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Analysis of Chemistry Interest Level in Merdeka Curriculum Implementation at SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak

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Abstract: *Elective subject is the flagship program of Merdeka Curriculum..The elective subject program is based on students' interest, talents, and aspirations. Therefore, students' interest level in chemistry, as one of the options for elective subject program is a necessary to determined. This study aims to determine the level of student interest in choosing chemistry as an elective subject, so that teachers could find the best alternatives to increase students' interest. The research was conducted with quantitative analysis methods and descriptive statistical approaches, using 139 students of grade 11th who have chosen chemistry as the elective subject. The level of students' interest in chemistry is measured by students' interest questionnaire. The questionnaire was adopted and developed by aspects of students' interest: teachers' role, students' perception, students' intrinsic motivation in learning, and meaningful learning of lesson. Content validation test using Aiken formula showed the questionnaire validity is very high, as value 1. Based on the analysis, the result stated that the level of students' interest was included as high category with 76,11%. All aspects are categorized as high, aspects of the teacher's role in learning with 77.44%, students' perceptions with 73.63%, students' intrinsic motivation 78.99% and the meaningfulness of learning lesson with 74.37%.*

Keywords: *elective subject program; merdeka curriculum; level of students' interest*

INTRODUCTION

Education is a critical factor for human resources improvement for national development. Educational progress develops various creative and innovative ideas in the dynamic of times. In the education unit, a curriculum is essential as the compass of education's direction and purpose (Sadewa, 2022). Through Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, the government is innovating to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, both in terms of human resources and systems. The improvement of the education system was realized through the inception of a new curriculum named Merdeka Curriculum.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology in the Exposure of Merdeka Curriculum about curriculum policy by March 17th of 2022, stated that Merdeka Curriculum has more strengths than Curriculum 2013, are easier to understand yet profound, more independent, more relevant and interactive. Merdeka Curriculum is easier to understand yet more profound because it

focuses on essential lesson and students' development in its phase. Moreover, there is no specialization program in high school. Student can choose according to their interests, talents, and aspirations. The learning process done by the teacher was according to students' achievement and development level. The authority to develope and manage the curriculum, along with learning procces, is delegated to the school to adapt the curriculum to each characteristic of an educational unit and student. In this regard, Merdeka Curriculum is considered more independent than the last curriculum. Furthermore, another strength of Merdeka Curriculum is its learning process, which is more relevant and and creative because it is done through project activities that give students chances to explore actual issues, such as environmental issues, health issues, and even global issues. The aims are to support the development of students' characters and Pancasila Student Profile competence (Education Standard, Curriculum and Assessment Board, 2022).

The structure of Merdeka Curriculum for high school is divided into two main learning activities: regular learning, an intracurricular activity, and the Pancasila Student Profile project. The regular learning process in high school is divided into phases: phase E and phase F. Phase E is for students in 10th grade, and Phase F is for students in 11th and 12th grade. In phase E, students learn all compulsory subjects without choosing any specialization subject, such as religion education, pancasila education, Indonesian Language, mathematics, science (physics, chemistry, and biology), social (sociology, economics, history, and geography), english, physical education, sports, and health, informatics and art & craft. The organizing of grouped subjects in phase E is delegated to the school based on the ability of human resources. Organization grouped subjects may use an approach suitable for each educational unit's condition and aim, such as a block system approach, separating subjects as standalone subjects or integrated systems.

Student choose the elective subject based on their interest before starting the 11th grade. This is because the structure of phase F is divided into two main groups: compulsory subjects and elective subjects. High school or equivalent institutions must offer the compulsory subject and must be taken by all students. Meanwhile, students will choose the elective subject at the end of phase E based on their interests, talents, and aspirations. Science and social will be separated into standalone subjects. Science in phase F will be separated into chemistry, biology, and physics (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, 2022).

The elective subject is divided into four groups, namely mathematics and science, social science, languages and crafts, and vocations; each group contains various subjects. In its implementation, students can only choose a maximum of two subjects in the same group. Elective subjects are selected based on students' interests, talents, and abilities. Therefore, examining students' interests, talents, and abilities is essential in choosing elective subjects. The freedom of choosing an elective subject reflects the passion for freedom of learning. In this case, students learn to be responsible for their learning process by determining elective subjects that suit them best to support their careers in the future.

SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak is one of the schools that participated in the Transformative School since the academic year 2021/2022. Transformative School program is a pilot project of school development as an effort to implement Merdeka Curriculum. Therefore, it is a must for SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak to implement the elective subject program as a flagship program of Merdeka Curriculum. The first elective subject program was done at the end of the 2021/2022 academic year by the students of grade 10th before starting the 11th grade in the 2022/2023 academic year. It is officially noted that 96 of 238 students chose chemistry as their elective subject. At the same time, the interview with one of the

chemistry teachers at SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak on September 17th, 2022, stated that there was a concern about the level of students' interest in learning chemistry. Moreover, it is revealed that the concern was because the activeness of students was low. The highest activeness of students was only 6 of 34 students or 17,65%. It can occur due to the excessive domination from the teacher herself or the use of the lecture method (Hafiza et al., 2022).

Research by Besare (2020) stated that if, in a learning process, a high level of interest was discovered, the activeness of students is high too. The low-interest level became a concern that affected students' learning outcomes. Research by Yudanti & Premono (2021) has proven that students' interest was in line with learning outcomes and had an influence of 30,1%. It is supported by research by Arifin and Ratnasari (2017), which stated that a high-interest level will motivate students to study harder. A strong motivation to study will increase students' activity in learning. Therefore, the learning outcome will increase.

For that reason, it is necessary to discover the level of students' interest in chemistry. Finding the best alternatives to learn chemistry in phase E is essential. Therefore, students' interest in learning chemistry will increase. Besides, exploring students' interests will also help the teacher's diagnostic assessment. This is because teachers can design suitable learning according to students' conditions. As a result, research titled "Analysis Level of Interest in Chemistry as an Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak". This research was done to determine the level of students' interest in choosing chemistry as an elective subject. Along with this, the researcher hopes that the research will provide an overview for teachers regarding students' interests and improve learning strategies to increase students' interest in chemistry

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main principle in developing Merdeka Curriculum is the policy that provides flexibility in eduacation unit, teacher and student. Merdeka Curriculum set to be minimal and more guiding than regulating. The other principal of curriculum are simple, easy to understand and implement, focus on the competence and students' character, harmonize, work together and pay attention to study and feedback (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, 2022).

The elective subject program is one of the flagship program of Merdeka Curriculum, which reflect independent learning. Elective subject program is a new space to provide students, so their interests, talents and abilities develop optimally. Academic Review: Curriculum for Learning Recovery by Education Standard, Curriculum and Assessment Board (2022), stated that providing choices to students is a strategy to build competencies to become lifelong learner in line with the principle of Merdeka Curriculum. Through elective subject program, student learns to take control of their learning process independently.

Interest is a tendency or high excitement or great desie for something (Syah, 2017). According to Susanto (2013), interest is a desire in someone who interested in an object and will give his attention on that object. From this object, someone who interested will get the satisfaction. Interest can also be interpeted as the main motivational tool that can stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning within a certain period of time (Nisa, Susongko, & Utami, 2017). Therefore, interest concluded as someones' tendency to give higher attention to an object that he likes, without being forced by certain parties.

Someone who interested in an activity will give attention consistently with excitement. This is in line with statement by Nurhasanah & Sobandi (2016), which stated that someone who interested in a lesson will have a feeling of interest which shown by a diligent attitude towards learning and

continuously understand all the knowledge related to lesson. This is done by enthusiasm and without feeling burden. Therefore, interest is important in learning and is one of the determinant factor for students' success in learning process (Alam, 2018).

Student with high interest will tend to be active in learning. This statement is evidenced by research by Besare (2020), which stated that if in a learning process it is found that students have a high interest in learning, then his learning activities will also increase according to his interests in themselves. It is supported by a research from Widiati, Sridana, Kurniati, & Amrullah (2022) that settled there is a significant influence between learning interest towards learning achievement. The higher students interest in learning, the higher students learning achievement. Thus, students' interests and learning activities can be said to have a large contribution to student learning achievement.

Students' interest and learning activities often experience ups and downs. The weakness of students' learning activities can be caused by weak learning motivation (Arifin & Ratnasari, 2017). This statement is confirmed by research done by Yudanti & Premono (2021) which shown that motivation has an influence of 23.7% on learning outcomes. Therefore, in order to maintain the quality of learning outcomes or students' achievement, students' motivation need to be strengthened.

