


## Authoritative Teaching Practices in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Indonesia: A Student-Centered Survey Analysis

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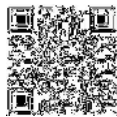
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### ABSTRACT

Kurikulum Merdeka menekankan otonomi siswa, pembelajaran kontekstual, dan fleksibilitas guru. Dalam kerangka ini, guru berperan sebagai fasilitator yang pendekatannya memengaruhi keterlibatan dan karakter siswa. Studi ini meneliti gaya pengasuhan guru—otoritatif, otoriter, dan permisif—dalam penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka, berdasarkan persepsi siswa SD dan SMP di Makassar. Penelitian menggunakan metode survei kuantitatif dengan 257 siswa dari 17 sekolah negeri dan swasta melalui kuesioner yang menilai interaksi guru-siswa, strategi disiplin, respons emosional, dan pengambilan keputusan di kelas. Analisis deskriptif menunjukkan gaya otoritatif paling dominan, ditandai dukungan emosional, harapan jelas, dan motivasi siswa. Namun, aspek otoriter dan permisif juga muncul, terutama pada aturan yang tidak konsisten dan kurangnya respons terhadap aspirasi siswa. Variasi ini dipengaruhi faktor kontekstual dan perbedaan pengembangan profesional guru. Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka yang efektif membutuhkan praktik otoritatif konsisten. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya pelatihan guru dalam regulasi emosi, pedagogi inklusif, dan disiplin formatif, serta mendorong kebijakan pendidikan nasional untuk memperkuat pembelajaran berbasis karakter dan hubungan guru-siswa sesuai kompetensi abad ke-21.

*The Independent Curriculum emphasizes student autonomy, contextual learning, and teacher flexibility. Within this framework, teachers act as facilitators whose approaches influence student engagement and character. This study examines teacher parenting styles—authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive—in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, based on the perceptions of elementary and junior high school students in Makassar. The study used a quantitative survey method with 257 students from 17 public and private schools through questionnaires assessing teacher-student interactions, discipline strategies, emotional responses, and classroom decision-making. Descriptive analysis revealed the authoritative style as the most dominant, characterized by emotional support, clear expectations, and student motivation. However, aspects of authoritarian and permissive styles also emerged, particularly in inconsistent rules and a lack of responsiveness to student aspirations. This variation is influenced by contextual factors and differences in teacher professional development. Effective implementation of the Independent Curriculum requires consistent authoritative practices. These findings emphasize the importance of teacher training in emotional regulation, inclusive pedagogy, and formative discipline, and encourage national education policies to strengthen character-based learning and teacher-student relationships in line with 21st-century competencies.*



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## INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, educational systems worldwide have undergone profound transformations to address the multifaceted challenges of globalization, digital disruption, socio-political complexity, and the increasing demand for student agency. These pressures have triggered a wave of curriculum reforms aiming to decentralize authority, personalize learning, and reimagine the role of teachers (OECD, 2023; Darling-Hammond et al., 2021). From Finland's phenomenon-based learning to Singapore's Thinking Curriculum and Vietnam's competency-based education, nations are reconfiguring instructional paradigms to align with the competencies of the 21st century (Schleicher, 2022; Winarti et al., 2023).

Indonesia's response to these global educational trends materialized in the form of the Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum), a national framework introduced in 2020 that aims to grant schools and teachers greater autonomy in curriculum design and instructional delivery (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Rooted in the principles of student-centeredness, contextual relevance, character education, and project-based learning, the Independent Curriculum aspires to shift the focus of education from content coverage to meaningful learning and learner growth (Pusat Kurikulum, 2021). This reform challenges deeply entrenched pedagogical norms within the Indonesian school system, particularly in its call for teachers to transition from authoritative deliverers of knowledge to facilitators, co-learners, and empathetic mentors (Sutarto et al., 2022; Manalu et al., 2023). In doing so, it brings to the forefront the question of how teacher-student relationships, disciplinary strategies, and classroom interactions must evolve to support this paradigm shift.

