

## **Government's Teaching Platform as an Intervening Influence of CEO-based leadership and Teacher Readiness Quality on the Successful Implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka**

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**Abstract:** This research aims to analyze the influence of CEO-based leadership and teacher readiness quality through the independent teaching platform on the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. This research was carried out at Pengmobil Middle Schools throughout Malang City, the sampling technique used was purposive random sampling, so that from a population of 300, 263 teachers and 11 school principals were obtained as research respondents. This research method is quantitative, with a structural model or SEM design using SmartPLS4 to examine the direct and indirect influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables. The exogenous variables in this research are CEO-based leadership as X1, teacher readiness quality as X2, independent teaching platform as Z1 or intervening, and successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka as Y1. Partial testing was carried out using a significance value of  $<0.05$  in all tests. The test results show that  $F_{count} > F_{table}$ , which means there is a positive and significant influence. In detail, the analysis was carried out in 4 stages, namely (1) validity and reliability test, (2) model feasibility test which was represented in the chi square determination with a value of  $<3.00$ , SRMR with a value of  $<0.10$ , NFI with a score of  $>0.80$ ,  $d_g$  with a score of  $>0.05$ , and  $d_U$ s with a score of  $>0.05$ , (3) bootstrapping will be allocated in assessing the significance of direct and indirect influence measurements which can be seen in the  $R^2$ ,  $F^2$ , outer loading and cross loading values, and (4) blindfolding used to determine predictive associations. The results of this research showed that all hypotheses were accepted, both direct and indirect effects. Overall, exogenous variables contributed 81.3% of their influence on the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka, while the remaining 19.7% was influenced by other variables that had not been studied.

**Keywords:** Teaching platform, CEO leadership, kurikulum merdeka, teacher readiness quality

### **INTRODUCTION**

The acceleration of global world development, which is called the era of digitalization 4.0 towards society 5.0, requires all aspects, both in terms of government bureaucracy, health and education, to adapt technology within the context of process efficiency (Al-Emran & Al-Sharafi, 2022; Kim, Raza, & Seidman, 2019). In specific aspects of the education sector, experts emphasize that educational institutions should adopt technology to assist the process, especially by using it to enrich the quality of the learning process (Chiu, 2021). This global development was welcomed by the government in Indonesia which oversees the education process, through the independent learning program which is implemented at all levels of formal education up to tertiary institutions.

The main objective of independent learning for formal education levels, especially elementary school, junior high school and final high school, is to improve students' 4C abilities, as well as overcome learning lags during the Covid-19 period (Miladiah et al., 2023;Kemendikbudristek, 2022). The 4C skills to be achieved in the kurikulum merdeka are creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking, so that in the context of implementing the kurikulum merdeka it can be said that these capabilities are output The main products of the kurikulum merdeka (Supena, Darmuki, & Hariyadi, 2021). The implementation of the kurikulum merdeka is divided into two main stages in its practical context, namely (1) selecting "Sekolah Penggerak" as a base model that will fully implement the kurikulum merdeka from 2022 to 2024 and (2) implementing the massive implementation of the kurikulum merdeka at all levels in 2024 -2025 (Novita et al., 2022).

Previous research discussing the implementation of the new curriculum on educational policy trends explains that during the transition period, school principals and teachers as the main implementers experienced link and match failure (Baharuddin, 2021;Nugraha, 2022;Rosidah, Pramulia, & Susiloningsih, 2021). Failure link and match what is meant was a policy that has been designed in a projective way to achieve success, but is not adapted to the competencies of human resources in an educational institution, especially implementers in the field. This is proven by data measuring the skills of school principals in directing teachers towards the new curriculum which tends to show graphs (1) 8.2% very bad; (2) 2.5% poor; (3) 56% moderate; (4) 25.1% good; and (5) 8.2% very good (Saputra & Nuchron, 2019). This data certainly proves that in fact the ability of school principals to direct their members in the transition to the new curriculum is still at an adequate stage, not yet able to reach the optimal point or quality of leadership ability. The policy implementing actors other than the school principal are of course teachers, it is recorded that in the context of their adaptability in implementing the new curriculum specifically for classroom learning, it is (1) 5.2% very bad, (2) 27.1% bad, (3) 37.6% fair, (4) 21.9% good, and (5) 8.1% very good. Other secondary data also proves that the national teacher competency test has an average of 65.00 at the junior high school level. Data specifically through qualitative exposure, proves that specifically in implementing the kurikulum merdeka, teachers find it difficult to carry out authentic assessments because they are considered (1) too much procedural steps, (2) have complex stages, and (3) take up teacher time to think about formulating authentic assessments (Rosidah et al., 2021). Specific to capabilities of teacher readiness quality at the junior high school level from training regarding preparing the quality of teacher readiness in developing learning and adaptability of technology, the average ability was 58.68 out of 100 (Juwita & Siswandari, 2018).