METHODS

The research process was conducted with quantitative analysis methods and descriptive statistical approaches. Descriptive statistical analysis is used to analyze data through a description of collected data as it really is, without intending to make general conclusions or generalizations. Descriptive statistics are only an accumulation of basic data in the form of descriptions, not explaining the relation, testing hypotheses, making predictions, or conclusions. The descriptive statistical analysis technique used in this research is the presentation of data in visual forms such as histograms, polygons, ogive, bar charts, pie charts or symbol diagrams (Muhson, 2006). In this research, the data presented in bar charts.

Data was collected by distributing a questionnaire of interest about learning chemistry. The subject was 139 students of grade 11th, who have chosen chemistry as the elective subject. Data collection using a questionnaire instrument of students' interest in chemistry. The purpose of questionnaire is to determine students' interest in chemistry. The questionnaire was a closed questionnaire with a total of 22 indicator items and has four scales, concists strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.

The questionnaire was adapted from a research by Wiyarsi (2017). The researcher only adopted the aspects of students' interest, which are the teachers' role, students' perception, students' intrinsic motivation in learning which is the combine of students' enjoyment and willingness, and meaningful learning of lesson. The indicator items was developed by researcher. Therefore, a validity test was required. The validity test used content validity by three experts, two of experts are the lecturers of chemistry education at Universitas Tanjungpura and one expert is a chemistry teacher at SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak. The results of the validation used Aiken formula showed that the questionnaire was valid and appropriate for use as an instrument research, with a validation value 1. Furthermore, an interview with subjects is required to strengthen the results. The researcher used an unstructured interview with students.

The collected data then converted into four alternative answers, strongly agree,

agree, disagree and strongly disagree respectively with score 4, 3, 2, and 1. Later, the score of each indicator from each aspect were summed up. After that, the score of each aspect were calculated and the percentage was calculated using the formula:

$$\%Level\ of\ interest = \frac{total\ score\ of\ each\ aspect}{maximum\ score\ of\ each\ aspext} \times 100$$

Bar chart then made based on the percentage of each aspect. Through the data, student interest then categorized with the following scale on Table 1.

Table 1. Students' interest category

Range (%)	Students' Interest Category
81-100	Very high
61-80	High
42-60	Moderate
21-40	Low
<20	Very low

(Arikunto, 2015)

The results of the interviews then analyzed to clarify things that were not obtained through research. After that, the results of the research and the level of interest of 11th grade students in chemistry subject described.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research was conducted based on several aspects, which are teachers' role, students' perceptions, intrinsic motivation in learning, and meaningful learning of the lesson. There are seven indicators on the teachers' role aspect, five indicators on students' perception of learning, six indicators on intrinsic motivation in the learning aspect, and four indicators on meaningful learning of lesson. The graphic of students' interest level can be presented as follow:

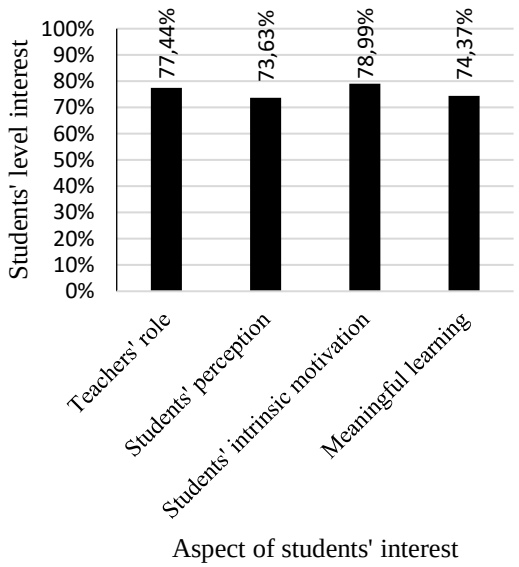

Figure 1. Level of students' interest in learning chemistry

The result of the research stated that students' intrinsic motivation in learning is the highest aspect that underlies students' interest in learning chemistry, at 78.99%. The second highest is the teachers' role at 77.44%. The aspect of meaningful learning of the lesson at 74.37% and students' perception in learning at 73.63%. Further discussion will be done for each aspect.

