Readiness of Elementary Schools in Facing the Minimum Competency Assessment in Malang City

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ABSTRACT

Merdeka Belajar is one of the new policies launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia starting in 2019. One part of the Merdeka Belajar policy is improving the educational evaluation system called the National Assessment, which aims to encourage quality improvement and student learning outcomes. Minimum Competency Assessment is one of the main points in the National Assessment policy. The Minimum Competency Assessment essentially measures minimum competency in institutional, personnel, and personality/character elements. This study aims to find out the portrait of elementary schools in Malang City in preparing for the implementation of the minimum competency assessment program. This research was conducted using a quantitative research approach with survey techniques. The survey was conducted on 30 elementary schools and the results showed that the readiness of elementary schools in Malang City to face the minimum competency assessment was 76.7%.

Keywords: national assessment, minimum competency assessment, elementary schools

1. INTRODUCTION

Merdeka Belajar is one of the new policies launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia starting in 2019. Merdeka Belajar is defined as a policy that can create an active and fun learning situation. This means that students are given the freedom to express what is being learned, not just sit, be silent, and listen [1]. In addition, one part of the Freedom to Learn policy is improving the educational evaluation system called the National Assessment [2], which aims to encourage quality improvement and student learning outcomes.

The National Assessment is one of the new policies that the central government began socializing in October 2020. The National Assessment is a mapping of the quality of education in all schools, madrasas, and the equivalence program for elementary and secondary schools. The National Assessment contains three main points, namely the Minimum Competency Assessment, the Character Survey, and the Learning Environment Survey [3].

Minimum Competency Assessment (MCA) is one of the main points in the National Assessment policy. MCA is an assessment of the basic competencies needed by all students to be able to develop their capacity and participate positively in society as measured through reading literacy and numeracy skills. The competencies assessed in the MCA were divided into two groups, namely reading literacy and numeracy competency assessment. The components assessed in the literacy and numeracy competencies include three things, namely logical-systematic thinking skills, reasoning skills, and skills of sorting and processing information. To be able to achieve these competencies, the development of the MCA instrument components will be developed based on content, cognitive processes, and contexts in reading literacy and numeracy.

Based on an interview with Mr. S a class VI teacher at SDN Arjowinangun 1 Malang City, he did not understand MCA, but the school had prepared MCA by buying MCA books published by GO. Mr. S added that he had never attended any training on MCA because the training provided by the government/relevant agencies was specifically for teachers of grades IV and V of SD. This fact is also supported by the statement of Mrs. E as a class III teacher at SDN Klojen Malang City. Mrs. E's understanding of MCA was only limited to the implementation of MCA which would be carried out by class V students in semester 1. According to her admission, she had never attended training on MCA, because at her school the MCA training was specifically

aimed at class IV and class V teachers. From the interview above, it can be concluded that not all teachers understand MCA, and MCA training is only given to certain teachers.

MCA is aimed at improving the quality of education and is designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning, which in turn will improve student learning outcomes. Therefore, it is appropriate to know whether the implementation of MCA is running smoothly or not as developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. This readiness can be seen, among other things, from school programs welcoming MCA, preparing teachers and school members in facing MCA, as well as training/coaching from schools to teachers in welcoming MCA. The purpose of carrying out this research is to describe school readiness in dealing with MCA in elementary schools in Malang City.

2. METHOD

This study uses a quantitative research design with survey techniques. The research variable is determined based on the readiness of schools in dealing with MCA in elementary schools in Malang City - East Java, in terms of the programs prepared by schools in welcoming MCA, preparing teachers and school members in facing MCA, as well as training/assistance from schools for teachers in welcoming MCA. The survey questionnaire was designed based on the variables above, then the questionnaire was distributed to public and private elementary schools in Malang City - East Java.

The population of this study is public and private elementary schools in Malang – East Java. The research sample was obtained based on the use of random sampling techniques. The total number of elementary schools in Malang City is 284, consisting of 196 public elementary schools and 88 private elementary schools. The samples taken in the city of Malang were 30 elementary schools, consisting of 20 public elementary schools and 10 private elementary schools.

The data analysis method is divided into four stages, namely the preparation stage, data tabulation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. At the preparatory stage, checking the names and completeness of the identity of the respondents, checking the completeness of the research data, and reducing the data based on the formulation of the research problem. The next stage is data tabulation. After that, the data is presented and described in descriptive quantitative form. The final stage of data analysis is drawing conclusions.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that the readiness of elementary schools in Malang City to face MCA was 76.7%. Specifically, the percentage of school readiness criteria for implementing MCA is shown in Table 1. below.