This becomes interesting when connected withroadmap an kurikulum merdeka, which conceptually contains various superior programs which require school principals and teachers to

be ready to develop their schools through adaptability to the latest learning models and technological adaptation. The existence of an kurikulum merdeka at junior high school level is fundamental because the cognitive phase that is present is "D". Cognitive phase D is a thinking process to bridge the ability to evaluate and create, or it could be said that this stage is a stage to train students in analyzing through critical thinking (Rosalia, Adinugraha, & Silalahi, 2021; Hidayat & Utami, 2019). The conclusion that can be drawn is that if concerns in secondary education are not focused on improving or measuring its quality, it will affect the ability of students in phases E and F to create work that is as useful as outcome the cognitive process. The hope that arises from this idea is that kurikulum merdeka at junior high school level is provided concern if the quality is full to be measured and improved, a generation will be born at the upper middle school level who will be able to create innovations and works, because the fundamental analytical skills have been formed at the middle school level.

The government's attitude in responding to the lack of readiness quality from education unit elements is quite good through the creation of an independent teaching platform. PMM (Platform Merdeka Mengajar) or government's teaching platform as a parent for developing the abilities of school principals and teachers, is represented by several features in it, namely (1) inspirational videos; (2) off the job training; (3) learning media creation; (4) student assessment; (5) teaching tools (Budiarti, 2022). Experts also stated that the presence of PMM is able to increase teacher independence in developing their competencies, but as of September 2023 there has been no research that discusses the role of PMM in contributing to the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. In another context in the implementation of the kurikulum merdeka, namely the realm of school principals, there are interesting findings regarding the practice track record of implementing the kurikulum merdeka, where there is hidden leadership created as a result of various implementations of these policies. This is known as CEO-based leadership in the realm of education, through its main focus on leading based on character (1) autocratic, (2) creative, (3) communicative, (4) visionary and (5) capable of being a collaborative role model like leading a company (Megayanti & Asri, 2022). This is interesting to research amidst trends that focus on transformational, visionary leadership and other leadership models in the realm of education.

Based on exposure to primary and secondary data, kurikulum merdeka theory constructs, and existing trends, three exogenous constructs are (1) CEO-based leadership; (2) teacher readiness quality; and (3) the independent teaching platform at the junior high school level is projected to be able to build an endogenous construct in the form of successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. At the junior high school level, there is not much research that addresses the topic of successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka and the factors or constructs that influence it, especially through the results of government innovation in the form of PMM and leadership

constructs, as well as studies regarding the quality of teacher readiness in teaching in the 4.0 era towards the society 5.0. Departing from this rationale, it is interesting if this research raises the main objective of analyzing the influence of CEO-based leadership and teacher readiness quality on the success of IKM through the independent teaching platform in SMP Penggerak throughout Malang City. The additional objective of this research is measuring the achievement of each variable and the direct influence between latent variables in this research. The results of this research can be used as baseline, the initial step is to evaluate the track record of implementing the kurikulum merdeka, especially in SMP Penggerak schools, before 2024-2025, IKM is implemented on a massive scale.

## **METHODS**

This research uses a quantitative approach, namely a research design with a survey model where primary data is obtained from statements in closed form. The researcher implemented the questionnaire using Google Form media to 11 “Sekolah Penggerak” in Malang City. Teachers and school principals were selected as the population in this study to assess CEO-based leadership, the quality of teacher readiness, the independent teaching platform, and the success of the implementation of the kurikulum merdeka throughout their respective institutions. The population in this study was 300 respondents from among teaching staff and school principals, while the sample size was determined using the Isaac and Michael formula to be 274 respondents by mapping match tables accumulated for each school. Determination of the sample size at each school was carried out using a purposive random sampling technique. This research allocates three exogenous variables, namely CEO-based leadership and teacher readiness quality as independent variables, then the independent teaching platform as an intervening variable. The endogenous variable of this research is the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. The SEM-PLS analysis in this research was carried out through several stages with the help of SmartPLS4, namely (1) Validity and reliability tests, which include discriminant validity, convergent validity, Cronbach alpha reliability, and composite reliability. Implementation discriminant validity implemented by reviewing the values cross loading, where validity is determined on a high scale or  $>0.70$  so that if the value is  $<0.70$  the item will be discarded (Hair et al., 2023).