Aspect of Teachers' Role in Learning Chemistry

In general, the aspect of the teachers' role in learning is included as high category with the percentage of 77.44%. Teachers' role aspect has seven indicators. Indicator X4, teachers' willingness to repeat the lesson when students have not understood the lesson was the highest percentage at 84.71%. Meanwhile indicator X1, which is teachers' explanation that is easy to understand, showed the lowest percentage at 70.86%. The percentage graphic of each indicator on the aspect of teachers' role in learning can be presented as follow:

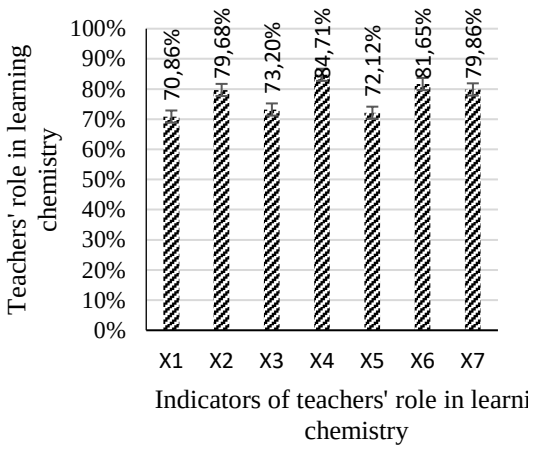

Figure 2. Teachers' role in learning chemistry

Detail:

X1 : I chose chemistry because the teachers' explanation is easy to understand

X2 : I chose chemistry because the teacher has a good relationship with students both in and out of class

X3 : I chose chemistry because the teacher uses variety of learning methods

X4 : I chose chemistry because teacher will explain again when there are students who haven't understood the lesson

X5 : I chose chemistry because the teacher always gave me supports and appreciations that increase my confidence

X6 : I chose chemistry because the teacher always give student chances to express their opinion

X7 : I chose chemistry because the teacher always respects my opinion when I present myself in class

The indicator of teachers' willingness to re-explain when students have not understood the lesson has the highest percentage, which is 84.71%. The purpose of re-explaining lesson by the teacher is to achieve the learning goals. In addition, the teacher stated that she is not satisfied if some students do not understand the lesson well. It is done by re-explaining the lesson with more straightforward words, along with examples that are easier for students to understand.

On the other hand, the indicator with the lowest percentage is the ease of teachers' explanation to understand by students, at 70.86%. At the same time, explanation skills play a primary role and are essential for teachers. Teachers' explanation is the leading role in the classroom (Findeisen & Seifried, 2023). Based on the interview, the students stated that they would like chemistry more if the teacher explained the lesson well and quickly understood it. Therefore, teachers' explanation skills are essential in the learning process. Teachers need to plan the explanation given in the class and analyze students' acceptance characteristics (Madjid & Pare-pare, 2019). Teachers' explanations must be delivered by considering the clearness of speech and avoiding using words that confuse students (Salsabilla et al., 2022). Research by Marpaung & Cendana (2020) stated that connecting lesson with current phenomena and using props makes teachers' explanations exciting and easy to understand (Madjid & Pare-pare, 2019).

Emphasizing by repeating lesson considered difficult by teachers or writing the critical lesson on the board makes it easier for students to understand. Also, feedback is essential to discover students' level of understanding. It allows teachers to know whether the learning goals have been achieved (Ulamatullah et al., 2017). Therefore, teachers' explanation skills must be improved. Research by Moonti et al. (2021) showed that the more innovative and creative teachers' explanation skills based on lessons' characteristics, the better students' learning outcomes will be.

Teachers have an essential role in the learning process. It is a dominant determining factor in education to achieve the primary purpose of the learning process, which is the change in student behavior (Kirom, 2017). Changes in learning must be made by a teacher who has the ability to influence students to respond to changes that occur in the 21st century (Hairida et al., 2021). A capable or high-quality teacher is

someone who has a strong influence on students' achievement (Hairida et al., 2021). Therefore, teachers must have various knowledges and qualifications to deliver lessons to students.

