



## The Importance of Emotional, Spiritual Intelligence, and Self Efficacy on The Principal's Performance in Sekolah Penggerak Program Based on Merdeka Curriculum

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the importance of emotional, spiritual intelligence, and Self Efficacy on the performance of school principals in Sekolah Penggerak that use the Merdeka curriculum. Based on initial observations, it was found that there was a lack of emotional and spiritual intelligence in the principal, which hindered the effectiveness of the process of implementing the self-development of a principal. This study used the literature review method. The instruments used were national and international journals, reference books, and unstructured interviews for analysis using thematic analysis. The results showed that the Sekolah Penggerak was an effort to improve the quality of schools through holistic learning outcomes starting with High-Quality Human Resources (principals and teachers). Improvements were made through 5 interventions to schools to increase the capacity of Human Resources. Self-efficacy as part of emotional and spiritual intelligence can form school principals as leaders, planners, supervisors or evaluators in schools who are confident and think ahead. This intelligence can make a school principal confident in planning work programs, strongly committed, able to carry out programs well, and collaborate with teachers and administrative staff to achieve the school's goal of producing students to become Pancasila student profiles.

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## Introduction

The importance of education makes this sector a sector that remains to be developed to improve the quality of human resources that determine the future of a country (Miyaura, 2018; Sari, 2016). Indonesian education is focused on creating a strong character and having good science, knowledge, and technology skills, as stated in the Education System Law No. 20 of 2003. The plan of Nadiem Makarim, the Minister of National Education in issuing circular letter No. 1 of 2020 regarding the policy of *Merdeka Belajar* (independent learning), raises the pros and cons of various groups. Is *Merdeka Belajar* means "Merdeka Belajar" (Freedom of Learning) or "Kebebasan Belajar" (Freedom of Learning)? The word "freedom" is understood as that schools are free to innovate and encourage creativity and critical thinking in students. However, in our country's education system, the functions and duties of teachers and students are still behavioristic, and colonialism still exists. Those are why "Merdeka Belajar" was designed (Nofri, 2020). *Merdeka Belajar* is finally approved because it is compatible with Indonesian education's future vision and mission: to produce quality people who can compete in many facets of life. (Indrawati & Kuncoro, 2021; Sibagariang et al., 2021).



*Sekolah Penggerak Program* is one program that is hoped to improve the education quality of the Indonesian government. The focus of quality improvement in developing human resources that can be targeted for improving the quality of student learning outcomes is principals and teachers. Interventions that will be carried out in *Sekolah Penggerak* are: Consultative and asymmetrical assistance, strengthening of human resources in schools, learning with a new paradigm, data-based planning, and school digitization (Kemdikbudristek, 2021). In the *Sekolah Penggerak* program, the principal has a role in planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, financing, controlling, assessing, and utilizing all school resources, including the teachers. (Taufan et al., 2021). The principal's role is so significant that in the implementation of *Sekolah Penggerak*, treatments are applied to the principal, starting from debriefing in the form of technical guidance and mentoring by expert trainers during the Intervention of *Sekolah Penggerak* Program (Kemdikbudristek, 2021). Technical guidance in this program is more about increasing the intellectual ability of the school principal in carrying out his or her duties and functions as a principal.

Based on the results of initial observations conducted in several schools in East Java, it was found that in *Sekolah Penggerak*, a principal tends to be not confident in his or her ability to change his or her school. This condition is shown in the mentoring process carried out by a team of experts during the school program preparation. Principals are still doubtful about the program they will put in the school program design and also doubt the achievement of the program in the future, which means that the principal's emotional and spiritual intelligent level is still low. A principal needs to have high confidence in leading his or her school. It is because the principal needs to contribute as top managers who must create a work atmosphere and be an example for other teachers. Several studies have stated that the competence of the principal has been proven to affect teacher performance in schools (Hidayat, 2021; Sinaga et al., 2021; Susanti, 2021).

