EXPLORING STUDENTS' VIEWS ON THE APPLICATION OF INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN NATURAL SCIENCE SUBJECT

EKSPLORASI PENDAPAT SISWA DALAM PENERAPAN KURIKULUM MERDEKA DI SEKOLAH DASAR PADA MATA PELAJARAN IPA

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Abstract

This study explored students' views on applying the independent curriculum in natural science subject. The method used was descriptive qualitative. The sample was fourth-grade students of Islamic Elementary School (IES) Salsabila Yogyakarta, selected using a purposive sampling technique. The instruments used were questionnaires and interviews. Data analysis used an interactive model, namely the reduction stages, data presentation, and conclusion. The findings of this study indicated that the fourth-grade students of IES Salsabila Yogyakarta responded positively to natural science learning, combined with social studies, to become Natural and Social Science (NSS). NSS gives students holistic knowledge so they get complete learning, hoping to make themselves individuals with a stand-in dealing with a problem. Therefore, it is expected that the application of the independent curriculum in natural science subject can be facilitated with media that support learning. Socialization or technical guidance for educators is needed in manufacturing innovative media to make this happen.

Keywords: Independent Curriculum, Natural Sciences, Student Views, Elementary School

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pendapat siswa tentang penerapan kurikulum merdeka pada mata pelajaran IPA. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Sampel penelitian ini adalah kelas IV Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (IES) Salsabila Yogyakarta yang dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah angket dan wawancara. Analisis data menggunakan model interaktif yaitu tahap reduksi, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa kelas IV IES Salsabila Yogyakarta merespon positif pembelajaran IPA yang dipadukan dengan IPS menjadi Natural and Social Science (NSS). NSS memberikan siswa pengetahuan holistik sehingga mereka mendapatkan pembelajaran yang lengkap yang diharapkan dapat menjadikan diri mereka individu yang tangguh dalam menghadapi suatu masalah. Oleh karena itu, diharapkan penerapan kurikulum merdeka pada mata pelajaran IPA dapat difasilitasi dengan media yang mendukung pembelajaran. Sosialisasi atau bimbingan teknis bagi para pendidik sangat diperlukan dalam pembuatan media inovatif untuk mewujudkan hal tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Kurikulum Merdeka, IPA, Pendapat Siswa, Sekolah Dasar

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1. Introduction

The world was shocked by the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) pandemic in early 2020. Covid-19 started to enter Indonesia in early March 2020. Not a few sectors were affected by this pandemic. Starting from the social, economy, tourism, and even the education sector were significantly affected by this virus. The policy taken by governments in various countries is to cancel educational activities to minimize the spread of this virus. All educational institutions are closed to prevent the spread of this virus (Putria, Maula, & Uswatun, 2020). The closure of educational institutions requires students and teachers to conduct virtual learning so that all learning activities are online (Gurukkal, 2020).

According to Permendikbud No. 109 of 2013 concerning distance learning, it is stated that online learning is a form of learning that utilizes technology-based information and communication for the benefit of learning without any boundaries of space and time. The online learning environment includes text, video, images, audio, or animation (Elçiçek & Karal, 2020). Online learning seems to return to the conventional learning format presented in digital form (Royani, Nazurty, & Hamidah, 2021). Information technology can be used to support the learning process during a pandemic. Learning can be done anywhere, anytime, and by anyone without any limitations of space and time. This allows students to learn and interact with educators even in remote situations (Pratiwi, 2020).

Online learning is new in education in Indonesia, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Online learning is massively implemented in elementary schools (Jannah, Wulandari, & Budi, 2020). This is undoubtedly a challenge for students and teachers to continue maximizing online learning. Through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, the government issued a blended learning policy, considered more effective than distance learning. The government also provides a free learning platform for students (Mulyadi & Wikanengsih, 2022). This learning is present as an effort to minimize the occurrence of learning loss in students. Various change concepts also occur in the curriculum's realm with the prototype curriculum's implementation.