Not only from cross loading, but in validity and reliability tests it is determined through the Fornell Larcker criterion and the accumulation of average variance extracted values. The reliability obtained for SmartPLS4 analysis must have a value of  $>0.9$  in both terms composite reliability cronbach alpha (Hair et al., 2023). Second (2) test the feasibility of the model which is represented in the chi square determination with a value  $<3.00$ , SRMR with a value  $<0.10$ , NFI with a score  $>0.80$ ,  $d_g$  with a score  $>0.05$ , and  $d_Uls$  with a score  $>0.05$  (Hair et al., 2023). Third (3)

bootstrapping will be allocated in assessing the significance of measuring direct influence and indirect influence which can be seen in the R value<sup>2</sup>, F<sup>2</sup>, outer loading, and cross loading. Such procedures can be reviewed in t statistics, and can be confirmed that if all the criteria are met then it can be said that the data is robust (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013). Last used procedure (4) blindfolding which is used to determine the predictive relationship, so that when the Q value<sup>2</sup> > 0.05, then the model is relevant in the long term as a result of scientific research, or the suitability of the hypothesis can be proven to be actualized in the field.

## RESULTS

### Descriptive Analysis

The results of the descriptive analysis will be written by the researcher through (1) exposure of the respondent's status, (2) distribution of data from the respondent's school, (3) mean category of variable X1, (4) mean category of variable X2, (5) mean category of variable Z1, and (6) mean category variable Y1.

**Table 1. Respondent Status Profile**

Respondent_Status		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Teacher	263	96.0	96.0	96.0
	Principals	11	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	274	100.0	100.0	

The status profile of the respondents in this study consisted of teachers and school principals spread across SMP Penggerak throughout Malang City. Based on these conclusions and interpretations, it can be ascertained that the data obtained by the researcher is in accordance with the initial planning of the technique sampling in this research. In detail, there are 263 teachers within the scope of this research and 11 school principals. The aim of the researcher in attaching the respondent's school origin is to show the reader whether the distribution of filling out the statement questionnaire is in accordance with the sample technique formulation stated in the research plan.

**Table 2. Respondent School Origin**

School_Origin		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SMP Negeri 1 Kota Malang	32	11.7	11.7	11.7
	SMP Negeri 12 Kota Malang	44	16.1	16.1	27.7
	SMP Negeri 17 Kota Malang	36	13.1	13.1	40.9

SMP Negeri 25 Kota Malang	18	6.6	6.6	47.4
SMP Negeri 7 Kota Malang	21	7.7	7.7	55.1
SMP Negeri 16 Kota Malang	36	13.1	13.1	68.2
SMP Negeri 24 Kota Malang	40	14.6	14.6	82.8
SMP 02 YPK Jatim Malang	8	2.9	2.9	85.8
SMP Islam Sabilurrosyad Malang	12	4.4	4.4	90.1
SMP Islam Terpadu Insan Permata	13	4.7	4.7	94.9
SMP Katolik Frateran Celaket Malang	14	5.1	5.1	100.0
Total	274	100.0	100.0	

The results of the average descriptive analysis for the level of latent variabel are in table 3. The calculation obtained from the average level of achievement of variable latent conduct that leadership based CEO are on 46,7% moderate, TRQ with 39,4% high level, PMM with 41,2% low, and IKM Successfully 39,1% high.