The principal's mandate, described previously, has explained the duties and functions of the principal, starting from planning and supervising to evaluating, which makes the principal need to have self-motivation to develop him/herself. A person's emotional and spiritual intelligence can improve performance and make these human resources professional (Lubis et al., 2020; Rahmawaty et al., 2021; Samadi & Emamgholizadeh, 2016). Both of this intelligence will lead to the teacher's ability to improve the quality of learning (Halik et al., 2018). Self-efficacy will build the mental health of leaders, especially in carrying out their duties (Yıldırım & Güler, 2020). Strong motivation within the principal will create self-efficacy, and a leader's self-efficacy will increase professionalism in professional development (Moran et al., 2021). This research feels the need for a form of evaluation of a leader's self in addition to evaluation assessments from other parties. Through self-evaluation, the principal will realize what needs to be improved and what needs to be developed later. The performance plan is essential for performance management and can be done by following the Self Determination Theory (Deci et al., 2017). Other research explains that spiritual, emotional, and self-efficacy are essential in improving performance and ensuring results following the plans without violating applicable rules. (Alaei et al., 2017; Tiwari & Dhatt, 2014).

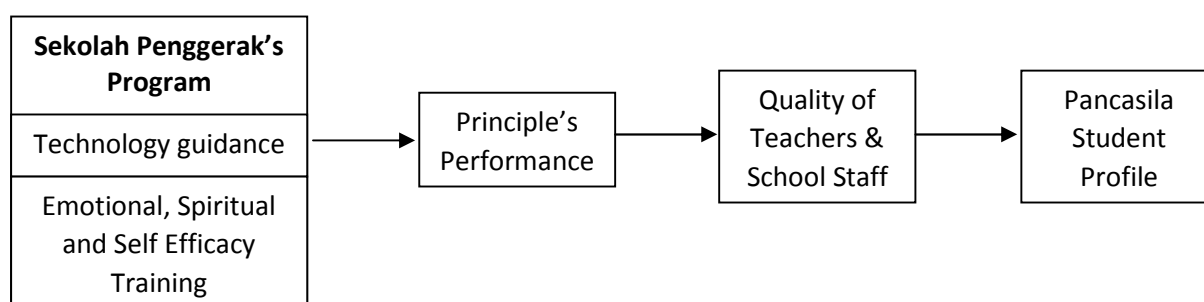
## Research Method

This study was a literature review study. A literature review can be taken from many references such as scholarly articles, books, documentations and websites. The method used in the literature review study was collecting library data, reading, taking notes, and managing research materials (Zed, 2014). The researcher comprehensively summarizes the research

done on a specific topic in this literature review to show the reader what is already known about the topic and what is not, to seek rationale from previous research, or for future research ideas (Denney & Tewksbury, 2013). This study used several references as data sources, consisting of 1 printed reference book, 2 educational websites, and 44 accredited journals (30 International Journals and 14 National Journals) and then analyzed using thematic analysis.

## Results and Discussion

This study provides an overview of how Emotional, Spiritual Intelligence, and Self Efficacy optimize The Principal's Performance in the Sekolah Penggerak's Program based on the Merdeka Curriculum. The following is an overview in the form of a framework of research results.



**Figure 1. Frame of Mind**

## Merdeka Curriculum

The Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intra-curricular learning in which the content will be optimized so that students have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competencies. Teachers are free to choose various teaching media or tools because their learning is based on students' learning needs and interests (Dasar, 2021). The Merdeka curriculum is used as an alternative to overcome post-pandemic learning setbacks by allowing teachers to develop all aspects of the learning process by paying attention to their students' interests and learning needs (Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo, 2022). The Merdeka curriculum was formed as a transition from curriculum 13 and the emergency curriculum during the COVID-19 pandemic by utilizing educational technology (Jusuf & Sobari, 2022). The emergence of the Merdeka curriculum demands an increase in the ability of teachers to innovate in their learning activities. Teachers should be able to understand the needs and interests of students before learning. The principal's ability to communicate and motivate teachers to continue developing themselves is very important in achieving their goal of developing students with the Pancasila student profile.

## Sekolah Penggerak Program

*Sekolah Penggerak* Program was launched in 2021 by the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim online. *Sekolah Penggerak* hoped to be a catalyst to actualize the vision of Indonesian education, which is advanced, sovereign, independent, and has personality, by creating Pancasila Students. This program is focused on developing holistic student learning development that includes competence (literacy and numeracy) and character, starting with high-quality human resources (principals and teachers). This program complements the previous school transformation program, which will accelerate public/private schools in all school conditions, 1-2 stages more advanced, with the hope that



all schools in Indonesia will become *Sekolah Penggerak* in the future. In *Sekolah Penggerak*, five interventions are carried out, which are (Kemdikbudristek, 2021) :

#### *Consultative and asymmetrical assistance*

In this intervention, there is a partnership between the Ministry of Education and Culture with the local government through *Sekolah Penggerak* assistance by the Ministry of Education and Culture to schools in each province. In addition, the Ministry of Education and Culture's Technical Service Units in each province will assist the local government during the implementation of *Sekolah Penggerak*, such as facilitating the local government in socializing the parties needed to find solutions to field constraints during implementation.