The Covid-19 pandemic has encouraged education policymakers to implement various concepts of curriculum changes following existing conditions. It started from the implementation of the simplified 2013 curriculum, the emergency curriculum, to the prototype curriculum at driving school (Rozady & Koten, 2021). A prototype curriculum has been prepared to be applied to school programs in recent years. The prototype curriculum has been piloted in 2500 pilot schools, namely the Driving School, with satisfying results (Sutrisno, 2021). The prototype curriculum is an elective curriculum applied to education starting in the 2022/2023 school year, which is the development direction of the 2013 curriculum. Competency-based prototype curriculum supports learning recovery by implementing project-based learning (Press Release of Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, 2022).

The prototype curriculum can answer the challenges of the existing situation by rearranging the curriculum by empowering the use of information technology while still paying attention to students' character. Project-based learning by utilizing technology can produce products such as animation (Adisya, 2021). The global pandemic has certainly had a tremendous impact on the quality of education in Indonesia. For this reason, to overcome learning loss, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendibud-Ristek) has prepared this prototype curriculum, which is

regulated in the Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture, Research and Technology Number 162/M/2021 concerning Driving Schools (Rozady & Koten, 2021).

The prototype curriculum is the forerunner of the independent curriculum; this curriculum aims to restore learning and fix what has happened due to the pandemic, including the loss of learning in students (Mustaghfiroh, 2020). The independent curriculum changes the horizon of increasingly independent thinking, which is indicated by various flexible policies and supports the direction of education with a new paradigm. The implementation of flexible education is considered necessary to be applied in Indonesia, which seems to have rigid rules. The independent curriculum was born so that educators are not shackled by the old paradigm that in this curriculum, students are free to choose education in the presence of democracy (Susilawati, 2021).

Independent learning is related to freedom of learning. According to the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, Nadiem Makarim, freedom of learning must exist in teachers before it exists in students (Istiq'faroh, 2020). Independent learning means giving freedom to teachers, students, and schools. The freedom in question is to innovate, be independent, and be creative. This concept aligns with the flow of progressivism by John Dewey, who views giving freedom to educational institutions to manage and explore students' abilities (Mustaghfiroh, 2020). Freedom to learn is the beginning of ideas created to form a happy learning atmosphere. Freedom of learning includes learning to be free to think, free to learn, independent and creative learning, and freedom for happiness (Daga, 2021).

The independent curriculum concept was initially applied to grades I and IV in the first year, with assessments carried out in fourth grade (Marisa, 2021). Learning materials are delivered to students with freedom. It can be started sequentially from the first material or randomized according to the teacher's considerations and wishes. For example, from the results of students' diagnostics of difficulties in ecosystem material, the teacher can start learning with material on the characteristics of living things first. The impact of implementing an independent learning curriculum in elementary schools can be directly felt by merging natural sciences and social sciences subjects into natural and social sciences. This application started in grades one and fourth elementary school in the 2022/2023 school year. The directorate of elementary schools explained that science and social studies were combined into Natural and Social Sciences (NSS) issues in the independent learning curriculum. Independent science learning emphasizes the discovery process and helps students understand the natural environment (Tursinawati, 2015). With the NSS, learning will be more holistic with the hope that it can trigger students to manage the natural and social environment in one unit. In the independent learning curriculum, there is also project-based learning to strengthen the profile of pancasila students, which is carried out at least twice in one academic year (Siska, 2016).

The implementation of the independent curriculum has encountered many obstacles and challenges. Moreover, there is a significant change in combining science and social studies subjects to become NSS. NSS helps students grow their curiosity about the phenomena around them. This curiosity can trigger students to understand how the universe works and interacts with the social environment. Such understanding can help students identify their problems and find solutions so they will be helpful in life. However, the challenges of learning science are increasing with this merger, especially for teachers to present learning about natural and social phenomena together

so that students can view learning holistically, as stated by the fourth-grade teacher at Islamic Elementary School Salsabila Yogyakarta.