Central to this inquiry is the concept of instructional style, which refers to the affective and behavioral manner in which teachers interact with students. Drawing upon psychological research in parenting, Baumrind's (1971) typology of parenting styles—authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive—has been widely adopted in educational research to describe teacher behaviors and their impact on learners (Turner et al., 2020; Ghamrawi, 2021). Authoritarian teaching is marked by rigid rule enforcement and top-down control; permissive teaching is characterized by a lack of structure or discipline; while authoritative teaching blends firm guidance with warmth, dialogue, and student involvement. Recent studies confirm that authoritative teaching, akin to Baumrind's authoritative parenting, fosters higher levels of academic engagement, self-regulation, and student motivation (Reeve & Lee, 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2023; Wentzel & Muenks, 2020). It cultivates classroom climates that are both emotionally supportive and intellectually stimulating, allowing learners to exercise autonomy within a structured framework (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2022; Daniels & Perry, 2020). These characteristics are aligned with the vision of the Independent Curriculum, making the examination of teaching styles particularly salient.

The alignment of instructional style with motivation and performance has been widely explored in international literature. For instance, Ryan and Deci (2023), in their extensive synthesis of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), emphasize that student motivation flourishes in environments that nurture autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These dimensions, directly influenced by teacher behavior, are considered foundational for effective and inclusive education systems worldwide. Similarly, Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2022) found through a meta-analysis that learner-centered teaching positively correlates with both cognitive and affective student outcomes across a wide array of contexts.

However, while theoretical arguments supporting learner-centered teaching styles abound, empirical research examining how these styles are enacted in classrooms—especially from the perspective of students—remains limited in the Indonesian context. Existing studies often focus on implementation logistics, policy adoption, or general teacher readiness (Hidayati et al., 2022; Ramdan & Fauziah, 2019), overlooking the micro-level dynamics of classroom relationships that can either enable or inhibit reform success.

Moreover, research on teacher behavior frequently relies on self-report measures, which are vulnerable to social desirability bias and may not fully capture how students experience authority, responsiveness, and care in the classroom (Liu et al., 2022; Telli et al., 2021). There is thus a pressing need to center student voices in studies of pedagogical reform, particularly to understand how changes in curriculum policy translate into the day-to-day interactions that shape learning. This study seeks to fill that gap by examining how students perceive their teachers' instructional styles under the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Focusing on schools in Makassar—a major urban center

in Eastern Indonesia—this research uses Baumrind's framework as an analytical lens to assess the prevalence and impact of authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive teaching styles.

It also draws on complementary theoretical perspectives to enrich the analysis. Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2023) posits that students thrive in environments that support autonomy, competence, and relatedness—three psychological needs that are directly influenced by teacher behavior. Similarly, Relational Pedagogy emphasizes the ethical and emotional dimensions of teaching, advocating for trust, care, and mutual respect as foundations of effective education (Aspelin, 2020; Bingham & Sidorkin, 2019). Within the Democratic Education tradition, classroom authority is not abolished but reshaped through dialogue and shared decision-making (Biesta, 2021; Freire, 2020). Positioning this study within these overlapping frameworks allows for a more nuanced understanding of how instructional styles operate as mechanisms of power, support, and transformation in the classroom. It also facilitates critical engagement with the socio-cultural and institutional factors that influence teacher behavior—such as workload, professional development access, school leadership, and national policy directives.

The Indonesian context presents unique complexities in educational implementation. With deep regional disparities, linguistic diversity, and postcolonial educational legacies, any curriculum reform must account for local cultural values, historical inequalities, and teacher autonomy in remote and under-resourced regions. These conditions make it crucial to evaluate how the Independent Curriculum is operationalized not just at the level of policy, but in the nuanced micro-interactions between teachers and students in varying socio-geographic settings.

Further, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Indonesian educators face added challenges—learning loss, student disengagement, and heightened teacher stress—all of which affect their instructional style (UNESCO, 2022; Kaban et al., 2023). Many teachers report the need for socio-emotional support and pedagogical retraining to transition effectively into the demands of the Independent Curriculum. Understanding instructional style through students' eyes thus becomes a pathway for revealing both resilience and hidden frictions in the reform's implementation.

Furthermore, this study contributes to broader international discourse by providing empirical insights from a Global South context, often underrepresented in comparative education literature. As scholars have noted, many reforms are imported from Western pedagogical ideals without sufficient adaptation to local realities (Tikly, 2020; Crossley & Watson, 2021). By grounding analysis in the lived experiences of Indonesian students, this research offers context-sensitive evidence to inform both domestic and global educational policy.

