

ANALYSIS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF *MERDEKA CURRICULUM* IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Article Information

Article History:

Accepted: 07-06-2023

Revised: 19-04-2024

Published: 31-05-2024

Key words:

Analysis,
Implementation,
Curriculum,
Merdeka Curriculum

ABSTRACT

The independent curriculum is currently being hotly discussed in the realm of knowledge. This situation is tied to the ideals expressed by President Joko Widodo aimed at giving birth to a golden Indonesia in 2045, conveyed by President Joko Widodo. Steps that can be taken to give birth to these ideals are the implementation of an independent curriculum in each school. The aim of this research is to provide an explanation of the conceptual study regarding the independent learning curriculum that has been implemented in each elementary school for the 2022/2023 academic year. The library *research* method is the method used in this research in descriptive qualitative form. The data collection method used is document study, which involves collecting journals, books and other related sources, then tested and tested. After going through the data collection process, it is then continued with testing and comparing the data obtained and then presenting it in the form of a scientific article. The technical analysis used is descriptive/content analysis. Based on the analysis carried out, the final result was that the independent curriculum moves students to form independent, creative and innovative individuals. Seeing that the global environment is increasingly sophisticated and competition is getting stronger, students need to have this ability to be better prepared to experience future challenges and prepare Indonesia for greater success. To prevent errors and maintain the accuracy of the analysis data, a literature check is carried out by re-reading the literature and paying close attention to the supervisor's review.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the core of human welfare. With education we can also organize and manage ourselves, our families, our surrounding environment, and even manage our country. Education here is not only related to academic grades. However, moral education, character education, social education are also very important and need to be studied by every individual to prepare for a profitable future.

So as the current era advances, changes will definitely emerge and it is not impossible that these changes will occur in the education system in Indonesia. These changes and developments are reviewed from programs and improvements to existing educational provisions, such as curriculum transitions. Thus, causing educational provisions to face changes. In fact, changes to educational provisions in Indonesia have undergone curriculum changes 11 times, starting in 1947.

This change occurred because it was driven by political, socio-cultural, economic conditions and also other considerations. Another thing that influences change is the development of technology and science. As technology and science develop, this also plays a role in overhauling the education system in Indonesia.

With the transition to the current curriculum, it includes the implementation of an independent curriculum and the concept of independent learning. This program is in line with the hopes of a national education figure, Ki Hajar Dewantara, and focuses on freedom for independent and creative learning. The existence of several independent curriculum policies, such as changing the National School Based Examination into a competency assessment and changing the National Examination into a minimum competency assessment and behavior review, will have an impact on developing independent student character formation (Fauzi, 2022; Insani, 2019). Along with reducing the learning application plan which generally contained 20 pages, it has now changed to only one page, which covers three main components: learning objectives, teaching and learning activities, and assessment (Indarta et al., 2022; Rohim, 2021).

In education, the curriculum is a very important aspect and must be included in an educational forum unit. The curriculum is an educational tool that has a main role in the teaching and learning process by providing planning, learning activities in the form of methods for studying new information and knowledge obtained from a series of learning activities (Sumarsih et al., 2022). According to Suratno, curriculum is a process consisting of different elements to determine educational goals based on several factors such as requirements, choosing appropriate teaching methods and materials, creating teaching materials and exercises, and assessing learning outcomes to focus on achieving educational goals and maintaining student quality. (Suratno et al., 2022). The overall curriculum objectives are considered important because they include the principles of preparing lesson plans which include objectives, content, learning materials and appropriate implementation.

