



## Analysis of Student's Response to Implementation of Merdeka Belajar Based Information Technology After Pandemic

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### Abstract

Technology-based learning has been very popularly used since the Covid-19 pandemic until now. Information technology provides various learning resources to make it easier for students to study independently, anytime, and anywhere in accordance with the Merdeka Belajar curriculum program. This study aimed to see students' response to the Merdeka Belajar curriculum-based information technology. The research method used is descriptive quantitative method and data collection through questionnaires given to 78 fourth grade students in Sampang District. The software used by students shows 100% using social media in the form of WhatsApp and 73.07% using Google Meet to communicate with teachers. Then as many as 100% used Google, 35.89% used Ruang Guru, 67.94% used Brainly, 53.84% used Wikipedia, and 60.25% used YouTube to find information. 33.3% used Quizizz and 46.15% used the Duolingo application to get practice questions. While students who find it easy to understand the material through digital media as many as 94, 87% and 5.12% find it difficult. Although some students have difficulty, all or 100% of students feel happy to use digital media to support the learning process.

**Keywords:** Merdeka Belajar, technology, students' response

## Analisis Respon Siswa dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Basis Teknologi Informasi Setelah Pandemi

### Abstrak

Pembelajaran berbasis teknologi sudah sangat populer digunakan sejak pandemi Covid-19 hingga sekarang. Teknologi informasi menyediakan berbagai sumber belajar sehingga memudahkan siswa untuk belajar secara mandiri, kapanpun, dan dimanapun sesuai dengan program kurikulum Merdeka Belajar. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk melihat respon siswa terhadap kurikulum Merdeka Belajar berbasis teknologi informasi. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode deskriptif kuantitatif dan pengumpulan data melalui angket yang diberikan kepada 78 siswa kelas IV di Kecamatan Sampang. Perangkat lunak yang digunakan siswa menunjukkan 100% menggunakan media sosial berupa *Whatsapp* dan 73,07% memanfaatkan Google Meet untuk berkomunikasi dengan guru. Kemudian sebanyak 100% memanfaatkan Google, 35,89% memanfaatkan Ruang Guru, 67,94% memanfaatkan Brainly, 53,84% memanfaatkan Wikipedia, serta 60,25% memanfaatkan YouTube untuk mencari informasi. 33,3% memanfaatkan Quizizz dan 46,15% memanfaatkan aplikasi Duolingo untuk memperoleh latihan soal. Sedangkan siswa yang merasa mudah memahami materi melalui media digital sebanyak 94, 87% dan 5,12% merasa kesulitan. Meskipun sebagian siswa mengalami kesulitan, namun seluruh siswa atau 100% siswa merasa senang memanfaatkan media digital sebagai alat penunjang proses belajar.

**Kata Kunci:** Merdeka Belajar, teknologi, respon siswa

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## INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused the implementation of learning and the education system has changed. The implementation of face-to-face or offline learning has changed to distance learning or learning from home by utilizing information technology. Changes in learning resources that previously tended to use books are now switching to online learning resources that are easily accessible at any anytime. [Alajmi \(2022\)](#) concludes that there is a shift in learning into a single technology unit to help students learn through various online platforms. Furthermore, [Molinillo \(2017\)](#) in his journal proves that technology has a good influence on learning, especially experiences in the use of social media as media and learning resources.

In addition to the implementation of learning, an education system that originally used the 2013 curriculum was changed to the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. [Jojo & Sihotang \(2022\)](#) in their journal also concluded that excessive competence and learning burden in implementing the 2013 curriculum resulted in decreased student interest in learning when studying from home during the pandemic so the government developed a Merdeka Belajar curriculum with the aim of overcoming learning loss and learning gaps. [The Ministry of Education and Culture \(2019\)](#) mentions four Merdeka Belajar policies, including (1) replacing the National Standardized School Examination (USBN) with an assessment organized by school institutions and the assessment is carried out in various forms of training that provides value for student learning outcomes, (2) the National Examination is replaced with AKM or Minimum Competency Assessment and character supervision that allows students' literacy skills, (3) simplification of the preparation of the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) which originally contained 13 components into 3 components, namely learning objectives, learning activities, and assessments, (4) Participant Admission for new students is more flexible to address access and quality in the regions. [Sherly \(2020\)](#) asserts that the Merdeka Belajar curriculum means learning, studying, learning independently, and being creative.