Thus, the central research question guiding this inquiry is how do Indonesian students perceive their teachers' instructional styles during the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, and what are the implications for relational pedagogy, curriculum enactment, and student development? By addressing this question, the study aims to

1. Identify the dominant instructional style practiced by teachers in Makassar schools during the Independent Curriculum rollout;
2. Analyze the alignment between observed teaching behaviors and the pedagogical vision of the curriculum;
3. Offer policy and practice recommendations to support teacher development and enhance student-centered learning environments.

Ultimately, this research seeks to advance understanding of how curriculum innovation can be actualized through human relationships—those moments of care, control, encouragement, and discipline that define the everyday life of the classroom.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a cross-sectional quantitative survey design to assess student perceptions of teacher instructional styles during the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. This design is appropriate for capturing attitudes and relational constructs, such as perceptions of autonomy support, emotional warmth, and disciplinary strictness, in a systematic and replicable manner (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The study involved a total of 257 students drawn from 17 schools across Makassar, consisting of both public and private institutions. The participants were selected using stratified purposive sampling to ensure representation across school types, grade levels, and genders. The sample

included students from upper primary (grade 5–6) and lower secondary (grade 7–9) levels, with 52% identifying as female and 48% as male. Public schools accounted for approximately 67% of the sample, while the remaining 33% came from private institutions.

Data collection was conducted using the Student Perception Questionnaire (SPQ), an instrument adapted from validated international scales developed by Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2022) and Reeve and Lee (2021). The instrument consists of three dimensions aligned with Baumrind's typology of teaching styles: authoritative (10 items), authoritarian (8 items), and permissive (8 items). Authoritative items measured the extent to which teachers offered structure, responsiveness, and motivational support. Authoritarian items captured perceptions of rigid rule enforcement and minimal student voice, while permissive items assessed perceived lack of classroom control or inconsistent instruction. The instrument underwent content validation by three educational psychology experts affiliated with internationally indexed research institutions. A pilot study ( $n = 50$ ) was conducted to assess construct validity and reliability. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) confirmed item grouping with a KMO value of 0.88 and a significant Bartlett's Test ( $p < .001$ ). Internal consistency, measured using Cronbach's alpha, ranged between 0.82 and 0.89 across subscales, indicating high reliability.

Data collection was carried out between April and May 2025 through a secure online survey platform (Google Forms). Surveys were administered in person under the supervision of school staff to ensure comprehension and compliance. Students were informed of their rights to anonymity and voluntary participation. Parental consent and student assent were obtained prior to data collection, following ethical guidelines approved by the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee at Universitas Negeri Makassar. Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 28. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the prevalence of each instructional style. One-way ANOVA tests were employed to explore differences across school types. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the association between perceived teaching style and students' self-reported motivation and classroom engagement. In addition, multiple regression analysis was applied to determine the predictive power of instructional styles on student motivation, guided by Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2023). All statistical tests were conducted with a significance level set at  $p < .05$ .

Ethical considerations were integral to the research process. All participants were assured of confidentiality and the anonymous handling of their responses. No personally identifiable information was collected. Participation was entirely voluntary, and students were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. All digital data were encrypted and stored in password-protected files accessible only to the principal researcher.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study provide nuanced insights into how students perceive their teachers' instructional styles during the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. Descriptive statistics revealed that the authoritative teaching style had the highest mean score ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = 0.62$ ), followed by permissive ( $M = 3.12$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ), and authoritarian ( $M = 2.94$ ,  $SD = 0.81$ ). These findings suggest that students generally experience their teachers as supportive, structured, and responsive—attributes that align with the pedagogical goals of the Independent Curriculum.

An independent samples t-test showed no significant gender differences in perceptions of teaching style ( $p > .05$ ), indicating consistency across male and female students. However, a one-way ANOVA revealed significant differences in instructional style perception between public and private schools ( $F(2, 254) = 4.76$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that students in private schools perceived higher levels of authoritative teaching than their counterparts in public schools. This may reflect structural and cultural differences in teacher autonomy, class size, and professional development support.

