

Instructional Implementation of Economics Learning in Senior High School: A Descriptive Study under the Merdeka Curriculum

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Abstrak

Implementasi pembelajaran Ekonomi di kelas X SMA Negeri 15 Palembang mengevaluasi efektivitas metode yang digunakan dalam meningkatkan hasil belajar siswa. Kegiatan ini dilaksanakan dalam rangka Pengenalan Lapangan Persekolahan (PLP) yang memberikan pengalaman nyata bagi mahasiswa dalam melaksanakan pembelajaran di sekolah. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah deskriptif dengan pendekatan observasi, asistensi mengajar, dan praktik mandiri. Hasil pelaksanaan menunjukkan bahwa implementasi pembelajaran Ekonomi dengan metode ceramah, diskusi kelompok, dan penggunaan media pembelajaran berbasis teknologi mampu meningkatkan pemahaman siswa terhadap materi yang diajarkan. Kendala yang dihadapi meliputi keterbatasan waktu, kendala teknis, serta adanya beberapa siswa yang kurang aktif dalam proses pembelajaran. Secara keseluruhan, pembelajaran Ekonomi di kelas X SMA Negeri 15 Palembang berjalan efektif dan sesuai dengan kurikulum merdeka yang diterapkan. Diharapkan temuan ini dapat menjadi acuan bagi pengembangan pembelajaran yang lebih inovatif di masa depan.

Kata Kunci: Implementasi Pembelajaran, Ekonomi, SMA Negeri 15 Palembang, Kurikulum Merdeka.

Abstract

Implementation of Economics learning in class X of SMA Negeri 15 Palembang evaluates the effectiveness of the methods used in improving student learning outcomes. This activity was carried out in the context of the Introduction to School Fields (PLP) which provides real experience for students in carrying out learning at school. The method used in this study is descriptive with an observation approach, teaching assistance, and independent practice. The results of the implementation show that the implementation of Economics learning with lecture methods, group discussions, and the use of technology-based learning media can improve students' understanding of the material being taught. The obstacles faced include time constraints, technical constraints, and the presence of several students who are less active in the learning process. Overall, Economics learning in class X of SMA Negeri 15 Palembang runs effectively and in accordance with the independent curriculum that is applied. It is hoped that these findings can be a reference for the development of more innovative learning in the future.

Keywords: Implentation of Learning, Economics, State Senior High School 15 Palembang, Independent Curriculum

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most important foundations for developing high-quality and competitive human resources. The learning process in schools serves as a conduit for transferring knowledge, values, and life skills. To improve the quality of education, teachers must use appropriate and effective teaching approaches depending on student needs (Munna & Kalam, 2021; Safitri et al., 2022). Economics is vital for developing critical and rational thinking skills. The course not only teaches fundamental economic ideas, but it also enhances

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student awareness of decision-making in everyday life (Gosal et al., 2025). Economics helps students develop logical and analytical thinking by teaching them about markets, payment instruments, financial institutions, and payment systems. However, many students find Economics difficult and boring due to a lack of learning variety and insufficient utilization of engaging learning tools. Teachers frequently use lecture strategies that render pupils passive (Lestari & Nanda, 2024; Susanti et al., 2024). Similar situations were seen in Class X at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang. Many students expressed disinterest and limited engagement in learning activities. Thus, more participatory and contextual teaching tactics are required to assist students grasp Economics and apply it to real-life problems (Mahmuti et al., 2025; Cahyono & Perdhani, 2023).

Universitas PGRI Palembang's School Field Introduction Program (PLP) allows preservice teachers to directly participate in school learning activities. PLP strives to provide students with hands-on experience in classroom management and instructional practices (Nugraheni, 2021). Preservice teachers employed a variety of teaching strategies during their PLP activities at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang, including interactive presentations, group discussions, and technology-based learning media. This strategy sought to improve learning interest, student engagement, and learning outcomes (Werang & Leba, 2022; Parhadjanovna, 2023). Based on this backdrop, the author investigates the implementation of economics education in Class X.I at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang. The outcomes of this exercise are expected to help instructors and future teachers construct more effective and engaging Economics learning in accordance with the current Merdeka Curriculum (Latifa et al., 2023; Zarazaga-Peláez et al., 2024)