Table 1. Percentage of School Readiness to Implement MCA in Malang City

No.	Criteria	Percentage (%)
1	Schools prepare certain programs to welcome MCA	76,7
2	The school prepares teachers and school members to welcome MCA	93,3
3	The teacher program plans in preparing MCA	96,7
4	Implementation/implementation of teacher program plans in preparing MCA	56,7
5	School cooperation with certain parties to welcome MCA	70
6	Training and/coaching from schools for teachers in welcoming MCA	66,7
	The average readiness of schools to implement MCA	76,7

According to criterion number 1 in Table 1 above, the research results obtained based on a questionnaire that has been distributed to 30 elementary schools (public and private) in Malang City show that 76.7% of schools have prepared certain programs to welcome MCA, and the rest have not prepared certain programs to welcome MCA. One of the reasons schools have not prepared a special program to deal with MCA is that schools consider that information from the government about the implementation of MCA is still confusing and there is no clear policy from the relevant agencies regarding the MCA program. Another reason is that MCA is a new thing and there are no specific guidelines on operational technicalities for MCA so schools have not programmed it optimally. For schools that are ready to welcome MCA, the programs prepared by the school include participating in outreach/webinar activities and training about MCA online; procurement of MCA practice questions books; training students with MCA questions; preparing facilities and infrastructure; running

literacy programs (reading and numeracy); provide socialization of MCA activities to parents, teachers, and students; provide information and communication technology learning in stages from class III to class VI; as well as student assistance by IT instructors.

In criterion number 2, 93.3% of schools had prepared their teachers and school members to welcome MCA, and the rest of the schools had not prepared their teachers and school members to welcome MCA. The preparations made by the school included providing outreach, webinars, and providing/facilitating resource books; prepare books that refer to MCA one student one book for fifth-grade students (2021-2022 school year); schools prepare to provide training, coaching, writing questions, and making modules; provide MCA socialization to parents of students via zoom at the time of receiving the 2nd-semester report card; involve educators in the national assessment technical guidance held by the ministry and the education and culture office of Malang City; preparing computer laboratory rooms (32 units), and scheduling the implementation of information and communication technology learning; providing school literacy programs, cultivating character education habits, distributing question links through the assessment and learning center.

Teachers as personnel in educational institutions apart from serving as teachers, should always be able to innovate to be able to improve their capabilities as teachers. One of the innovations that can be developed by teachers is in the form of innovative learning strategies [4]. Teachers can adopt various innovative learning strategies according to the needs of students [5]. Innovative teaching skills are needed so that students can actively participate in the learning process [6].

In criterion number 3, 96.7% of teachers have prepared plans/programs to prepare MCA. Plans/programs prepared by teachers in preparing for the implementation of MCA, including participating in webinars/socialization/training from various sources; improving literacy activities; applying assessment questions according to MCA questions; teacher coordination meetings; preparing practice questions; adapting yourself to the computer; buy a book about MCA; prepare learning tools. Based on the research results according to Table 1, as much as 56.7% of the plans/programs that have been prepared based on criterion 3 have been implemented/implemented. Based on criterion number 6, as many as 66.7% of schools have provided training/coaching/socialization to teachers to prepare for the implementation of the MCA program. The training/coaching/socialization provided is in the form of explaining the meaning, goals, objectives, and functions of MCA; manual and digital literacy about MCA material; IT adaptation; reasoning questions; making learning devices. Forms of training/coaching/socialization are carried out during work meetings, and conducted through workshops, and webinars.

Another effort made by the school to welcome and prepare for the implementation of MCA is by collaborating with external/certain parties. Based on the research results obtained, as much as 50% of schools have collaborated with certain parties, including school committees, student guardians, supervisors, K3S, KKG, teacher assistant drives, the Malang City Education and Culture Office, tutoring institutions (Primagama, tutoring Ragil), publishers, and higher education institutions (Universitas Negeri Malang, Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang).

Literacy is the main focus of the government in the MCA program. Literacy competencies need to be instilled from an early age so that students understand that literacy is not only limited to basic skills (reading, writing, and arithmetic), but furthermore, literacy competencies are important for students' financial, social and personal well-being as provisions for living in society [7]. This is of course concerned with the personal interests of students. Because of the importance of these literacy competencies, the government developed the MCA program. MCA is a program to evaluate students' literacy skills. Of course, before the evaluation is carried out the teacher must prepare learning which includes literacy components.

These components include logical-systematic thinking skills, reasoning skills, and skills in sorting and processing information. These skills are internalized into the content/learning materials so that students are expected to be able to master these skills. Therefore, teachers should link learning content/material with students' personal interests, socio-cultural interests, and scientific frameworks. The scientific framework of thinking needs to be grown and internalized within students. This is because knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and processes are needed for decision-making, to increase student productivity, and participation in social life [8]. In social life, literacy competence is needed. Because literacy competence is expected to create and maintain social relations between humans so that they can coexist peacefully [9].

CONCLUSION

Based on the research, it can be concluded that the readiness of elementary schools in dealing with MCA in Malang City is 76.7%. This percentage shows that more than 50% of elementary schools in Malang City are ready to face MCA. The preparations made by schools tended to be technical preparations, namely in the form of preparing facilities and infrastructure and procuring books. The core essence related to changes in the learning process that leads to improving students' higher-order thinking skills has not been touched fundamentally. Preparation for the implementation of MCA should not only focus on procuring facilities and infrastructure, especially the IT component, but also on preparation for the learning process. Because the aim of MCA is to improve the quality of education and is designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning, which in turn will improve student learning outcomes. So that the main improvement is carried out at the stage of the learning process.

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