Based on the results of initial interviews conducted by researchers, applying the independent curriculum in fourth grade in science learning was considered to have a promising future because, in science learning, there was also an emphasis on project-based learning. Previously limited to natural-scope material, science learning is now developed into complete learning by combining social fabric. There is a pillar of Pancasila that, if successfully applied to students, will foster good character so that learning does not only focus on the academic field but also student morale. Character education aims to develop students into noble characters through practicing and teaching moral values (Rosidutan, 2018).

The application of NSS is considered not to burden students and even lighten the burden of students. Students feel happy with this learning because there is a practicum or experiment that can increase the creativity of students or teachers. The basic principles of the scientific method in science learning will train scientific attitudes, such as curiosity, critical thinking, and analytical decision-making, to produce wisdom in students (Nia, 2022). Science learning in elementary schools focuses on how much material can be learned or absorbed by students and how much competence students have in utilizing their knowledge. A strong reason is those elementary school-age students still see everything as a whole and as it is so that science and social studies learning is simplified into science and social studies.

Looking at the facts, implementing the independent curriculum in elementary schools, especially in science subjects, has encountered many problems. Science learning was formerly known as a lesson that discusses nature, and social studies were previously learned as a lesson that discusses society; now, since the existence of NSS, the boundaries between the two have disappeared. Of course, this change will surprise students. Then not to mention the mindset of teachers who are too comfortable with the old curriculum will create challenges. This research is considered essential to be carried out with many considerations, namely students' views on learning science combined with social studies into science and technology. It is necessary to ensure the Ministry's policies align with the program of each academic unit, especially in elementary schools. Changes such as the merging of science and social studies subjects into natural sciences will have an impact on students who are subjects in education; of course, this must be investigated and dug as deep as possible to find out early on things that are felt to be lacking in the implementation of the independent curriculum, especially in elementary schools. Based on the explanation of the background, the researcher believes that it is essential to explore the views of students in the application of the independent curriculum for elementary school science subjects to find out student responses regarding the implementation of the independent learning curriculum in the natural sciences so that it can be used as evaluation material in its implementation.

2. Research Method

This research is a qualitative descriptive study. The qualitative descriptive study aims to describe the findings in detail according to the phenomena that occur; this is in line with what is described by Creswell (2016), which states that qualitative research is research that explores and understands the meaning of some individuals or groups of people who depart from social problems. Qualitative descriptive research is focused on answering questions about what, who, where, when, and how an event occurred, which

was studied in depth to find patterns to describe an event (Kim, Sefcik, & Bradway, 2017). View or perception is the process of interpreting a stimulus based on how we view the world (Saputra & Hadi, 2022). Perception is also defined as someone's understanding of interpreting something; this statement is in line with what is conveyed by Kotler (2000), which explains that perception is the process of how a person selects, organizes, and interprets information so that a meaningful conception is formed. This clarifies that each individual has a view according to their background.

The research subjects were 3 teachers and 31 fourth-grade students of Islamic Elementary School Salsabila. Fourth-grade students were chosen because the independent curriculum was applied to start from one to fourth grade, while the NSS material was in fourth grade. This study explored and explained students' views on implementing the independent learning curriculum in natural science subjects, which are joining social sciences to become NSS. Sample selection using a purposive sampling technique. This technique in qualitative research methods is usually used to achieve specific research objectives (Bachri, 2010). There is no limit to the number of respondents to make a purposive sample as long as the desired information can be obtained. The instruments in this study were questionnaires and interviews. More details regarding the questionnaire and interview questions can be seen in table 1.

Table 1. Questionnaire and Interview Guideline for Students

No.	Question
1	What do you know about the independent curriculum?
2	What do you think about the implementation of the independent curriculum in schools?
3	How is natural science learning after being combined with Social Science (NSS)?
4	Do you like natural science? Why?
5	What learning media are used in natural science learning?
6	Does natural science become interesting after combining with Social Science (NSS)?
7	How are natural science learning activities after becoming NSS?
8	What are your hopes for the independent curriculum in natural science learning?