Aspect of Students' Perception in Learning Chemistry

Aspect of students' perception in learning chemistry is categorized as high with the percentage of 73.63%. Students' perception has five indicator. Indicator X9, students' perception towards chance for their career path has the top percentage at 83.27%. At the same time, indicator X12 has the bottom percentage, which is students perception towards chemistry formula and calculation as 60.25%. The percentage graphic of each indicator on the aspect of students' perception in learning chemistry can be presented as follow:

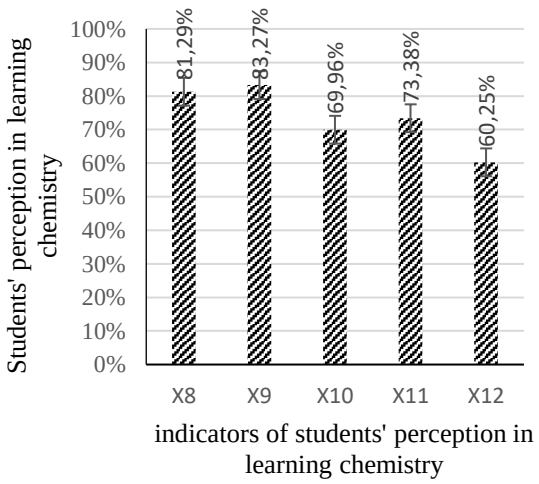

Figure 3. Students' perception in learning chemistry

Detail:

X8 : I chose chemistry because it has big chance to choose study program in university

X9 : I chose chemistry because it has big chance to my career path

X10 : I chose chemistry because my score in chemistry is higher than other subject

X11 : I chose chemistry because my friend said that chemistry is easy

X12 : I chose chemistry because the formula and its calculation is not that hard

By the interview, students stated that they consider chemistry often used in jobs with a science background. Besides that, chemistry is also a supporting subject in various university study programs. Guidelines for Selection of Elective Subjects in Senior High School/MA/ Other Equivalent Forms, published by Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (2022), stated that chemistry is a supporting subject in various study program, for example natural sciences' field such as chemistry and applied science (pharmacy, nutrition, medicine and engineering). On the other hand, the lowest indicator is students' perception of chemistry's formula and calculation at 60.25%. This means many students have a negative perception of chemistry, which believes that chemistry is complicated. So, it is necessary to change students' negative perceptions. In general, negative perception have negative impact on students' motivation in learning. Therefore, it is crucial to form positive perceptions from the beginning of the learning process (Siregar, 2017).

Nazarwaty in Irawati & Santaria (2020) stated, "Perception is the process of receiving stimulus in the form of an object, quality, connection between symptoms and phenomena until the stimulus is realized and understood". Chemistry is a subject that mainly contains abstract concepts, calculations, and interrelated reactions (Syofiana & Rohiat, 2018). Therefore, learning chemistry requires a high concept understanding, with appropriate learning media and models help. Learning media or models that are used should be suitable for students and entertain them. Based on the interview, students like to learn using the internet, playing games such as practicum or quizzes, and learning in groups.

One of learning medias that can be used is learning media based on mobile learning. This is supported by an interview with students, who said they would like chemistry even more if the learning was done by playing. Research by Ayona & Hidayah (2021) showed that students are not bored with chemistry learning using Android-based games and can understand the lesson well. For that reason a game-based learning model can be used to change students' negative perception in learning chemistry. Beside game-based learning, learning video as a learning media also increases students' interest and memory if used according to their needs (Dheadema et al., 2023).

A cooperative or problem-solving learning model can also be used to change students' negative perceptions. The cooperative learning model can use the Make a Match (MM) and Teams Games Tournament (TGT) models. Research by Syofiana & Rohiat (2018) showed that MM and TGT learning models can increase students' motivation and learning outcomes. This is because MM and TGT learning model contains game elements. So it is not boring for students. TGT learning models can be applied by using TGT with cooperative type learning model assisted by crossword puzzles media. The crossword puzzles media is very effective in increasing students' learning interest and can affect students' learning outcomes (Amelia & Rezania, 2023). In another case, problem-solving model is also one of the solutions. Research by Lestari *et al.* (2022) stated that it improves students' learning outcomes. It also trains students to solve problems. The use of weblog using the problem based learning also increase student motivation and learning outcomes (Marpaung & Sitorus, 2024). It is also supported by a research by Tambunan *et al.* (2024) that problem based learning and video learning models has influence on student learning outcomes. Besides that, discovery Learning Model supported by Powtoon Media and Word-wall Game has a positive influence on the interest and learning outcomes (Irham et al., 2024). Teacher also could use Dart Board media in the Discovery Learning. A research by Aryuni *et al.* (2024) stated that Dart Board media has an influence on students' learning motivation in learning chemistry.