An independent curriculum means a way to answer how to overcome educational difficulties that arise due to the effects of the educational crisis caused by the pandemic. A number of new policies that theoretically give both institutions and students freedom in how the learning process is implemented have been produced as a result of an independent curriculum created to help children during the pandemic when they cannot go to school as usual. It is hoped that the world of education will experience more significant changes in character development as a result of this curriculum change with the development of character and soft skills in accordance with competencies (Fauzi, 2022; Indarta et al., 2022). This freedom to learn is caused by various problems that exist in the world of education, with special emphasis on human abilities (Baro'ah, 2020; Yamin & Syahrir, 2020). The subject of this policy is to delegate education management to schools and local governments by providing flexibility when creating, implementing and assessing education plans. (Kemendikbudristek, 2020). However, the problem is that schools in Indonesia have not fully implemented the independent curriculum itself. In a number of schools there are those that have implemented the independent curriculum, especially in grades 1 and 4. In fact, in the independent curriculum only 2 criteria are needed for implementation. Schools fill out a short survey and registration form, as well as the readiness of the head of the institution to familiarize themselves with the entities provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture, are two of these criteria.

This research uses a library/scientific literature review method, which involves collecting data from various scientific references such as books, journals and research documents related to the study discussed. To draw conclusions, a descriptive presentation method was used, with qualitative data analysis techniques including grouping, presentation and data analysis. The aim of this research is to write a scientific article that describes a conceptual study and is a practical step for analyzing the independent curriculum, which will be used in all schools in the 2022/2023 academic year using the library/scientific study method (library research).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

When choosing the research method used in this paper, namely the literature method / scientific literature review method was adopted. Literary research or library research is a method of collecting data by searching for and reading existing written sources, such as books or literature that explain the theoretical basis. According to Sugino (2018:291), literary studies are linked to theoretical studies by referring to the values, culture and norms that develop in the social context studied. In writing this scientific article, the author checked journal references published on Google and Google Scholar. Using selected keywords: education system in Indonesia, independent curriculum, implementation of independent curriculum in elementary schools. The review criteria for this research are articles published in national journals.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Essence of the Independent Curriculum

Analysis of research data shows that the challenges posed by the rapid flow of globalization and technology are currently increasingly difficult to face. Education is very important in responding to and preparing current and future generations. One way to achieve the required competencies is through continuous curriculum development. To overcome this challenge, it would be wise to reform the curriculum

from the 2013 curriculum to an independent curriculum. This research aims to explain the concept and implementation of an independent curriculum in 21st century elementary/MI education (inayati, 2022). The research methodology used is library research or literature study, which involves reviewing relevant literature from various sources.

The Merdeka Curriculum is currently being hotly discussed within the scope of education in Indonesia. This is in line with the implementation initiative in Indonesia Emas 2045 launched by the President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo. One concrete action to achieve these ideals is the implementation of an independent curriculum in all schools in Indonesia. Apart from that, the implementation of the independent curriculum is very important for the realization of Golden Indonesia 2045. The Independent Curriculum encourages students to become independent, productive and innovative learners. In an increasingly complex and competitive global world, students with these advantages will be more mature to face future obstacles and lead to greater development for Indonesia (ibrohim, 2023).

An independent curriculum is a curriculum that gives students the freedom to develop according to their wishes and abilities. The focus of the independent curriculum is on three main areas, namely providing relevant material, strengthening character, and developing student potential (Kusumawardani, 2022). The preparation of this independent curriculum is to catch up on delays in the reading and mathematics/numeracy phases. An independent curriculum will be a solution for completing the curriculum, its implementation can be carried out in stages and aligned with the school's capabilities. (Priantini, DAMMO, Suarni, NK, & Adnyana, 2022)

Even though this curriculum will not be officially introduced until the 2022 academic year, it has already been tested in several 2,500 driving schools, as well as in several schools throughout Indonesia. According to information from the Ministry of Education and Culture, to date there are 143,256 schools that have implemented this curriculum (Kusumawardani, 2022). This figure will increase further after the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum as a learning reference in 2022 at all levels of education, from Kindergarten, Elementary School, Middle School, to High School level (Advantages of the Merdeka Curriculum if Applied in Schools, Is It Better Than K13?, 2022; Priantini, DAMMO, Suarni, NK, & Adnyana, 2022)

Based on research results, it shows that the independent curriculum aims to maximize the breadth of education in Indonesia through diverse intracurricular learning. This is also in line with 21st century education by prioritizing the skills needed by students to answer the challenges of the times. There were 3 (three) options for implementing or implementing the independent curriculum (IKM) for the SD/MI level, including: Independent learning category, independent changing category and independent sharing category for grades 1 and 4. Elementary and MI schools will begin to be implemented in the 2022 school year/ 2023, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the SD/MI stage will focus more on project-based learning.