Checking the validity of the data in this study is done by triangulation technique. Triangulation techniques are used to find and seek the truth of data from the same source through different techniques. Researchers can cross data from interviews, observations, and documentation, which are then combined to produce one conclusion (Sugiyono, 2013). This study used questionnaires and interviews to obtain data on students' views on science subjects in the independent curriculum. The data analysis technique in this study was carried out through several stages consisting of: (1) data reduction, (2) presentation, and (3) drawing conclusions or verification. This research begins with a preliminary step by searching the literature for books and supporting references and conducting teacher interviews to obtain initial data. The next phase of implementation is to collect as much information as possible. Then the last stage is to analyze the data based on the research findings obtained from questionnaires and interviews.
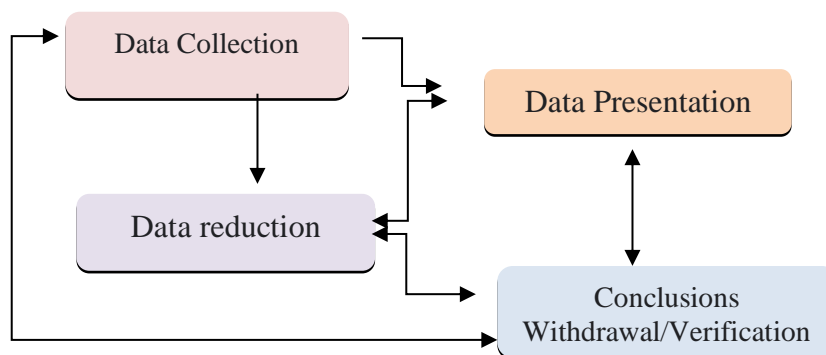
Figure 1. Research Method

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The Meaning of Free Learning According to the Student's View

Education must be in line with the current developments. Existing developments must be balanced with mastery of skills provided to students (Parhan, 2019). Skills are an essential component of the curriculum (Musfiqon, 2016). The prototype curriculum was born due to criticism of the 2013 curriculum and being urged by the pandemic conditions, which required curriculum changes to keep learning (Mawati, 2020). The prototype curriculum, which is the forerunner of the independent curriculum, has learning characteristics designed on a project basis to develop soft skills and characters (faith, taqwa, and noble character) and focus on essential materials for in-depth learning for basic competencies such as literacy and numeracy, flexibility for teachers to carry out learning according to the ability of students (Supangat, 2021).

Based on the results of questionnaires, it is known that the meaning of the independent curriculum, according to fourth-grade students, is more relaxed and fun learning. In addition, some interpret the independent curriculum as learning that focuses on only basic materials so that learning is more diverse. This is stated by one of the respondents:

"Learning focuses on the subject matter, and the learning is more diverse".

The independent curriculum is considered more different from the previous one because of Pancasila student profile. Some students interpret the independent curriculum as learning where students can do assignments according to their abilities and developments. The average student already understands the independent curriculum; this can be seen from data using a questionnaire through google form. Student answers lead to the essence of the independent curriculum, where learning is more focused on content and strives to give students freedom in learning. One of the students responded that:

"Learning activities that give schools the freedom to carry out teaching and learning activities in extracurricular teaching so that maximum results are achieved".

The statement indicated that the independent curriculum differs from the previous curriculum because it is full of content-focused learning and consists of various extracurricular education. Schools are free to process learning so that learning

objectives will be achieved. The independent curriculum also aims to hone the students' interests from an early age. Learning is also focused on student competencies and character with the Pancasila student profile.

Independent learning that is applied in learning has meaning and implications for teachers and students. The purpose of independent learning is to be free to think, to learn independently and creatively, and to have space for happiness. Freedom of thought means relating to the state of mind. Teachers and students need to apply the concept of learning to develop independence of thinking. The teacher can be a learning partner for students. As a learning partner for students, the teacher designs learning to be more fun so that students have self-awareness and dare to make their choices independently (Mahendra, 2020). Freedom to innovate can be developed by applying innovative learning models (Purwadhi, 2019). Freedom to learn for happiness means the free learning policy is designed to create a pleasant learning climate for both students and teachers. Students and teachers can learn without feeling shackled (Sherly, Dharma, & Sihombing, 2020).

