. Utilizing the natural environment, local culture, and community professions can create authentic and meaningful learning contexts (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). This type of contextual learning aligns with the principles of *meaningful learning*.

Furthermore, excessive administrative burdens appear to hinder pedagogical reflection. Simplifying administration and strengthening academic supervision based on coaching, rather than document review, is needed to encourage quality-oriented learning practices.

Partnerships with parents require a cultural and gradual approach. Simple initiatives—such as *class meetings* and student art exhibitions—can be the first step in building parental ownership and involvement.

Finally, assessment challenges demonstrate that teachers remain trapped in conventional assessment practices. The dominance of written tests (11 out of 13 lesson plans) indicates a lack of understanding of authentic assessment. Teachers are unable to assess collaboration, creativity, or student character, even though the Independent Curriculum places *assessment for learning* and *assessment as learning* as crucial pillars.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description of the results and discussion, here are brief conclusions for each aspect:

Teacher Teaching and Learning Profile and Culture

The teaching and learning culture in both schools is still strongly dominated by the conventional teacher-centered paradigm, with senior teachers showing resistance to change, while junior teachers' enthusiasm is hampered by a lack of support, modeling, and confidence to innovate.

Challenge Deep Learning Implementation

Deep Learning implementation is hampered by challenges systemic on fourth pillar, namely weakness planning and practice pedagogical, utilization environment and minimal technology, as well as partnership that is not meaningful, mutually strengthening, and maintaining the status quo of learning conventional.

Administrative Burden

Excessive, formalistic administrative burdens have diverted teachers' focus from the substantive essence of learning, draining time and energy that could otherwise be used for pedagogical reflection and innovation in the classroom.

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