**Table 3. Variable Latent Category**

Latent Variable	Cumulative percent	Category
Leadership based CEO	46,7%	Moderate
Teacher Readines Quality	39,4%	High
Platform Merdeka Mengajar	41,2%	Low
IKM Successfully	39,1%	High

#### Validity and Reliability SmartPLS4

The model suitability parameters of SmartPLS4 are based on several criteria, namely (1) SRMR, (2)  $d_U$ s, (3)  $d_G$ , (4) Chi-Square, and (5) NFI. On the basis of measuring these five parameters, if the data from SmartPLS4 is processed through various stages of analysis, it can be concluded that the research results are reliable or robust. The main theoretical basis used to enter the door to analysis in SmartPLS4 is the increased validity and reliability of the instrument. In SmartPLS3 the desired validity is  $>0.5$ , whereas in SmartPLS4 it must be at a vulnerable level of  $>0.7$ , so that data from respondents and bad instruments must be executed. The calculation results of the loading factor value in determining convergent validity can be seen in table 4.30. In this table it can be seen if there are three items with a value  $<0.5$ , namely indicators X1.8; and Y1.16. Each of these variable values, X1.8, is 0.246; X1.7 is 0.175; and Y1.16 of 0.579. The invalid indicator is followed up by deleting the item, so that bootstrapping and  $Q^2$  Predict are fulfilled after

the invalid item is deleted.

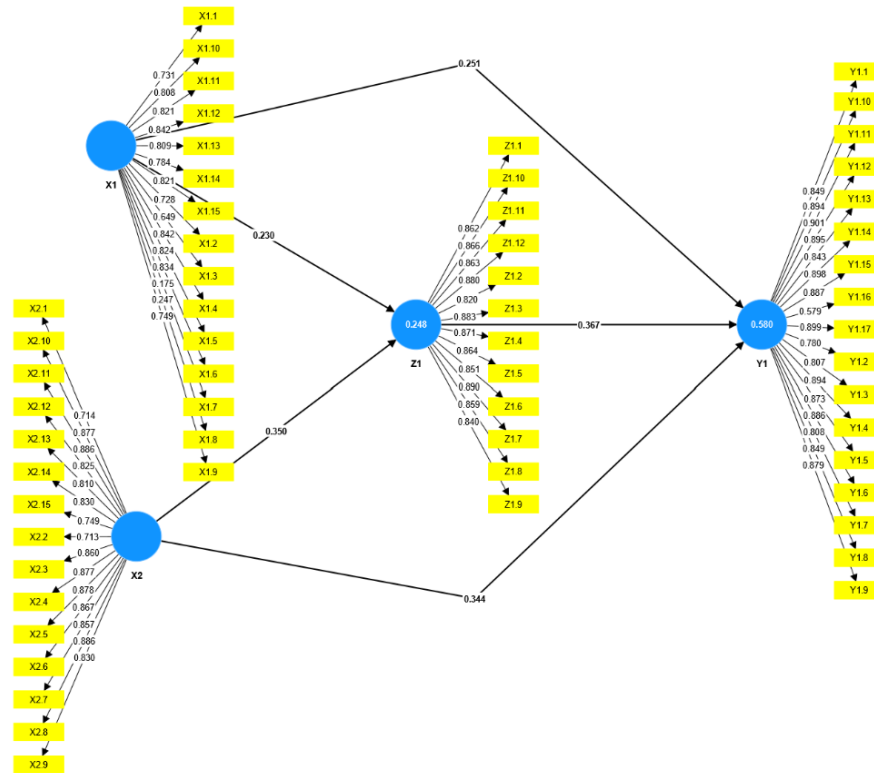








Figure 1. Structural Equation Model SmartPLS4

Figure Notations:

-  The sign represents the latent variable of CEO-based leadership in SMP Penggerak Mobilizers throughout Malang City
-  The sign represents the latent variable Teacher Readiness Quality in SMP Penggerak throughout Malang City
-  The sign states the latent variable of the Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) / Governments Teaching Platfrom in SMP Penggerak throughout Malang City
-  The sign states the latent variable of successful implementation of the Kurikulum merdeka in SMP Penggerak throughout Malang City
-  Instrument Items in Latent Variables
-  The connector is the influence attached to the research hypothesis

Several items that have been executed produce new coefficients of validity and reliability values, so that in the existing process bad data is not detected to be used for hypothesis testing. It is known that the AVE value of variable X1 is 0.644; X2 is 0.693; Z1 is 0.744; and Y1 is 0.751. Decision making from passing discriminant validity viewed from the value of cronbach's alpha which is >0.90; mark composite reliability >0.90; and value composite reliability rho c of >0.90. In

this concept, the data obtained has passed these criteria, therefore the AVE results are in line with the expected results, namely >0.50 overall for the latent variable.