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology provides flexibility for educators to carry out project-oriented learning processes in the hope that learning can be more active and adaptive. To achieve this, teachers need suitable models, approaches, strategies, and methods to realize the prototype curriculum and national education goals. The principle of independent curriculum design is divided into several aspects, including: (1) simple, easy to understand and implement, (2) focusing on the competence and character of all students, (3) flexibility, (4) harmonious, (5) working together, and (6) paying attention to the results of the study and feedback (Board of Standards, Curriculum, and Education Assessment, 2021).

3.2 Fourth-Grade Students' Opinions Regarding the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum

The independent curriculum has begun to be implemented at several levels of education, including elementary schools (Vhalery, Setyastanto, & Leksono, 2022). Based on the questionnaire, it is known that students' opinions regarding implementing the independent curriculum are that they feel happy and think that learning becomes more accessible. The following is the student's statement.

"Learning will be maximized and happier".

Students feel more accessible and can explore a subject more optimally. In addition, students are freer to choose activities according to their interests and talents. This follows the Ministry of Education regulation, which states that elementary school education units can manage the allocation of learning time flexibly to achieve the set lesson hours. Students also think that there are many extracurricular activities in the independent curriculum. Independent curriculum learning in elementary schools strengthens differentiated learning according to the stages of students.

Learning with the independent curriculum makes learning more accessible and more fun. This curriculum allows students to gain knowledge anywhere and anytime freely. Students feel true 'Learning Independence' because there is no coercion or demand to study subjects that are not their primary interest. This is following the statement of one student who stated that:

"With independent learning, we can freely gain knowledge wherever and whenever we want".

The independent learning curriculum gives learning more leverage. Student responses related to the existence of this curriculum policy were excellent, and they were even enthusiastic about taking part in learning with the independent curriculum.

3.3 Changes in Status of Natural and Social Science to Natural and Social Science (NSS)

Changes in the status of subjects are an effort to strengthen the development of competencies that are important for all students now and in the future. In addition, this change is intended to harmonize learning between one level and the next. Science and social studies learning, initially separated in the 2013 curriculum, was changed to be combined into NSS in the prototype curriculum as the foundation before students learn natural and social science separately at the junior high school level.

NSS is a subject aimed at building basic scientific literacy skills. This subject is intended to strengthen students to learn more complex natural and social sciences at the junior high school level. When studying the surrounding environment, students see natural and social phenomena as interconnected. Students be accustomed to observing, exploring, and doing activities that encourage other inquiry skills, which are very important to learn as a foundation before moving on to higher education (Kemendikbud, 2021).

Inquiry-based learning is one of the models that can lead students to make discoveries to gain in-depth knowledge (Dewi, 2016). In this case, educators act as facilitators to help build student understanding. Natural and social science subjects are combined in the NSS because the basis of these two subjects is the development of inquiry skills, known as scientific thinking skills. In addition, the various problems in this world often cannot be solved with just one point of view. To help students think holistically, learning to think with more points of view and multiple perspectives develop students' inquiry abilities and reduces the burden of learning hours.

Table 2. Scope of Material for NSS Phase B

Scope	Core Material
Living things and process life	- The relationship between the form and function of the human body (the five senses and the body skeleton) - Needs of living things - Life cycle - Biodiversity - Living creatures preservation - Ecosystem
Substances and things	- Substance form - Changes in the state of matter
Energy and its changes	- Sources and forms of energy - The process of changing the form of energy - Style and motion - Simple plan
Earth and universe	- Natural resources conservation

Scope	Core Material
	- Water cycle
Geography	- Landscape range
	- Community governance system (R-Province)
	- Use of conventional/digital maps
Sociology	- Roles and responsibilities as part of the school community and the neighborhood
History	- Cultural diversity and local wisdom and their conservation efforts
	- The history of the figures and their periodization in the province and their relationship with today's context
Economy	- Society profession
	- The difference between wants and needs
	- Currency values and related activities in everyday life