Schools that independently implement the latest independent learning curriculum can choose three ways, including independent learning, independent change and independent sharing. The possibility of implementing this latest curriculum proposed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology or Kemendikbudristek provides leeway for schools in making choices based on a survey of readiness to implement the independent curriculum through testing the readiness of teachers and lecturers to implement the independent curriculum (Alphabet String, 2022). Analysis of Independent Learning, Independent Change, and Independent Sharing for options for implementing the Independent Curriculum.

1. Independent Learning

In independent learning, the learning unit applies the 2013 Curriculum rules in curriculum development and implements several Independent Curriculum principles in implementing learning and assessment (Knowing Independent Learning, Independent Change, and Independent Sharing in the Independent Curriculum, 2023). Schools that choose independent learning as their choice will continue to apply the 2013 Curriculum, but will continue to implement the foundations contained in the Independent Curriculum regarding literacy, numeracy, character education and improving other skills (Priambodo, 2022).

The independent learning policy gives independence to every level of education to create innovation. In essence, independent learning exists to grow the skills of students and teaching staff to start improving quality independently by creating innovation. Mandiri does not only follow the available education officers, but requires new activities as a form of innovation. Independent learning has four main ideas to strive to create a learning system that is increasingly active, creative, independent, innovative, contextual to build a universal transition in the scope of education today. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology stated that to achieve the goal, it is necessary to minimize things that are in accordance with regulations and administration so that obstacles to the essence of learning can occur. This idea does seem critical for implementing an independent curriculum towards outputs and outcomes.

To strengthen this independent learning innovation, the Ministry of Education and Culture launched an independent curriculum on February 11 2022. Independence must be understood broadly, not just interpreted as freedom. The independent learning option offers freedom to each level of education to implement the independent curriculum only in part and its rules, without changing the implementation of the curriculum at the early childhood education level, grades 1 and 4 of elementary school, junior high school grade 7, senior high school (SMA) grade 10 (A, 2022).

2. Independent Change

In this variant, educational levels can use independent curriculum rules when developing study curricula and apply independent curriculum rules when teaching and evaluating. Mandiri Berubah uses all available Merdeka Mengajar policies (Priambodo, 2022). The education unit uses the independent curriculum to develop its educational unit curriculum and uses the independent curriculum rules when carrying out learning activities and assessments, so that it can be responsible for setting a good example to other educational units. Education units can choose learning outcomes (CP), learning objectives (TP), reference learning objectives (ATP), learning tools, and assessments in the Merdeka Mengajar policy, which covers all school needs to implement the Merdeka Curriculum. Mandiri Berubah gives freedom to teaching units when implementing the Merdeka Curriculum by using learning tools that are available in PAUD schools, grades 1 and 4 of elementary schools, and grades 7 of junior high school, and 10 of high school.

3. Mandiri Sharing

In this case, the Education unit uses the Independent Curriculum policy in developing a unique educational curriculum and implements the Independent Curriculum rules in implementing learning activities and assessments, by undertaking to provide good practice to teaching staff and to other educational units. This option gives each educational unit the freedom to implement the Independent Curriculum by independently advancing learning tools in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10 as well as PAUD (Get to Know These 3 Options Before Registering for the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum Independent Path, 2022; Differences in Independent Learning, Independent Change, And Mandiri Sharing, 2023).

Independent curriculum policy

Central government policy towards the independent curriculum

Autonomous education is an option for all educational units, however independent courses are not implemented on a large scale at the same time, this is in line with the policy of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, giving freedom to educational units to implement courses. Several programs that support the implementation of the independent curriculum are the Center of Excellence School Mobilization and the Vocational High School Program where the Ministry of Education and Culture will provide support for the implementation of the independent curriculum from these two activities. Both the experience gained from implementing the independent curriculum, Turn into good practice and content. Learning from SP/MK-PK which implements stand-alone courses is widely known and can be a lesson for other educational units.