**Table 4. Overview Discriminant Validity and Reliability Model**

	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_a)</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_c)</b>	<b>Average variance extracted (AVE)</b>
X1	0.949	0.952	0.956	0.644
X2	0.968	0.969	0.971	0.693
Y1	0.978	0.979	0.980	0.751
Z1	0.969	0.970	0.972	0.744

**Structural Model Analysis**

The test output for the model is carried out through the R Square value which is part of the inner PLS SEM model. R Square itself is a method used to review how the dependent construct can be explained by the independent construct.

**Table 5. R Square Determination Value**

	<b>R-square</b>	<b>R-square adjusted</b>	<b>Interpretasi</b>
Y1	0.576	0.571	Moderate (>0.50)
Z1	0.248	0.242	Weak (<0.250)

The coefficient of determination (R Square) shows that <0.75 indicates a strong model; <0.50 then the model means moderate; <0.250 weak model; And ; < 0.10 is not feasible. On this basis, the model obtained from research data is moderate or adjusted r square of 0.571 or moderate and 0.242 means weak. Based on these results, the coefficient of determination R square in the table can be concluded that X1 and X2 together have an influence on Z1 of 0.248 with an adjusted R Square value of 0.242. All exogenous constructs (X1 and X2) influence Z1 by 24.2%. Therefore, the conclusion that the influence of X1 and X2 on Z1 is weak. The R Square value of X1 and X2, and Z1 against Y1 is 0.576 and the adjusted R Square is 0.571. This means that the intact exogenous constructs (X1, X2, and Z1) have an influence of 57.1% on the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. These results lead to the conclusion that the intact exogenous construct has a moderate influence on the endogenous construct. The cumulative value of R Square Adjusted is 81.3% of 100% obtained from the complete construct for the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. The conclusion of these results is meaningful if 18.7% of the success of implementing the kurikulum merdeka is determined by other variables that have not been studied.

**Table 6. Standardized Root Mean Residual Criteria**

	<b>Saturated model</b>	<b>Estimated model</b>	<b>Kriteria (Estimated Model)</b>	<b>Interpretasi</b>
<b>SRMR</b>	0.046	0.046	<0.10	<i>Good Fit</i>

<b>d_ULS</b>	3.300	3.300	>0.05	<i>Good Fit</i>
<b>d_G</b>	2.570	2.570	>0.05	<i>Good Fit</i>
<b>Chi-square</b>	3.543	3.543	<3.00	<i>Fit</i>
<b>NFI</b>	0.805	0.805	>0.80	<i>Good Fit</i>

All models are within the good fit criteria, except for the chi-square form which is within > 3.00 which does not yet meet the good fit criteria, but the research model is stated to be fit or feasible because the vulnerable value is not far from 3.00. Based on these results, it can be said that the results of research and development of existing models are robust. One thing that is new about SmartPLS 4 is the degree of trustworthiness of the data which can be measured from (1) d\_Uls and (2) d\_G, so that the new interpretation results in estimated model results >0.05, the data collected in the research has goodfit criteria in terms of trustworthiness.

Testing of the final model will be carried out through blindfolding, which aims to provide a presentation of the results if the dependent variable has a predictive relationship with the intended independent variable. The conclusion from q square is quite simple, if the value of  $\sum Q^2 > 0$  then the construct has predictive relevance status for the independent variable.

**Table 7. Value Q<sup>2</sup> Predictive Relevance**

	<b>Q<sup>2</sup>predict</b>	<b>RMSE</b>	<b>MAE</b>
Y1	0.460	0.741	0.500
Z1	0.225	0.889	0.631

Based on table 13, it can be seen that the Q2 results for variables X1 and X2 against Z1 have predictive relevance because 0.225 > 0.000. The exogenous variables as a whole (X1, On the basis of various final data processing from blindfolding, the data is suitable for continuing with bootstrapping analysis to determine the research hypothesis.