This study seeks to provide a thorough knowledge of the application of Economics learning in Class X.I am in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum (Ferdous & Novita, 2023). The study aims to describe in full how Economics education is planned, implemented, and assessed in the classroom, including teaching tactics, learning activities, and student engagement throughout the learning process (Fitriyadi & Wuryandani, 2021). Furthermore, this study seeks to uncover numerous supporting variables that contribute to the successful implementation of Economics learning, such as teacher competence, availability of learning materials, learning media, and school support systems (Agung & Surtikanti, 2020). Furthermore, the study aims to uncover impediments to the success of Economics education, such as facility restrictions, time allocation, student learning motivation, and teacher adaptation issues to the Merdeka Curriculum. The study's aims are expected to provide a comprehensive and systematic review of both strengths and obstacles in the implementation of Economics learning at the senior high school level (Isgiarno et al., 2020).

This study is likely to have both theoretical and practical implications in the field of education, notably in economics learning (Lukita et al., 2023). From a theoretical standpoint, the findings of this study contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge regarding the implementation of Economics learning within the Merdeka Curriculum, enriching existing literature and supporting previous studies (Redjeki & Muhajir, 2020). The findings can be used as a resource for future studies interested in curriculum implementation, learning innovation, and instructional approaches in Economics education (Sari & Suprihandri, 2024). This study is likely to have both theoretical and practical implications in the field of education, notably in economics learning. From a theoretical standpoint, the findings of this

study contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge regarding the implementation of Economics learning within the Merdeka Curriculum, enriching existing literature and supporting previous studies such as those conducted by (Musfidah et al., 2023). The findings can be used as a resource for future studies interested in curriculum implementation, learning innovation, and instructional approaches in Economics education.

Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research problems are as follows:

1. How is Economics learning implemented in Class X.I at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang?
2. What supporting factors influence the implementation of Economics learning in Class X.I?
3. What obstacles are encountered during the implementation of Economics learning in Class X.I?

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Economics Learning in Senior High School

Economics education is critical for comprehending fundamental economic ideas used in everyday life. According to Permendikbud No. 37 of 2018, Economics strives to foster logical, analytical, and innovative thinking when examining economic challenges (Akkaya & Polat, 2022). The Merdeka Curriculum focuses on student-centered learning, meaningful learning experiences, and competency development (Andayani et al., 2024; Fadliyana & Nugraheni, 2024). Learning implementation is heavily dependent on the teacher's role in selecting tactics, methods, and media. Active learning methods, such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, and group discussions, enhance conceptual comprehension and critical thinking. The usage of digital learning material helps pupils understand abstract topics (Buchman, 2024; Nugraha & Suyatmin, 2021).

Economics education in senior high school is an important component of instructional practice that aims to improve students' economic literacy, critical thinking skills, and decision-making ability. Economics education necessitates rigorous planning, execution, and evaluation to guarantee that learning objectives are met effectively. Instructional design in Economics include selecting appropriate learning models, tactics, and evaluation methods to help students grasp economic concepts and apply them in real-world scenarios. According to Permendikbud No. 37 of 2018, economics training should develop rational, analytical, and inventive thinking while examining economic problems at both the individual and societal levels. Economics learning focuses on interactive and student-centered teaching approaches. The Merdeka Curriculum encourages active student participation through learning activities that foster inquiry, discussion, and problem solving. Teachers play an important role in fostering meaningful learning experiences by encouraging students to develop knowledge collectively rather than passively collecting information. Learning approaches such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, and group discussions allow students to actively participate in the learning process, improve conceptual knowledge, and build higher-order thinking abilities. To facilitate deep and reflective learning, effective economics teaching requires continual interaction among teachers, students, and learning tools.

In terms of curriculum creation, the Merdeka Curriculum allows teachers to create teaching modules that are tailored to students' needs, school circumstances, and local characteristics. This curriculum's economics instruction emphasizes competency

development, contextual understanding, and relevance to real-world economic realities. Teachers are encouraged to adapt learning objectives, activities, and evaluations to ensure that they are in line with curriculum outcomes. This adaptability encourages the creation of novel instructional approaches and enables Economics learning to evolve in response to current economic concerns and educational demands. The learning environment is another important aspect in determining the success of economics training. A supportive learning environment consists of both physical and psychological components, such as classroom facilities, access to learning resources, and a pleasant learning climate that promotes student participation.