Students' perception has significant impact on the process of learning chemistry. students' perception engage the process of receiving stimulus through their sense organs, which will affect students' understanding and behavior towrds chemistry. Hence, the dynamisc betweent students' percepction, understanding and behavior must be considered, in order to find a more efective learning strategy (Rosa & Nursa'adah, 2023).

Aspect of Students' Intrinsic Motivation in Learning Chemistry

Students' intrinsic motivation aspect categorized as high category and the highest aspect with the percentage as 78.99%. Students' intrinsic motivation aspect has six indicators. Indicator X13, choosing chemistry as the elective subject because they like learning with practicum is the top indicator with the percentage of 83.99%. On the other hand, X14 is the bottom aspect, which is choosing chemistry because the lesson is not fully formula at 70.32%. The percentage graphic of each indicator on the aspect of students' interest motivation can be presented as follow:

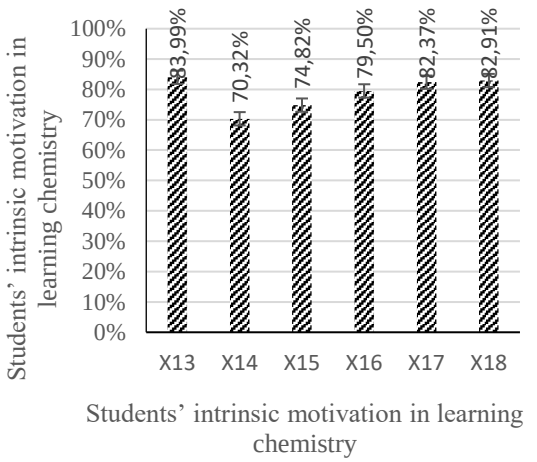

Figure 4. Students' intrinsic motivation in learning chemistry

Detail

X13: I chose chemistry because i like learning with practicum

X14 : I chose chemistry because I like chemistry's lesson that not completely formulas

X15 : I chose chemistry because the lesson that delivered always make me curious

X16 : I chose chemistry because I always try harder if my outcomes learning is not good enough

X17 : I chose chemistry because I want to keep on learning and exploring chemistry's theories

X18 : I chose chemistry because I always try to understand the lesson as well as possible even though I need long time to understand it

Through interviews, students stated they felt proud when wearing their laboratory coats. They enjoy all practicum activities, from wearing laboratory coat to quizzes about practicum results. Besides, students also revealed they feel proud when they wearing laboratory coat. They are also interested in practicum activities, starting from using laboratory equipment and mixing lessons to see the reaction and the result. Research by Putri *et al.* (2023) stated that optimizing laboratory utilization has a positive relation to students' learning outcomes. Students claim to be more interested in learning with practicum. They also stated that the class atmosphere during practicum in the laboratory was not tense. This is confirmed by research from Putri *et al* (2023), that there is a positive relation towards students' learning outcomes, proved by the students' motivation and learning outcomes that increased. Moreover, a research by Setianingsih (2023) shown that practicum has a positive affect. The positive affect proved by students' motivation and learning outcome that also increased. Yusmanidar *et al.* (2017) also stated that students' motivation in learning can be increased by using practicum with problem based learning.

Howover, the bottom indicator is the chemistry lesson, which is not completely formulaic at 70.32%. Students admitted that they also had difficulty learning chemistry theories and concepts. The difficluty was caused by chemistry's theories and concepts that are connected to each other. If students do not understand one concept, they will have difficulty learning other concepts. Therefore, a learning strategy is necessary so that students can understand chemistry's theories and concepts easily.

Learning strategy is key to achieve a good learning goals, which is to motivate students in learning and give a strong good influence for student (Jufri, Asri & Mannahali, 2023). Intrinsic motivation is a sense of satisfaction in learning something because someone considers it interesting, challenging, or fun. The existence of intrinsic motivation can be a reason for someone to stay interested in learning to expand knowledge without hoping for anything (Teppo et al., 2021). In this case, a effective learning strategy need to be planned to stimulate and maintain students' intrinsic motivation. Learning strategy that make students more actively engage in learning are more likely to achieve deep understanding.