Merdeka Belajar's curriculum requires students to develop literacy skills and free will not run well if it is not supported by the availability of abundant learning resources. [Mastuti, et al \(2021\)](#) describe the Freedom of Learning as the freedom to think, work, respect, and respond to the changes that occur. In line with Mastuti, [Muhajir, et al](#)

[\(2021: 18\)](#) in their book, Merdeka Learning provides freedom of learning by emphasizing teacher creativity in implementing learning innovation and student creativity in carrying out learning. The teacher can use technology information or known as digital media to support the implementation of Merdeka Belajar. [Huda \(2020\)](#) in his article concluded that teachers can use information technology in learning to help the learning process. Furthermore, [Manongga \(2001\)](#) asserts that information technology makes learning efficient in terms of time, cost, and logistics to achieve the desired learning outcomes and goals.

Based on the initial study at Gunong Sekar I Elementary School, information was obtained that students had used social media WhatsApp as a medium of information regarding homework and materials to be studied before and after learning. In addition, students stated that with the help of digital media that provides a variety of learning resources, it is very easy for them to complete their homework. [Suyanto \(2020\)](#) mentions that various software can support the implementation of increasingly diverse learning, such as Google Meet, Zoom, Quizizz, and others.

[Pandia \(2016: 37\)](#) explains that information technology is a technology that uses a computer or android and high-speed communication lines that contain information in the form of data, voice, and video. Furthermore, [Rahmawati \(2020: 81\)](#) explains that information technology is an alternative to solving problems faced in making decisions. [Sulhan & Khairi \(2019:39\)](#) describe that information technology is a learning support tool for collecting more up-to-date learning information. Based on this explanation, it can be seen that information technology is a tool created to facilitate the search for information in the form of data, sound, or video as a reference in solving problems.

[Mercer, Hennessy, & Warwick \(2017\)](#) explain that computer-based learning in students' reading activities has an effect on increasing thinking skills and the ability to think together. [Merner, Hennessy, & Warwick \(2017\)](#) found that many schools have tried to encourage their students to use digital devices in learning and bring up innovation. Based on this opinion, it is very clear that teachers can use technology and digital tools to develop student learning strategies. exploration of learning resources, act the utilization of materials, as well as the most up-to-date development information, can be easily accessed by students. [Astuti \(2014\)](#) in his article explains that the more students are busy focusing

their attention on reading various learning resources, the more their vocabulary and other general knowledge will increase. Based on these opinions, it can be concluded that information technology-based learning is the use of electronic devices that can collect various learning resources to expand students' knowledge of the material.

Several previous studies on digital media for learning that underlie this research have shown a positive response. Devya & Wiryanto (2022) in their research on student responses to the implementation of the 2013 curriculum for distance learning during the pandemic concluded that digital media has an important role to play in making it easier for students to learn from home during the pandemic. In addition, the results of Kong, Seo, & Zhai (2021) research support the opinion that the frequency of students' attitudes to using digital media has a positive influence on the development of reading achievement. Meanwhile, the results of the study by Kucirkova, et al (2020) concluded that children showed a positive response to the use of digital media that was personalized to their own experiences and self. The results of Cho, Hwang, & Hyejin (2021) research further strengthen that digital media shows student responses to interest in reading through digital devices are increasing and show good learning effectiveness.

The purpose of this study is to describe the use of the software by students in implementing the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. There are 5 mappings of student analysis of digital media, namely: (1) the use of digital media as a communication tool, (2) the use of digital media as a learning resource, (3) the use of digital media to practice questions, (4) the ease of understanding the material through digital media, (5) the attractiveness of digital media as a tool to support the learning process.