An interactive learning environment that encourages debate, collaboration, and mutual respect allows students to express their ideas, examine economic issues, and learn from their peers in Economics. A suitable learning environment also reduces student anxiety and boosts motivation, resulting in better learning outcomes. From the standpoint of teacher education, instructors' competency and professionalism have a substantial impact on the quality of Economics learning. Teachers must have both good content understanding of Economics and pedagogical abilities in order to adopt active and student-centered learning methodologies. Programs like the School Field Introduction (PLP) help preservice teachers apply theoretical knowledge in real classroom settings. Practical teaching experiences help preservice teachers build instructional skills and classroom management abilities, and reflective teaching practices that contribute to continuous professional growth. The integration of educational technology has become increasingly important in Economics learning, particularly in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Technology-based learning media such as digital presentations, instructional videos, and online learning resources support students' understanding of abstract economic concepts and enhance learning engagement. Educational technology also allows teachers to vary their educational approaches and provide more dynamic learning experiences. However, effective technology integration necessitates proper infrastructure, digital competence among teachers and students, and careful instructional preparation. Finally, in terms of educational development, successful Economics learning helps to achieve the overarching goal of improving educational quality. Economics education may help students become economically literate, critical thinkers, and change agents by introducing new teaching approaches, adjusting curriculum content, providing supportive learning environments, and improving teacher competence. The ongoing improvement of Economics learning methods is consistent with national educational development goals and contributes to the formation of a more responsive and future-oriented education system.

Learning Implementation

Implementation is the process of turning plans into tangible actions. In education, implementation is the process of transforming lesson plans such as RPPs and teaching modules into actual classroom activities. It encompasses teaching strategies, methodologies, learning environments, evaluation, and student-teacher interaction (Gustiansyah et al., 2020; Rahman & Ekkayokkaya, 2024). Learning is an interaction between students, teachers, and learning materials. According to Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System, learning seeks to help pupils maximize their potential. Learning activities are methodically developed to accomplish the targeted results (Marheni et al., 2025; Auliyah et al., 2024).

Several theories underline the learning process:

1. **Behaviorism:** learning as behavioral change through stimulus–response, reinforcement, and punishment. Suitable for teaching Economics through repeated exercises. (Mawara et al., 2025). According to behaviorism, learning is a process of behavioral change that occurs as a result of the interplay between stimulus and response, which is reinforced and punished. Behaviorist theory is especially useful in teaching basic ideas, formulas, and procedures that require accuracy and consistency, such as calculating demand and supply, inflation rates, and simple economic indicators. Teachers provide stimuli such as explanations, examples, and practice questions, to which students respond by completing exercises or answering questions. Feedback, scores, or praise are used to reinforce correct responses, whilst corrective feedback is used to reduce errors. Repeated activities help students acquire study habits and understanding of basic economic topics efficiently.
2. **Cognitive Theory:** focuses on internal mental processes where students construct knowledge based on experiences (SIBURIAN, 2022). Cognitive theory focuses on internal mental processes involved in learning, such as perception, memory, comprehension, and problem solving. According to this view, pupils actively analyze information and develop knowledge based on their prior experiences. Cognitive theory encourages activities that allow students to examine economic phenomena, connect new information to current knowledge, and comprehend cause-and-effect relationships in economic concerns. Teachers help students learn by structuring materials rationally, utilizing visual aids, and encouraging them to think critically about economic topics. This approach corresponds with the Merdeka Curriculum, which promotes meaningful learning experiences and deep conceptual understanding above rote memorization.
3. **Constructivism:** knowledge is built through social interactions and cultural contexts, supported by scaffolding within ZPD (Damanik et al., 2025; Buhary et al., 2024). Constructivism defines learning as the process by which knowledge is created through social interaction, collaboration, and engagement with cultural and contextual elements. According to this viewpoint, learning is most effective when students actively participate in debates, group projects, and problem-solving exercises based on real-world economic issues. The teacher's job evolves to that of a facilitator, providing scaffolding to help pupils learn within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Constructivist approaches to economics education are represented in the utilization of group discussions, project-based learning, and contextual learning activities that enable students to collectively investigate economic problems. This idea greatly supports the Merdeka Curriculum's student-centered learning principles, which enable students to create understanding via inquiry and social engagement (Zou et al., 2023).

Economics Learning in Senior High School

The term economics derives from the Greek words *oikos* (household) and *nomos* (rules). Thus, economics is the study of managing resources to meet household needs effectively. Economics examines decision-making under limited resources (Janwari & Jubaedah, 2024).