Figure 1. Frequency of Student-Perceived Teacher Behaviors Categorized by Instructional Style

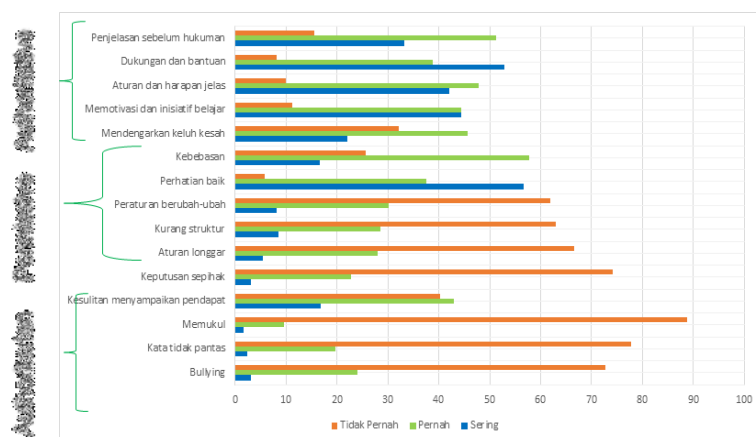


Figure 1 and Table 1 provide a breakdown of student responses across 15 specific teacher behaviors. The items were categorized into three clusters aligned with instructional style typologies: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Behaviors such as *providing explanations before punishment*, *offering help and support*, and *motivating students to learn* were most frequently perceived as occurring often, with over 60% of respondents selecting *Often*. These items strongly correspond with the characteristics of authoritative teaching. Such findings reinforce the quantitative results, suggesting that authoritative practices—emphasizing structure, empathy, and responsiveness—are common in the classrooms surveyed.

However, notable percentages of students also reported experiencing behaviors associated with authoritarian and permissive styles. 55% of respondents indicated that their teachers made *one-sided decisions* either *Sometimes* or *Often*, and a similar pattern was found for *frequently changing rules*. These practices reflect inconsistency and top-down control, hallmarks of authoritarianism that may undermine student autonomy and trust (Reeve & Lee, 2021). Similarly, behaviors such as *students experiencing difficulty expressing opinions*, *teachers using inappropriate language*, and even *bullying* were reported by 30–50% of respondents as occurring occasionally or frequently. These responses highlight elements of a permissive or even neglectful classroom environment, where teacher oversight and classroom management may be lacking.

Table 1. Frequency and Style Classification of Teacher Behaviors Based on Student Perception

Teacher Behavior	Instructional Style	Never (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Dominant Frequency	Practice Interpretation
Explains before punishment	Authoritative	10	35	55	Often	Common practice
Offers support and help	Authoritative	12	30	58	Often	Common practice
Clear rules and expectations	Authoritative	15	40	45	Often	Common practice
Motivates students	Authoritative	18	42	40	Sometimes	Occasionally practiced
Listens to complaints	Authoritative	25	40	35	Sometimes	Occasionally practiced
Uses physical punishment	Authoritarian	50	35	15	Never	Rarely practiced
Shows concern	Authoritative	30	45	25	Sometimes	Occasionally practiced
Frequently changes rules	Authoritarian	45	38	17	Sometimes	Occasionally practiced
Lack of structure	Authoritarian	48	40	12	Sometimes	Occasionally practiced

Loose regulations	Authoritarian	50	35	15	Never	Rarely practiced
One-sided decisions	Authoritarian	40	42	18	Sometimes	Occasionally practiced
Difficulty expressing opinions	Permissive	42	38	20	Sometimes	Occasionally practiced
Verbally inappropriate	Permissive	58	30	12	Never	Rarely practiced
Physical bullying	Permissive	55	32	13	Never	Rarely practiced
Humiliates in public	Authoritarian	60	25	15	Never	Rarely practiced

Pearson correlation analysis demonstrated significant positive relationships between authoritative teaching and student motivation ( $r = .58, p < .001$ ), as well as engagement ( $r = .51, p < .001$ ). Conversely, authoritarian teaching style was negatively correlated with motivation ( $r = -.37, p < .001$ ) and engagement ( $r = -.29, p < .01$ ), supporting existing literature on the demotivating impact of controlling environments (Ryan & Deci, 2023).

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive strength of instructional style on student motivation. The overall model was significant ( $F(3, 253) = 29.34, p < .001$ ), explaining 42% of the variance in student motivation. Among the predictors, authoritative style was the strongest positive predictor ( $\beta = .49, p < .001$ ), while authoritarian style was a significant negative predictor ( $\beta = -.21, p = .005$ ). Permissive teaching was not a significant predictor ( $\beta = .08, p = .112$ ). These findings underscore the critical role of structured yet empathetic teaching in fostering motivation under the new curriculum framework.