#### *Strengthening of School Human Resources*

This intervention will be carried out through a one-to-one intensive training and mentoring program with expert trainers provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture. First, training for principals, school superintendents, and teachers consists of; 1) Training on implementing learning with a new paradigm for school principals, supervisors, inspectors, and teachers. 2) Leadership in learning for school principals and school superintendents training conducted once/year during the program. 3) National training for teacher representatives while the rest of the teachers are trained by in-house training. Second, assistance for Principals, School Supervisors, and Teachers consisting of; 1) In-house training, 2) District or City level workshops, 3) Learning communities or practitioners (Subject Groups), 4) Coaching programs that are conducted regularly every 2-4 weeks during the program. Then the implementation of technology consists of; 1) Technology literacy, 2) Teacher platform for profile and competency development, 3) Teacher platform for learning, 4) School resource platform, and 5) Education report card platform.

#### *Learning With a New Paradigm*

Learning with the new paradigm is designed based on the principle of differentiated learning so that each student learns according to their needs and stages of development. Having faith in God Almighty and having noble character, global diversity minded, independent, cooperation, critical reasoning, and creative are profiles of Pancasila learning learned through curricular and co-curricular programs.

#### *Program based planning*

School-based management is planning based on the self-reflection of the education unit.

#### *School Digitization*

Multiple digital platforms' usage aims to reduce complexity, increase efficiency, add inspiration, and a customized approach.

### **The Importance of Emotional, Spiritual Intelligence, Self-Efficacy for School Principals**

*Sekolah penggerak* program focuses on improving the quality of schools through acceleration to schools so that they can move forward, one of which is by improving the competence of teachers and principals. In *Sekolah penggerak* program, especially in the competence of the principal on the planning level, a school principal is required to be able to prepare a School Activity and Budget Plan (RKAS) in the implementation of one of the principal's functions as a planner. The RKAS should be the principal's performance and commitment target through programs offered in the following year. In addition, the programs should be known and approved by relevant parties outside the principal, such as teachers, parents, committees, or city-level education officials who synergize with each other for school progress. This performance plan is used as a medium to help principals and school officials express their innovations and creativity to improve the quality of schools in the





future. A good performance plan made by the principal will affect the professionalism of teachers in schools (Nugroho et al., 2022)

The commitment of a school principal to maintain the plan that has been made and implement it until the plan is carried out to the maximum is essential. Emotional intelligence will build the personality traits of good, committed workers and increase job satisfaction (Kaur & Sharma, 2019). Emotional intelligence has been proven to positively affect employee performance and provide job satisfaction, including in implementing education management (Kaur & Sharma, 2019; Mohamad & Jais, 2016; Sharma & Chand, 2022; Yoke & Panatik, 2015). Spiritual intelligence also affects the making of organizational commitment, and this organizational commitment can mediate spiritual intelligence on employee performance (Tahir & Rahman, 2018). Human resources with spiritual intelligence are proven to cope with stress in the workplace, develop themselves in the surrounding environment and ultimately produce better performance (Qadri et al., 2017). Besides commitment, there is also a need for motivation within the principal to develop himself. Self-efficacy will build a leader's mental health, especially in carrying out his / her duties (Yıldırım & Güler, 2020). Self-efficacy is crucial in exercising personal control, including control over one's health (Zlatanovic, 2016). Someone will believe in the existence of efficacy in him/her if the things they do are completed well and have a positive response. It will increase the individual's confidence. Self-efficacy is the belief from within that one will succeed in achieving specific goals (Pamungkas & Indah, 2017). Self-efficacy is the belief that a person has in his abilities that can support success in a career. High self-efficacy will directly influence the individual's confidence so that his/her creativity level becomes higher (Mobaraki, 2012).