**Hypothesis Test**

The analysis of the relationships between variables resulted in 5 interpretation models as shown in table 14 and table 15 for 2 models of indirect influence analysis. These results are (1) the influence of X1 on Y1, (2) the influence of X1 on Z1, (3) the influence of X2 on Y1, (4) the influence of X2 on Z1 and (5) the influence of Z1 on Y1. The results of the indirect influence are X1 through Z1 on Y1 and X2 through Z1 on Y1. Conclusions from decision making are drawn from p values <0.5 because the social humanities level is 5% or 0.05, so there is significance. T count with a value > 1.96 can be interpreted as having an influence in the research.

**Table 8. Bootstrapping Direct Effect**

<b>Original sample (O)</b>	<b>Sample mean (M)</b>	<b>Simpulan T Statistics (T&gt;1.96)</b>	<b>T statistics ((O/STDEV))</b>	<b>P values</b>	<b>Simpulan P Values (&lt;0.5)</b>
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X1 -> Y1	0.249	0.247	Influence exist	3.117	0.002	Significant
X1 -> Z1	0.231	0.238	Influence exist	2.698	0.007	Significant
X2 -> Y1	0.342	0.346	Influence exist	4.439	0.000	Significant
X2 -> Z1	0.347	0.345	Influence exist	4.124	0.000	Significant
Z1 -> Y1	0.366	0.364	Influence exist	4.460	0.000	Significant

The meaning of table 14 is that in this study all exogenous variables have a direct influence on endogenous variables, namely the success of implementing the kurikulum merdeka, because the p value is <0.5 and the T count is >1.96, which means there is an influence in the relationship between these variables. Another meaning that can be taken is that H0 is rejected because H1 is accepted entirely for direct influence. The indirect influence hypothesis test will be shown in table 15.

**Table 9. Bootstrapping non direct influence**

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Simpulan T Statistics (T>1.96)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values	Simpulan P Values (<0.5)
X2 -> Z1 -> Y1	0.127	0.125	Influence exist	3.102	0.002	Significant
X1 -> Z1 -> Y1	0.085	0.086	Influence exist	2.392	0.017	Significant

The results of the estimated calculations contained in SmartPLS4 show that the T count of the influence of CEO-based leadership (X1) on the success of IKM (Y1) through PMM (Z1) is 2.392 and P Values are 0.017. The conclusion from the results of these calculations is that CEO-based leadership on the success of IKM through PMM has a significant influence and nature, because P Values <0.5 and T count > 1.96. H0 is rejected because there is a direct influence of CEO-based leadership on the success of IKM through PMM. The estimated results of the calculations contained in SmartPLS4 show that the T count of the influence of teacher readiness quality (X2) on the success of IKM (Y1) through PMM (Z1) is 3.102 and P Values are 0.002. The conclusion from the results of these calculations is that teacher readiness quality on the success of IKM through PMM has a significant influence and nature, because P Values <0.5 and T count > 1.96. H0 is rejected because there is a direct influence of CEO-based leadership on the success of IKM through PMM.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Direct Influence Analysis**

The results of the research, as already mentioned, can be concluded from the existing findings that all variables have a direct influence on endogenous variables. First, there is the influence and significance of CEO-based leadership on the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. The findings in this research are in line with the results of previous research which stated that the key to the success of implementing an kurikulum merdeka is the leadership and capability of teachers in discarding old, outdated habits to be directed towards innovative and creative work patterns, especially in organizing learning (Rahayu et al., 2022). In line with this, there are research findings which state that the main function of CEO leadership is to remove negative constraints from work patterns to ensure employee work patterns become adaptive to new values by replacing old, outdated cultures (Carmeli, Tishler, & Edmondson, 2012). The revolutionary characteristics of the kurikulum merdeka, which requires critical thinking, especially for teachers, needs to be balanced with the ability to utilize and direct from their superiors, namely the school principal. Old values in the form of steadfast adherence to teacher-centered learning principles, lesson plans that are stagnant on behavioristic learning values, and the use of outdated learning media must be eliminated to refresh the learning atmosphere after education in Indonesia has declined due to the pandemic (Angga et al., 2021; Fathurrahman et al., 2022). Therefore, the dimensions of CEO-based leadership are (1) being creative and risk taking, (2) showing benevolence and communicating, (3) articulating a vision, (4) being authoritative, (5) monitoring operations, able to fill the gap a pattern of leading amidst various revolutionary policies in educational circles, especially for the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka.