**METHODS**

This research uses the descriptive quantitative method. Hamzah (2019: 53) explains that descriptive quantitative methods are used to study the relationship of attitudes, activities, views, and ongoing processes to a phenomenon, quantitative descriptive seeks to describe objects or subjects according to reality or empirically. Therefore, this research will explain the response of grade 4 elementary school students to the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum based on information technology in the city of Sampang, East Java. The research was conducted from August 30, 2022, to September 9, 2022. Data collection was carried out using a closed

questionnaire or online questionnaire containing five questions. The questionnaire instrument that must be filled out by students is listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Student questionnaire instrument

No.	Question	Answer
1.	Digital media that I use to communicate with my teacher from home.	<input type="radio"/> Social media/WhatsApp/messenger <input type="radio"/> Google Meet/Zoom <input type="radio"/> (Other answer)
2.	Digital media I use to find and collect information about my lessons.	<input type="radio"/> Google <input type="radio"/> Ruang guru <input type="radio"/> Brainly <input type="radio"/> Wikipedia <input type="radio"/> (Other answer)
3.	Digital media that I use to find exercises	<input type="radio"/> Quizziz <input type="radio"/> Duolingo <input type="radio"/> Edmodo <input type="radio"/> (Other answer)
4.	Digital media makes it easier for me to study independently either at home or at school	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
5.	I like digital media to help me study	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

Source: adapted from Devya & Wiryanto (2022)

The total number of 4th grade students who participated in filling out the questionnaire was 78 students from 6 schools in Sampang District. The data acquisition is shown in Table 2. After the data was obtained, the researcher conducted a descriptive data analysis by looking at the percentage in each aspect of the instrument.

Table 2 Research Instrument Data

School	Number of Students	Percentage
SDN Gunong Sekar 1	15	19,23%
SDNR Rongtengah 1	18	23,07%
SDN Karang Dalem 1	11	11,10%
SDN Dalpenang 1	13	16,66%
SDN Rongtengah 4	12	15,36%
SDN Rongtengah 5	9	11,58%
Total	78	100%

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the distribution of the questionnaire, it is known that Merdeka Belajar



based on information technology has been carried out entirely by elementary school students in Sampang District. It is also known that elementary school students show responses related to the type of digital media used to help students communicate with teachers about learning materials from home, the type of digital media used to collect information related to learning, the type of digital media used to find practice questions, ease to understanding the material through information technology, the impression of using information technology in learning.

Merdeka Belajar is a program that aims to improve the national education system that previously seemed monotonous into learning with a happy nuance through a learning environment that is free of expression (The Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020). Furthermore, The Ministry of Education and Culture (2020) explained that in the Merdeka Belajar curriculum the teachers have the freedom to maximize learning in order to achieve the goals of national education in accordance with the development needs of each student and in accordance with the curriculum guidelines, while students have the freedom to build knowledge by following the rules.

Education is facing learning loss problems due to the Covid-19 pandemic, through the digitalization of learning it is hoped that it can support the acceleration of the preparation of Pancasila students as the nation's buds (The Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022). Information technology-based learning or digital media is one form of effort in realizing Merdeka Belajar that is freeing students to think, obtain information, and build understanding either with the teacher or independently. In line with that, the Ministry of Education and Culture (2022) on its official website asserts that Merdeka Belajar provides freedom of learning implementation, meaning that it can be anywhere, anytime, and from any source.

### Communication Tools for Learning

Digital media used by students to communicate with teachers include WhatsApp and media conferences such as Google Meet and Zoom. This communication media is used as a means of connecting students from home to the teacher either to clarify the material being studied or used to obtain information about homework assignments or regard to activities to be carried out the next day. In addition to being used with teachers, communication media also uses students to share information between students, both

regarding school assignments or other learning information.

The data obtained by the researcher shows that students in Sampang District use WhatsApp digital media as many as 78 students or 100% of respondents. In addition, as many as 57 or 73.07% students also use digital conference media such as Zoom/Google Meet. Based on the acquisition of the questionnaire, students did not show the use of communication media other than those already mentioned. The use of digital communication media is presented in Figure 1 below.