The primary goal of high school economics education is to provide students with a thorough understanding of fundamental economic principles that serve as the foundation for assessing a variety of economic situations. Students who study economics are supposed to develop the ability to make rational and responsible decisions in both personal and social contexts, taking into account resource restrictions and the many alternatives accessible. Furthermore, economics education strives to raise students' knowledge of the importance and impact of economic activities in everyday life, allowing them to grasp economic phenomena

such as consumption, production, distribution, and economic policy. Economics education also encourages the development of critical and creative thinking skills, so that students are not only able to understand theory, but also analyze, evaluate, and offer solutions to contextual and dynamic economic problems (Lubis & Lubis, 2022).

Economics education in high school emphasizes a contextual, participatory, and integrated approach. Learning is contextual because economic information is related to real-world economic realities that students encounter on a daily basis, making the concepts acquired more meaningful and understandable. Furthermore, economics learning is interactive through the use of discussions, question and answer sessions, and problem-solving exercises that require students to actively participate in the learning process. This connection allows students to share ideas, express themselves, and improve their logical and analytical thinking abilities. Furthermore, economics learning is integrative because it connects economic concepts to social, political, and cultural issues, allowing students to gain a holistic understanding of the relationship between economic features and numerous societal dimensions. This method is consistent with the Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on meaningful, relevant learning that aims to build students' competencies (Suryani et al., 2022).

3. METHOD

This study takes a qualitative descriptive method to provide a detailed explanation of learning processes. The research was carried out during the second semester at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang. Classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and documentation of teaching materials, lesson plans, learning media, and images were all used to gather data. Data was analyzed using Miles and Huberman's model (data reduction, presentation, and conclusion) (Asipi et al., 2022; Syaepul Uyun, 2022). The research was conducted during the second semester at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang, with a focus on the implementation of Economics learning in Class X.I am in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum. The qualitative technique was chosen because it allows the researcher to delve deeply into the development, implementation, and evaluation of learning activities, as well as the experiences and responses of both teachers and students throughout the learning process.

Data were obtained using a variety of ways to verify their credibility and richness. Classroom observations were carried out to investigate teaching tactics, student engagement, classroom dynamics, and the use of educational media. Interviews with instructors and students were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of attitudes, obstacles, and supporting variables connected to learning implementation. Documentation was also employed to support observational and interview data, such as teaching modules, lesson plans, learning media, student workbooks, and photographic evidence of classroom activities.

Data analysis was carried out utilizing Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drafting. Data reduction entails selecting, concentrating, and simplifying key information about Economics learning implementation. Data display was accomplished by organizing the reduced data into descriptive narratives and tables to aid interpretation. Finally, conclusions were reached by analyzing patterns, linkages, and major results regarding the effectiveness, supportive variables, and barriers to learning. This rigorous examination ensured that the research findings were legitimate, comprehensive, and in line with the study objectives (Ida Royani & Sihombing, 2024).

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings of this study suggest that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in the classroom has been positively influenced by various factors, but also faces certain challenges. The study emphasizes the importance of the following aspects:

1. Effective Teaching Practices

According to **Latifa et al. (2023)**, teachers have designed teaching modules that are aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum, which fosters more student-centered learning. Key teaching strategies that have been implemented include:

- a) **Group Discussions:** Encouraging collaboration among students, promoting peer learning, and improving communication and critical thinking skills.
- b) **Problem-Based Learning (PBL):** This approach helps students develop problem-solving abilities and enables them to connect theoretical knowledge with practical applications.
- c) **Role Play:** This method enhances students' understanding of complex concepts by allowing them to simulate real-life scenarios and practice decision-making skills.

2. Use of Learning Media

As highlighted in the study, **Latifa et al. (2023)** also point out the integration of various media, such as digital presentations, short videos, and economic articles, to engage students. These digital tools have proven to be effective in making learning more interactive and relevant to students' everyday lives. The incorporation of multimedia supports different learning styles and helps in explaining complex topics more clearly.

3. Supporting Factors

Prasetyo et al. (2023) identified key supporting factors that contribute to the success of the curriculum implementation:

- a) **Teacher Competence:** The ability of teachers to adapt and implement the Merdeka Curriculum effectively plays a significant role in achieving the desired outcomes.
- b) **School Support:** Access to necessary resources, such as projectors and internet access, enhances the learning experience, allowing for more interactive and diverse teaching methods.
- c) **Student Enthusiasm in Project-Based Learning (PBL):** Students show a high level of enthusiasm when engaging in PBL, which helps in fostering an active and participatory learning environment.