The second direct influence on this research hypothesis is CEO-based leadership on the effectiveness of PMM. The results have been generalized if CEO-based leadership has influence and significance on PMM effectiveness. The core matter is certainly not much different from the discussion on the influence of CEO-based leadership on the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka in the context of changing old habits of refusing to use technology. Basically, PMM is a generally accessible medium for teachers and school principals to study the kurikulum merdeka and improve their capabilities in teaching and implementing school-based management (Budiarti, 2022). Analysis from researchers, if CEO-based leadership has an influence on the effectiveness of PMM, is a dimension to direct school members to utilize PMM as a means of developing learning media and improving the quality of learning through all existing features. In the end, teachers became more accepting of changes that an application or media made by the

government that could be accessed online could provide benefits for improving the quality of implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. In essence, CEO-based leadership has an influence on the effectiveness of using PMM because its dimensions can neutralize old habits of being reluctant to use technology to become committed to utilizing existing technological facilities.

The third hypothesis result is the influence of teacher readiness quality on the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. The findings of this research prove that TRQ has influence and significance on the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. Researchers have projected that this influence and significance will occur, because basically TRQ is the main requirement in the process of improving the quality of learning in schools. In line with previous research which states that no matter how curriculum modifications are implemented and the learning structure is improved, if the school has teachers who are competent in (1) technological requirements, (2) new normal class management, (3) instructional materials, and (4) online skills will still be able to neutralize barriers to learning (Sente & Gorriceta, 2022). The presence of the TRQ concept in the learning context is also stated as a general competency of teaching staff to provide up to date learning approaches, learning models and learning strategies (Muthuprasad et al.,2021;Pribudhiana, Bin Don, & Bin Yusof, 2021). Therefore, it can be concluded that the presence of TRQ is not only limited to supporting the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka, but also as a key factor in carrying out the implementation of the latest curriculum policies from the government.

The fourth direct influence analysis is the influence of TRQ on the effectiveness of the independent teaching platform, where it is known that these two variables have influence and significance. In simple terms, in this case the TRQ dimension which has a big influence certainly tends to be technological requirements and online skills. This can be generalized as such because the characteristics of PMM are mobile applications which require capital to operate. The capital in question is technological equipment owned by the school or teacher personally. Technological requirements themselves are the teacher's capability to have devices to support their learning such as laptops, cellphones and internet facilities (Sente & Gorriceta, 2022). It can be concluded clearly that without TRQ, PMM application design by the government will not be able to be utilized by teachers. The second dimensional factor that influences PMM effectiveness is TRQ through its dimension of

online skills. It is known that this is part of the dimensions of teacher readiness in operating technological devices and developing insight from the internet for the quality of learning (Sente & Gorricea, 2022; Perifanou, Economides, & Tzafilkou, 2021). In line with the previous arguments, the latest research conclude that coaching through online meeting or asynchronus content can make teacher become profesional (Imron et al., 2023). The conclusion that can be drawn from various ideas from experts and researchers is that TRQ has an influence on the effectiveness of PMM because two dimensions in the form of technological requirements and online skills act as facilitators for teachers to utilize applications developed by educational policy makers.

The final direct influence analysis that can be reviewed is the influence of PMM on the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka. The findings of this research explain that PMM has a direct influence on the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka and has significance. Previous research explains that PMM's main role in contributing to the success of the kurikulum merdeka is to become an actor as a role model practice for teachers and school principals, especially in teaching tools and implementing leadership in schools (Budiarti, 2022). Researchers are of the opinion that PMM is an application used for self-learning for teachers and school principals. In line with other expert research which confirms that in the practice of implementing the kurikulum merdeka, the role of applications is to develop insight, while the role of direct training is also the same, namely in the form of developing insight but also touching on the motivation of teachers and school principals to change for the better when carrying out the implementation of the kurikulum merdeka (Setiaryny, 2023). On the basis of this, it can be concluded that PMM is the right forum for teachers and school principals to fill gaps in insight without having to take part in direct training in contributing to the success of the implementation of the kurikulum merdeka.