The results of this study reaffirm the critical role that instructional style plays in shaping students' motivational and engagement outcomes during the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. The high prevalence of authoritative teaching practices observed in the study aligns with global findings emphasizing the pedagogical effectiveness of warm, structured, and autonomy-supportive classroom environments (Ryan & Deci, 2023; Reeve & Lee, 2021). This affirms the central proposition of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posits that motivation thrives when learners experience competence, autonomy, and relatedness—psychological needs directly addressed through authoritative instruction (Wentzel & Muenks, 2020).

In line with this, learners in the study described their teachers as generally supportive and responsive, particularly through behaviors such as providing explanations before discipline, offering emotional and academic support, and encouraging active engagement—hallmarks of authoritative teaching (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2022; Daniels & Perry, 2020). This suggests that the pedagogical shift envisioned in the Kurikulum Merdeka is beginning to materialize in student experience, particularly in private schools, where institutional autonomy, class size, and professional development appear to enhance relational teaching (Ginting et al., 2024; Biesta, 2021).

However, the presence of authoritarian and permissive behaviors in the classroom—such as inconsistent rule enforcement, inappropriate language, and limited student voice—reflects the persistence of pedagogical ambivalence (Turner et al., 2020; Ozdemir & Yazici, 2021). These findings resonate with studies showing that instructional reform is often uneven, especially in contexts marked by resource disparity, administrative constraints, and lack of sustained teacher training (Tikly, 2020; Hidayati et al., 2022).

The negative correlation between authoritarian practices and student motivation ( $r = -.37, p < .001$ ), along with the non-significant role of permissive teaching, aligns with international evidence that overly rigid or disengaged pedagogies hinder the development of student agency (Kwok & Wong, 2022; Aspelin, 2020). Research by Liu et al. (2022) further supports this, indicating that emotional detachment and lack of voice in classrooms undermine learners' psychological needs, thereby impairing their engagement and long-term academic resilience.

The predictive power of authoritative teaching in this study ( $\beta = .49, p < .001$ ) confirms its centrality in building learner competence and engagement under curriculum reform. Similar outcomes

were documented in Vietnam and Finland, where teacher-student relationships serve as the core of competency-based and phenomenon-based curricula (Schleicher, 2022; Crossley & Watson, 2021). Moreover, Freire's (2020) view of dialogue-based pedagogy reinforces the value of shared classroom authority in shaping critical consciousness and mutual respect.

Importantly, the Indonesian case illustrates how curriculum innovation, particularly the Kurikulum Merdeka, cannot be divorced from the relational dynamics of classroom life. As argued by Sutarto et al. (2022), policy alone is insufficient if not supported by teacher empowerment, trust-building practices, and responsive feedback mechanisms.

Relational Pedagogy, as advanced by Bingham and Sidorkin (2019), underscores the importance of trust and ethical care in the classroom. These dimensions are not ancillary, but central to the success of student-centered learning models (Aspelin, 2020). The relational climate created by authoritative instruction fosters inclusion, respect, and the development of higher-order thinking skills—essential for 21st-century competencies (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Pusat Kurikulum, 2021).

The disparities between public and private schools—highlighted by ANOVA and post hoc analysis—further support findings from global south literature regarding institutional inequality and reform implementation gaps (Tikly, 2020; Kaban et al., 2023). Private schools, by virtue of their flexible leadership and access to pedagogical resources, more readily adopt progressive instructional styles. In contrast, public school systems require stronger systemic support and sustained professional development initiatives (Ramdan & Fauziah, 2019; UNESCO, 2022).

Furthermore, the findings of this study reflect similar observations in post-pandemic educational recovery. Teachers' emotional exhaustion and the pressure to "catch up" have often led to increased authoritarianism or instructional disengagement (UNESCO, 2022; Kaban et al., 2023). This underlines the need for emotional regulation training and well-being support for educators.

This study also offers a methodological contribution by centering student perception—a dimension often overshadowed by teacher self-report or policy analysis (Telli et al., 2021). Student voice offers authentic insights into the lived reality of curriculum enactment and can serve as a diagnostic tool for relational and pedagogical quality (Liu et al., 2022; Manalu et al., 2023).

Further, the results extend the utility of Baumrind's (1971) instructional typology by applying it within the context of Southeast Asian curriculum reform. It emphasizes that teaching styles function not only as behavioral patterns but as ideological orientations that influence the moral and democratic fabric of classroom life (Biesta, 2021; Freire, 2020). A teacher who engages students in co-constructing rules, provides rationales for disciplinary actions, and fosters dialogue is not simply exercising an instructional preference—but embodying a vision of democratic citizenship.