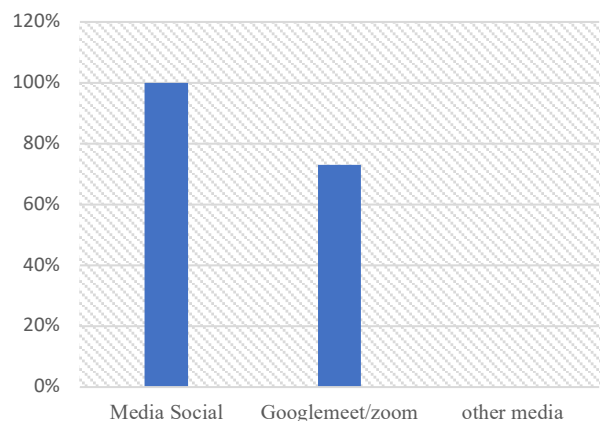


Figure 1 Chart of Communication Tools for Learning

Based on the table, it appears that all students use digital media as a communication tool in the learning process. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of digital communication media is support the student learning process. Social media used for educational purposes has a positive influence on student responses because social media allows students to be actively involved in learning (Bowman & Akcaoglu, 2014). Meanwhile, Liao, et al (2015) in their journal explained that in recent years social media has become an important communication medium for the learning process.

### Searching Information Tools for Learning

With regard to digital media used as learning resources such as Google, Wikipedia, Ruang Guru, Brainly, and other digital media. This information technology is used by students to find information or learning materials they are studying, either in the form of narration, how to solve problems, or through audiovisuals. The ease and freedom of obtaining information through information technology currently encourage students to develop and expand understanding



that can be done anytime and anywhere, not only at school.

The research data shows that the utilization of elementary school students on the use of information technology is 100% or 78 students use Google. Furthermore, the data shows that as many as 35.89% or 28 respondents use the Ruang Guru. A total of 67.94% or 53 student respondents also uses Brainly. 53.84% or as many as 42 respondents using Wikipedia. The additional responses related to digital media used to obtain information were YouTube as many as 60.25% or 47 respondents. The pattern of using digital media as a learning resource by students is shown in Figure 2 below.

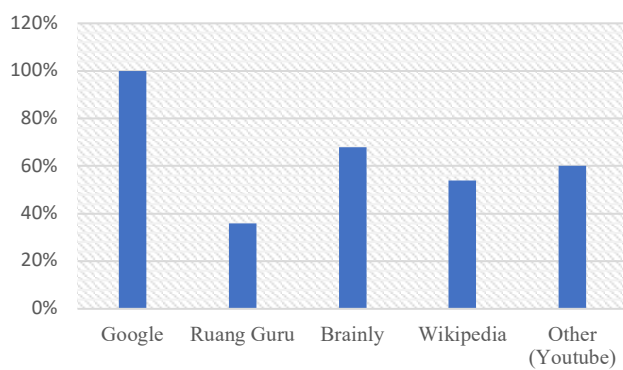


Figure 2 Chart of Searching Information Tools for Learning

Based on the results of the explanation above, digital media is one of the important factors in the learning process. It is known that all students use digital media to support their learning process. These findings support the use of digital media as a learning resource based on students' excellent responses in utilizing the functions of digital media for learning purposes. Utilization of media and learning resources can make it easier for students to understand learning materials, and stimulate interest, attention, and willingness to achieve learning goals (Supriyono, 2018). It can be suggested that the use of digital media to find information about learning makes it easier for students to understand learning and have the will to achieve learning goals.

**Exercise Tools for Learning**

Digital information technology or digital media used to obtain practice questions are very diverse, among which the most popular are Quizziz, Duolingo, and Edmodo. The media can help students get questions related to the material being studied. Through the ease of obtaining practice questions, students will increasingly familiarize students with problem-solving,

preparation for school exams, and broaden understanding of the material.

The results of the questionnaire showed that 26 students or 33.3% of respondents used Quizziz. A total of 64 students or 82.05% of respondents are happy to use Duolingo. However, there was no use of Edmodo digital media by students or 0% use of Edmodo. In addition, there were no other digital media used by respondents to find practice questions. The detailed description of data is shown in Figure 3 below.

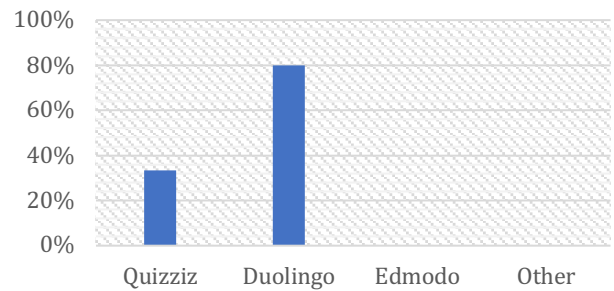


Figure 3 Chart Exercise Tools for Learning

Based on the results of data exposure, digital media that provides services in the form of practice questions are needed by students in the learning process, so students do not need to wait for the practice questions from the teacher but can independently obtain a collection of questions through digital media. Anggraini, et al (2020) in their journal concluded that digital media of the type of evaluation or collection of questions attracts students' interest in learning and can overcome the feeling of laziness in learning because this digital media is easy to use by students. In line with Anggraini, et al. Hasiholan & Fernando (2021) in their journal concluded that digital media-based evaluation can increase students' interest in studying and exploring material in a controlled manner.