### **Indirect Influence Analysis**

Hypothesis testing regarding indirect influence consists of two studies, namely (1) the influence of CEO-based leadership on the success of IKM through PMM and (2) the influence of teacher readiness quality on the success of IKM through PMM. The hypothesis X1 on Y1 through Z1 shows that there is influence and significance, which means that an indirect influence is found in path analysis. Analysis from researchers, rationally, CEO-based leadership contributes to its influence on the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka, acting as a guide for

teaching staff to change old cultural elements in the lack of technology and theoretical gaps in the kurikulum merdeka. Elements of PMM complement the shortcomings of CEO-based leadership, the scope of which is guidance through communication, creating institutional regulations, and assigning certain responsibilities to carry out creative thinking processes (Begum, Xia, Mehmood, Iftikhar, & Li, 2020). PMM can be called a complement to CEO-based leadership because it would be better if the ability to direct and guide the school principal is supplemented with tangible support to be used at any time, especially in supporting the development of employee insight in schools. At first glance, the principal's leadership certainly carries out basic tasks which are of course in high quantity, so it is very possible that the development of teacher competence will be delayed if certain media are not replaced to explain new insights, especially for teachers. The researcher's opinion is in line with the expert's idea which explains that it is very possible for school principals to be busy with official work that takes place outside the school, where this pushes the gap for teachers in developing their competencies to be delayed (Syihabuddin, 2019). Therefore, it can be concluded that CEO and PMM-based leadership, if elaborated, is able to create successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka.

The final hypothesis, which provides a statement about the influence of X2 through Z1 on Y1, shows that there is an indirect influence and there is significance. In the discussion of direct influence, it has been stated that TRQ has a fairly large role, where this construct builds the success of IKM through (1) technological requirements, (2) new normal class management, (3) instructional materials, and (4) online skills. The indirect influence of TRQ will be stronger if it is moderated by PMM, because even though TRQ achievement levels tend to be high, a teacher must still comply with the guidelines for implementing the kurikulum merdeka. TRQ only touches on teacher quality readiness in general, not specifically on how to implement the kurikulum merdeka, especially on the project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. On this basis, it is important for TRQ to be moderated by PMM in producing the success of the kurikulum merdeka, so that TRQ's presence becomes stronger, especially in how the kurikulum merdeka items are internalized in the context of practice in schools. The researcher's statement is supported by expert research which states that highly competent teachers are an asset for implementing the kurikulum merdeka, but they still have to develop their insight, especially in following the signs in implementing the new curriculum, which is obtained through independent training, as well as access to material in PMM (Kemendikbudristek, 2022; Susilawati et al., 2021). Another practitioner says that the more dynamics its curriculum, the more professional teacher that the school needs to accomplish strategic goals (Imron & Hantari, 2021). Means that TRQ based on this research can make dynamic curriculum such as kurikulum merdeka easily adapted at every school environment. Lastly in this discussion, in the analysis of the results it has been stated that as a whole, variables X1,

Researchers' research from previous research regarding the remaining influencing variables, there are several possibilities, namely (1) involvement of parents and the community, (2) evaluation of the practice of implementing the new curriculum through educational supervision, and (3) socio-economic factors of students (Kalman, 2020; Palestina, Pangan, & Ancho, 2020; Sumarsono et al., 2019), however it needs to be studied further because previous research discussed in general terms the implementation of the new curriculum and the key factors that influenced it.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusion**

Based on the research results that have been analyzed using SmartPLS4, the findings of this research state that all hypotheses, whether direct influence or indirect influence, are accepted. The indirect hypothesis as an advantage of SmartPLS4 states that (1) CEO-based leadership has influence and significance on the success of IKM through the independent teaching platform and (2) teacher readiness quality has influence and significance on the success of IKM through the independent teaching platform. Overall, CEO-based leadership, teacher readiness quality, and an independent teaching platform contribute 81.3% of the influence to the successful implementation of the kurikulum merdeka at the Malang City Junior High School level. On the basis of previous research, it can be explained that 18.7% of the success of IKM could be caused by (1) involvement of parents and the community, (2) evaluation of the practice of implementing the new curriculum through educational supervision, and (3) socio-economic factors of students.

### **Suggestions**

The quality of this research can be developed on a broader scale of population reach, for example on a national or provincial scale, so that it can represent at a macro level the results of assessing the success of the implementation of the kurikulum merdeka, especially in SMP Penggerak schools in 2023-2024. Secondly, future researchers can examine the involvement of parents in the community, practical evaluation, and socio-economic factors of students as exogenous variables in influencing the massive implementation of the kurikulum merdeka in 2024-2025 in accordance with the IKM road map.

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