The principal's mandate, as previously described, has explained the duties and functions of the principal, from planning and supervising to evaluating. Motivation within the principal him/herself is needed in order to develop. Self-efficacy will build the leader's mental health, especially in carrying out his/her duties (Yıldırım & Güler, 2020). Strong motivation within the principal will create self-efficacy, and the leader's self-efficacy will be able to increase professionalism in his/her professional development. (Moran et al., 2021). Through self-evaluation, the principal will realize what must be improved and what must be developed. Performance plans are essential for performance management, and this can be done by following the Self Determination Theory (Lan e.t, 2016).

The role of the principal as a supervisor of learning in schools will run effectively when the principal does it through a good approach and communication with the teacher (Choudhury, 2022). The principal's self-efficacy will impact his ability to effectively communicate as a leader to teachers and other school environments to improve teacher performance in implementing the *sekolah penggerak* program (Sudarmanto, 2021). In addition, communication can mediate the effectiveness of emotional and spiritual intelligence to improve employee performance (Rahmawaty et al., 2021). Improving teacher performance will strengthen the role of teachers in *sekolah penggerak* as facilitators and motivators who are creative and innovative in driving student-centered learning and providing fun learning (Sibagariang et al., 2021). Therefore, there must be strong self-efficacy. The principal will pour all his ideas and innovations into the performance plan and ensure that the principal's performance will be focused.

Previous research has reviewed the importance of self-efficacy to improve one's performance in managing others, carrying out work according to their duties, work psychology, and other positive things in the work environment. (Cayır & Ulupınar, 2021; Day et al., 2021; Horcajo et al., 2022; Redifer et al., 2021). The principal is an essential



contributor to the professional development of teachers and educators. So it is necessary to communicate and collaborate with the principal, teachers, and administrative staff to improve the teaching and admin profession, which will impact student services and the achievement of school education goals (Bredeson & Johansson, 2000). In his leadership, a democratic school principal will provide opportunities for teachers and staff who make mistakes to improve themselves and reward those who excel (Saputra et al., 2021). Principals also play a role in influencing student achievement in school and their welfare through policies related to teachers, curriculum, and other policies that are the decisions of a principal. (Ahkam et al., 2020; Dhuey & Smith, 2012). Principals need to have self-efficacy to play a positive role in building performance. In other words, the better self-efficacy in tendency, the better the level of performance (Dewi, 2012). The competence of principals and teachers will improve the quality of education in schools (Setyawan & Santosa, 2021). At this level, the duties and functions of the principal as a planner, supervisor to evaluator can run well. On this basis, it is essential to increase the competence of the principal to be balanced with an increase in emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and the principal's self-efficacy so that the objectives of *Sekolah Penggerak* program can be achieved.

## Conclusion

*Sekolah Penggerak* is focused on developing holistic student learning outcomes that include competence (literacy and numeracy) and character, starting with high-quality human resources (principals and teachers). Improvements to become a *Sekolah penggerak* are carried out by providing five interventions, including consultative and asymmetric assistance, strengthening human resources in schools, learning with a new paradigm, data-based planning, and digitizing schools. In the intervention of strengthening human resources in schools, it is necessary to build emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and self-efficacy for principals and teachers, especially for principals in carrying out their leadership roles on the highest management level.

Emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and self-efficacy for principals in *Sekolah Penggerak* are vital, especially in future program design and implementation of school programs. Emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and self-efficacy will create a high commitment in a principal to what has been planned, manage self-stress in collaboration with teachers and staff and encourage a principal's confidence to develop more creative and innovative programs for the betterment of the school. Emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and self-efficacy are critical for principals in *Sekolah Penggerak*, especially in future program design and implementation. Emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and self-efficacy will help a principal commit to what has been planned, manage self-stress in collaboration with teachers and staff, and boost a principal's confidence in developing more creative and innovative programs for the school's benefit. This will also impact the performance of teachers who play an important role in shaping students to achieve the goals of Pancasila student profile characteristics.

## Recommendation

The recommendation from the results of this study for Minister of education is that the development of emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and self-efficacy needs to be added to the implementation of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program. This recommendation can be applied at the stage of centralized guidance for principals by the ministry, it is necessary to include material on how to mentally and spiritually develop the principal in carrying out his duties as the highest manager in the school. so that in the process, the principal does not



hesitate to compile a school program and can carry out the program well with other school officials.

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