**Ease of Using Information Technology for Learning**

The ease of obtaining information through information technology or digital media requires sufficient experience and digital literacy skills, so in its application, not all students find it easy to understand learning materials through digital media. Based on the data obtained, as many as 74 students, or 94.87% of students stated "Yes" or it can be concluded that most students easily understand the material through digital media or information technology used. Furthermore, there are 4 students or 5.12% of respondents stated "No"

or it can be interpreted that students find it difficult to understand the material through the digital learning media used. Details of the data are presented in Figure 4 below.

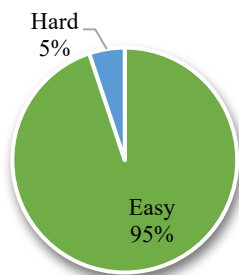


Figure 4 Ease of Using Information Technology for Learning

With regard to the ease with which students understand learning materials through the information technology used, teachers should play a role in selecting appropriate learning resources. [Alabba \(2021\)](#) adds that the teacher's role is to facilitate students' learning based on information technology by providing apperception or initial understanding before helping students get digital learning resources that are appropriate for the age and condition of students so that students do not feel burdened. In line with the results of [Abadi \(2015\)](#) who explains that the weakness of information technology-based learning is the lack of interaction and teacher assistance which can result in a slow understanding of values in the learning process. Based on the findings of this study, it can be suggested that for the successful implementation of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum which expects students to learn anytime, anywhere, and independently, it is recommended to develop students' digital literacy skills and the role of teachers to build initial understanding and teacher direction on appropriate learning resources.

### The Impression of Using Information Technology for Learning

Digital media has its own attractiveness value. Student responses to the use of digital media in the learning process are 100% or 78 respondents chose the answer "Yes" which means that all students like digital media as a tool that helps the learning process while students who answered "No" were 0% or no students did not like digital media as a technology that helps students' learning process even though a small number of students still find it difficult to understand the material. So, to maximize the function of digital media as a source of student

learning, it is necessary to have direction from teachers and assistance from parents. Details of the data are in Figure 5 below.

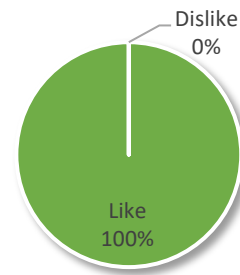


Figure 5 Ease of Using Information Technology for Learning

Based on the data obtained, it can be seen that currently technology has an important role in the learning process of children. That is, the development of knowledge is closely related to the use of technology as a facility for the continuity of the student learning process either at home or at school ([Salsabila, 2020](#)). In line with this opinion, [Nuriah, et al \(2022\)](#) in their journal concluded that learning activities that utilize technology have a positive relationship to student learning motivation. So, based on these findings, it is recommended to use digital media based on information technology as a learning resource to increase students' learning motivation wherever and whenever.

### CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that all 78 students participated in information technology-based learning to support Merdeka Belajar curriculum. The software used by grade VI elementary school students shows 100% using social media in the form of WhatsApp and 73.07% using the Google Meet conference application to communicate with teachers when at home to clarify understanding of the material. Then as many as 100% of students use Google, 35.89% of students use Ruang Guru, and 67.94% of students use Brainly, 53.84% of students use Wikipedia, and 60.25% of students use YouTube as a digital medium to find information about material. which is being studied. 33.3% of students use Quizizz and 80.05% of students use the Duolingo application to get practice questions. While students who find it easy to understand material through digital media are 94, 87% and students who find it difficult to understand material through digital media are 5.12%. Although some students have difficulty understanding the material through digital media,

all or 100% of students feel happy to use digital media to support the learning process.

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