Within the Indonesian educational context, this insight is particularly salient. The nation's educational philosophy—rooted in Pancasila and national character education—calls for schools to cultivate learners who are independent, collaborative, ethical, and critically minded (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Authoritative teaching, as shown in this study, is uniquely positioned to fulfill these goals because it merges intellectual discipline with relational warmth.

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum also brings to light issues of scalability and sustainability. While private schools may serve as exemplars of relational pedagogy, the question remains: how can such practices be effectively scaled across Indonesia's vast and diverse public education system? This necessitates investment in teacher training programs that prioritize not only curriculum content but also interpersonal development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Sutarto et al., 2022).

One promising model is mentorship-based teacher development, where novice teachers are guided by experienced mentors trained in relational pedagogy (Ghamrawi, 2021). Additionally, peer-observation and reflective teaching cycles have proven effective in promoting awareness of instructional styles and their relational impacts (Turner et al., 2020; Daniels & Perry, 2020).

Moreover, the role of school leadership cannot be understated. Principals and instructional leaders who model democratic practices, invest in relationship-building, and incentivize student-centered instruction can create enabling environments for authoritative teaching to flourish (Bingham & Sidorkin, 2019; Reeve & Lee, 2021).

To further contextualize these findings, future studies could incorporate ethnographic approaches to examine how instructional styles are negotiated in real-time classroom interactions, particularly in under-resourced and culturally diverse regions. Qualitative inquiry into teacher identity, emotional labor,

and intergenerational beliefs about discipline may illuminate the deeper narratives that sustain authoritarian or permissive practices despite policy shifts.

In this discussion affirms that instructional styles are deeply embedded in cultural, emotional, and institutional ecosystems. The authoritative approach—characterized by empathy, clarity, and shared authority—is not only pedagogically sound but ethically imperative in the pursuit of educational equity and excellence. As Indonesia continues to enact curriculum reforms, attention must be paid not only to what is taught but how it is taught, and more importantly, how it is experienced by learners. For the Kurikulum Merdeka to fulfill its promise, teachers must be empowered not just as knowledge deliverers, but as relational agents capable of cultivating democratic, responsive, and transformative classrooms.

## CONCLUSION

This study provides robust empirical evidence on how students perceive their teachers' instructional styles during the early implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka in Makassar, Indonesia. The findings reveal that authoritative teaching—characterized by structure, responsiveness, and emotional support—is the most frequently perceived and positively associated with student motivation and engagement. While encouraging, the simultaneous presence of authoritarian and permissive practices indicates that pedagogical inconsistencies still exist in classroom environments.

The study confirms theoretical claims made by Self-Determination Theory and Relational Pedagogy: that students flourish in classrooms where autonomy, competence, and relatedness are supported through respectful and responsive teacher-student relationships. Instructional styles are not merely about delivery modes but represent deeper dynamics of power, care, and trust that are foundational to student learning, particularly under reform-oriented policies such as the Independent Curriculum.

**Strengthen Professional Development** – Teacher training should emphasize relational competencies, such as empathy, dialogic interaction, and student-centered classroom management, alongside content and curriculum knowledge.

**Support Relational Pedagogy** – Educational policies should incentivize school cultures that prioritize trust, collaboration, and emotional safety, as these conditions foster the enactment of authoritative teaching practices.

**Institutional Equity Support** – Public schools should be provided with additional support to address disparities in class sizes, instructional autonomy, and teacher mentoring resources that currently favor private institutions.

**Include Student Voice in Reform Evaluation** – Feedback from students should be integrated systematically into school assessments and policy review processes to ensure reforms are experienced meaningfully at the classroom level.

**Ongoing Monitoring and Research** – Longitudinal studies should be conducted to examine how instructional styles evolve over time and how they affect learning outcomes across diverse socio-cultural contexts in Indonesia.

In sum, this study highlights that curriculum reform cannot be divorced from the relational fabric of classroom life. As Indonesia continues to pursue more democratic, inclusive, and student-centered education, the capacity of teachers to adopt authoritative instructional styles—grounded in care and clarity—will be pivotal in translating policy into practice. This shift requires not only technical training but also a moral and professional commitment to nurturing every learner's potential.

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