3.4 The Activity after Becoming NSS

Activities in science learning can remind literacy and numeracy competencies in the Minimum Competency Assessment in Elementary Schools (AKM). AKM is part of the national assessment that is imposed on students. Literacy and numeracy competencies can be developed through social studies learning in elementary schools (Kemendikbud, 2020). Scientific literacy skills are related to using scientific concepts in everyday life and explaining scientific phenomena with scientific evidence (OECD, 2009). Science learning makes activities more contextual for students. In addition, students will be involved in learning by presenting learning projects that will train students' independence. Activities carried out by students in science learning are designed to solve challenges faced in everyday life. Furthermore, students can propose ideas/reasons, carry out investigations/experiments, communicate, conclude, compile, design, and follow up on the processes that have been carried out.

Students are directed to create science projects that aim to equip students to face and solve real-life 21st-century problems related to natural and social phenomena around them scientifically by applying scientific concepts. In other words, after learning science, students can acquire the skills to make scientifically correct decisions to live more comfortably, healthier, and better (Umami, Nugroho, & Zubedi, 2021). Science learning is designed with a learning approach that emphasizes students based on their ability level, not class level.

3.5 The Views of Fourth-Grade Islamic Elementary School Salsabila Students to Natural Science Subjects that Turned into NSS

Students' views on applying the independent learning curriculum in natural science subjects were obtained from students' answers which were filled in through the Google form. This questionnaire is the main instrument to get primary data regarding students' views. According to students, the combination of natural and social science received a positive response. Based on data analysis, students felt they could learn more efficiently and interestingly because of the merger between science and social studies into NSS. The following is a student's statement:

"Yes, because it makes learning easier".

Another statement regarding the agreement of efficient and interesting NSS was also stated by a student as follows:

"I like it because it is interesting and more fun because there is a lot of practice".

Science learning presents activities that are not just listening or doing tasks but are more dominated by practical exercises by students. The practices carried out are designed by the teacher to be followed by students. Individuals or groups can do the practice. In practical activities, students will experience learning directly and obtain their discoveries. This activity is designed to be fun and make students interested in learning. Practice can be done inside and outside the classroom so students can explore their insights to find their knowledge.

Combining science and social science can trigger students to manage nature and society in one unit. However, not a few students admitted that they were confused by the incorporation of these subjects. NSS is considered confusing because students find it difficult to distinguish which material is related to natural science and which is related to social science. This was conveyed by one of the students as follows:

"I don't like it because being one later when the exam is too dizzy".

There are concerns that at the time of the exam, there will be two materials, natural science and social studies, which are judged difficult for students. The merger between natural and social science to become NSS gets a good response from students; it's just that adjustments and deepening are still needed, and there is still a lack of books and supporting media for NSS. Based on the answers to the questionnaire, students feel more interested in learning after the science class subject because they can learn about leaf bones and their history. The student responses to social studies subjects based on the questionnaire can be seen in table 3.

Table 3. Student Responses to Questionnaire for Science Subjects

Question	Responses	
	Positive	**Negative**
Question 1 What do you think about the implementation of the independent curriculum in schools?	32 Students	0 Student
Question 2 How is natural science learning after being combined with social science?	28 Students	4 Students
Question 3 Do you like natural science lessons? Why?	30 Students	2 Students
Question 4 Does natural science learning become interesting after being combined with social science?	28 Students	4 Students
Question 5 How are natural science learning activities after becoming NSS?	28 Students	4 Students