Aspect of Meaningful Learning of the Lesson For Student

In general, meaningful learning of the lesson for student aspect categorized as high with 74.37%. Aspect of meaningful learning of the lesson for student has four indicators. Indicator X21, choosing chemistry because it is enjoyable to be engaged in practicum is the peak indicator at 83.09%. On the other hand, indicator X22 which is chemistry applied to students' hobbies is the lowest indicator as 59.53%. The percentage graphic of each indicator on the Aspect of meaningful learning of the lesson for student can be presented as follow:

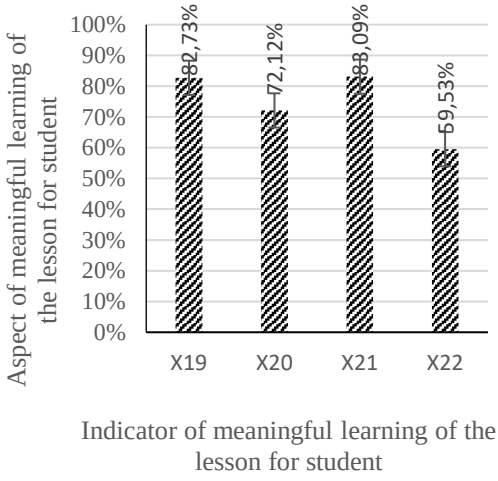

Figure 5. Aspect of meaningful learning of the lesson for student

Detail:

X19 : I chose chemistry because it encourages my dreams

X20 : I chose chemistry because its theory relate and important to my daily life

X21 : I chose chemistry because I like to engage in practicum

X22 : I chose chemistry because its theory can be implemented to support my hobby

Based on Edgar Dale's cone of experience, the most effective learning method is when students get a direct and pointed learning experience, for example, by doing a practicum. These new experiences will be associated with old experiences, leading to meaningful learning. However, it stated that if students do not understand the purpose of practicum activities well, they will only see practicum as a distraction from learning activities in class. Therefore, learning activities in the field of science must have clear purposes for students so they gain full benefits (Shana & Abulibdeh, 2020). It is also confirmed by research from Hakim et al. (2022), which shows that giving examples of the actual application of practicum data will increase the meaningfulness of learning lesson and someone's interest in learning more. Thus, teacher need to prepare practicum activity carefully, so that the meaningful learning of the lesson can be experienced by students.

Beside, the lowest indicator is chemistry applied to students' hobbies, with 59.53%. The low level of the indicator is due to students' lack of understanding of the application chemistry in daily life. Based on interview result, some of students do not realize that chemistry is related to their hobby. For example, a student has cooking as her hobby, but she thinks there is no relation between cooking and chemistry, despite chemistry is very close to the world of cooking, from the methods up to identifying toxic compounds in food. For example, food products such as soy sauce, meat, bread, and coffee have flavors from the Maillard reaction (Hustiany, 2016). The other students who like sports and martial arts such as badminton, basketball, futsal, and karate also think there is no connection between their hobbies and chemistry. Even so, Chemistry, especially biochemistry, can explain the reason behind fatigue felt by athletes. The fatigue is caused by the high intensity of exercise, which can not be overcome by rest. This is because there is a possibility of imperfection in the energy metabolism system providing energy. Therefore, recovery is important with the preparation of a balanced training and resting program (Parwata, 2015). As the result, it is important for teacher to show the application of chemistry in daily life to

increase students' interest in chemistry. As stated by Ausubel in Vallori (2014), that "the most important factor that is influencing learning is already known by student". Meaningful learning is able to give a stronger memory. This is because student are able to associate new concepts with old concepts that they already know. Thus, meaningful learning is needed to create long-term memories and can be applied in real life.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of data result, the level of interest in chemistry as an implementation of Merdeka Curriculum at SMA Negeri 8 Pontianak, it is concluded that the average level of students' interest is 76.11% and categorized as high. The highest aspect as the reason for students to choose chemistry as elective subject is students' instrinsic motivation in learning chemistry with percentage of 78.99% and categorized as high. The other aspects are alson categorized as high, as aspect of teachers' role in learning chemistry at 77.44%, followed by aspect of meaningful learning of lesson for student at 74.37% and aspect of students' perception in learning at 73.63%.

Teachers play a crucial role in the learning process by influencing student behavior. Implementing cooperative, problem-solving or TGT learning models can positively change students' negative perceptions of chemistry. However, many students struggle to connect chemistry to their everyday lives. Therefore, it is important for teachers to point out the relevance of chemistry in everyday contexts to increase students' interest. Overall, the research indicate that the effective and meaningful learning strategies could enhance student motivation and learning outcomes. By adopting appropriate approaches, teachers could foster a more engaging learning environment, ultimately preparing students for future challenges.

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