5. Inhibiting Factors

Despite the positive impact, there are several challenges identified by **Khlaif et al. (2021)** that inhibit the full potential of the curriculum:

- a) **Limited Student Access to Devices:** In some regions or schools, students may lack access to personal devices, which hinders their ability to participate fully in digital learning activities.
- b) **Unequal Student Participation in Discussions:** While group discussions are an essential part of the learning process, there is often unequal participation from students, which can affect the overall learning experience.
- c) **Limited Class Time for Completing Projects:** The time constraints imposed by the school schedule limit the opportunity for students to engage deeply with projects, which can impact the quality of their work and learning outcomes.

The findings from this study indicate that while the Merdeka Curriculum provides a robust framework for promoting student-centered learning, its success is contingent on several factors: Teachers' ability to effectively use modern teaching strategies and learning media, The necessary support from schools in terms of resources and infrastructure, The engagement and enthusiasm of students in active learning methods like PBL and group discussions.

However, to maximize the effectiveness of this curriculum, efforts should be made to address the identified challenges. Schools should provide more equal access to technology for all students, improve strategies to engage all learners in discussions, and explore ways to better manage class time to allow for project completion. Furthermore, ongoing professional development for teachers and continued support from school administrations will be critical in overcoming these barriers.

Discussion

The findings show that economics education at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang is consistent with the Merdeka Curriculum. Teachers create learning modules that are appropriate to the course subjects and school setting. Active learning techniques, such as PBL and group discussions, enhance students' critical thinking (Aprina et al., 2024; Bhwana, 2023). The usage of digital media expands the range of learning tools beyond those available through textbooks. However, inequalities in technological access provide difficulties for some kids, necessitating significant teacher support. Facilities and instructor skill are critical considerations in implementation. Meanwhile, limited student devices and classroom time should be handled to enhance learning (Wati & Trihantoyo, 2020; Dahliana et al., 2022).

The study's findings show that the implementation of Economics learning at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang aligns with the Merdeka Curriculum's aims and features. Teachers can create and deploy learning modules that are consistent with curriculum requirements, student needs, and school conditions. Active learning practices, such as problem-based learning and group discussions, help students develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills by encouraging them to analyze real-world economic situations and propose collaborative solutions. The use of digital learning media broadens learning options beyond traditional textbooks and improves student engagement with the topic. Visual and audiovisual media serve to simplify abstract economic topics while also making learning more engaging and relevant. Nonetheless, discrepancies in students' access to technology gadgets pose issues for teachers, necessitating additional support and alternate learning methodologies. Teacher competency and school facilities appear as important elements impacting the efficacy of learning implementation, as qualified teachers can modify instructional approaches to overcome obstacles and maintain student involvement. Furthermore, limited class time and uneven student involvement must be addressed in order to improve learning outcomes. Teachers may need to better manage time allocation and use measures to encourage active involvement from all pupils. Overall, the findings imply that while the Merdeka Curriculum's implementation of Economics learning has been effective, continual development in instructional planning, classroom management, and technology support is required to enhance learning quality (Sari & Alizar, 2023)

5. CONCLUSION

Economics instruction in Class X.I at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang was implemented in accordance with the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasized student-centered and contextual learning methodologies. The preservice teacher created structured learning plans that were

matched with curriculum outcomes and classroom settings, and used a variety of instructional approaches such as lectures, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and quizzes. These strategies were utilized in conjunction to meet a variety of learning objectives, including conceptual understanding, skill reinforcement, and learning evaluation. The preservice teacher played an important role as a mediator and facilitator in the learning process by organizing classroom activities, guiding conversations, and assisting students who struggled to understand economic concepts. Students were encouraged to participate actively, share their ideas, and apply economic knowledge to real-world problems using interactive learning methodologies. Although the use of technology-based learning material had some constraints, such as unequal access to devices, the instructor was able to modify instructional tactics to ensure that learning objectives were met.

Overall, students displayed a high degree of comprehension of the Economics curriculum, especially when learning activities were linked to ordinary economic realities they were familiar with. This contextual approach helped students see Economics as relevant and meaningful, resulting in increased engagement and comprehension. Despite the presence of certain pupils who lacked desire or involvement, the learning process generally went well. The PLP experience gave preservice teachers excellent insights into classroom management, instructional modification, and the practical application of the Merdeka curriculum. These findings show that continual reflection and change in teaching approaches are required to improve the quality of Economics education in senior high schools.

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