More details on fourth-grade responses at Islamic Elementary School Salsabila regarding natural science learning combined with social studies can be seen in figure 2. It shows that 87% of students responded positively, while the remaining 13% responded negatively related to the change in natural science combined with social science to become NSS.
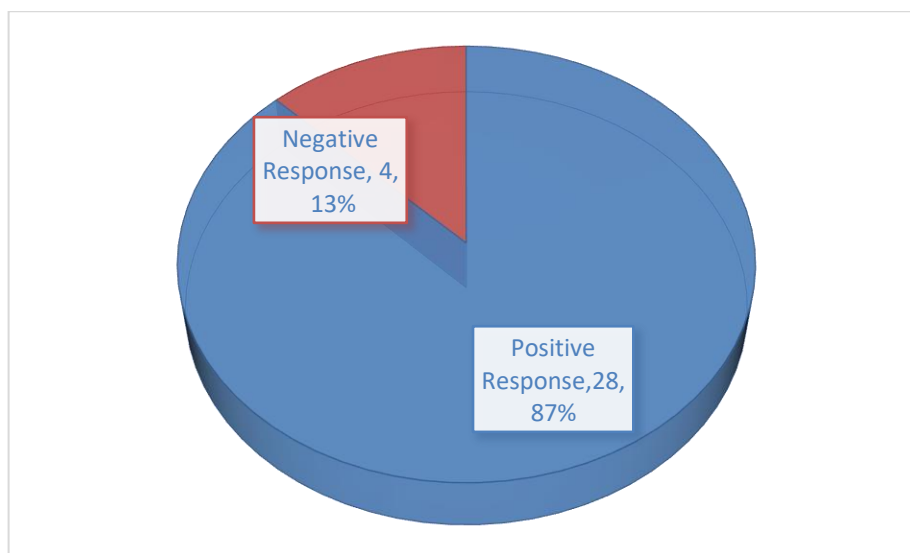

Figure 2. Percentage of Student Responses

3.6 Learning Media in NSS

The learning media used in NSS learning activities use materials that are easy to find around the student environment. For example, leaves are used to observe the shape of the leaf bones or even in photosynthesis. This is following the opinion of one student who stated that:

"Pictures, learning videos, natural materials such as leaves, flowers, etc".

In addition, the teacher also uses videos and pictures to help students understand the material. The media used in the independent curriculum is incomplete because the handbooks for teachers and students are still limited.

Many hopes have emerged through the students' enthusiasm for the independent curriculum. One is that students expect learning in independent learning to be done more with activities that add to the student's experience. In addition, learning is made simply according to elementary school age. Learning media is also expected to be added and equipped to make learning more creative and fun.

3.7 Fourth-Grade Students' Expectations of Science Learning

Hope is defined as the ability to plan ways to achieve goals despite obstacles, and make motivation way to achieve goals (Carr, 2004). Fourth-grade students of Islamic Elementary School Salsabila in Yogyakarta expect science learning learned in interesting ways, so they are enthusiastic about it and find it easier to understand a material completely and thoroughly. This is stated by a respondent as follows:

"Hopefully, the independent curriculum presents learning interestingly. I hope that science lessons will be reproduced by experimentation, simple and suitable for elementary students so that students are more creative".

Science learning is expected to have more practice than theory to shape students' creativity so that the skills acquired can prepare them to face the problems encountered. Another hope raised by students regarding science learning is that in the future, teachers in education can develop learning media that can facilitate students in learning science. Teachers are also expected to design quality learning so that the independent curriculum can be implemented correctly.

4. Conclusion

The students' views on the implementation of the independent curriculum in natural science subject are getting a positive response, and the student's enthusiasm to participate in learning. The study results also explain the importance of massive training and socialization to all parties in the education unit so that curriculum implementation can follow expectations. Science learning in elementary schools makes students interested in learning. NSS presents complete education by learning about nature and society so that there are no boundaries between these two subjects. Students are accustomed to observing, exploring, and doing activities that encourage other inquiry skills, which are very important to learn as a foundation before moving on to higher education. Students felt they could learn more efficiently and interestingly because of the merger between science and social studies into NSS. However, not a few students admitted that they were confused by the incorporation of these subjects. NSS is considered confusing because students find it difficult to distinguish which material is related to natural science and which is related to social science. Students expect that learning can be facilitated in future NSS with learning media, either books or other media that can support learning. Through this research, it was found that the policy on the independence curriculum by combining science and social studies subjects to become natural sciences received a positive response from students so that through this research, the government could continue implementing policies and present science as a more enjoyable lesson at the elementary school level.

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