Regional government policy towards the independent curriculum

The authority for independent curriculum matters is divided into central authority and regional authority. This regulation exists because its implementation must be carried out in accordance with the principles of accountability, efficiency and national interests, especially the implementation of provincial and district/city education. Curriculum issues included in education policy research are the result of central government policy in the education sector which is aimed at updating students and schools for learning readiness, including as one of the government's affairs. It must be carried out by the regional government, then in the attachment to the division of labor the division of government affairs in the education sector is clarified, there is a power relationship between the center and the regions. By managing local wisdom and implementing the education system, it is hoped that equality can be achieved in all regions. To support this goal, it is important to strengthen connections between the central government and regional governments where provinces have authority over secondary education (Hilmin et al., 2022).

From the results of the analysis we conducted, it appears that there is an independent learning policy in teaching and learning activities in schools that is linked and organized with the development of quality learning methods. The learning process can be carried out effectively and efficiently anywhere as long as the facilities are able to support the learning process itself. In teaching activities for implementing independent courses, educators must not limit children's activities so that children can feel comfortable in these activities. In autonomous education sources there is project-based learning to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students which is carried out at least 2 times a study year, while basic independent courses are at elementary school level. Strengthen basic skills and understanding of logistics to understand the importance of the

surrounding environment, combining natural and social subjects such as natural and social sciences (IPAS), Indonesian and Mathematics, including the integration of computational thinking.

Independent learning policies can be adapted to the current education system, where after the Covid-19 pandemic requires online learning, providing unlimited space and time to carry out online teaching activities in independent courses. From the explanation above, the independent curriculum procedure has a good influence on teachers, because educators are educational facilitators and are free to explore their abilities in creating and educating a quality generation of the nation in accordance with government programs, namely becoming a superior nation in 2045.

Independent course learning cultivates students' high analytical reasoning ability to solve problems, and educators also play an important role in guiding students. Through the Independent Learning Policy, students are able to be independent based on aspects of the Pancasila student profile which requires students to reason critically, have good morals, be creative, work together, have global diversity and be independent, so that students are motivated to improve their academic achievements.

The Pancasila student profile is a general supporter or personality that must be applied and brought to life in every student's personality from an early age. Learning is based on the achievement stage (teaching at the right level) to ensure that every student has the right to learn which gives them the opportunity to reach the minimum level of proficiency. The project strengthens the Pancasila student profile as a learning aid to strengthen learning characteristics in the Pancasila student profile through project activities. With co-curricular activities and adapting to the learning material or topic that will be discussed. For example, the learning that can be linked is about introducing how to make traditional food made from green beans, where green beans are ingredients that are easily found in the environment where students live. Through these activities, it is hoped that students will be able to develop their character in increasing their awareness of nature.

Obstacles faced by teaching staff in implementing the Independent Curriculum

In implementing the independent curriculum in elementary schools, an educator has participated in several trainings organized by local institutions, both virtual and face-to-face. There are several aspects related to the independent curriculum, namely preparation for conducting assessments to replace the National Standard School Examination (USBN), implementation of learning implementation plans into teaching materials, preparation of operational curricula, and preparation of project modules to increase student profiles in understanding Pancasila. This includes preparations for implementing assessments as a replacement for the National Standard School Examination (USBN), compiling Learning Implementation Plans (RPP) into teaching modules, compiling operational curricula, and creating project modules to strengthen student profiles in understanding Pancasila.

Initially, teaching staff were faced with the problem of providing facilities to carry out assessments, where they still experienced difficulties in implementing this diagnostic assessment to determine students' competencies, strengths and weaknesses, then the learning process could be planned according to their needs. Even though diagnostic assessments have been implemented in the 2013 learning curriculum, in the current newest curriculum, namely the independent measurement curriculum, it is designed with formative and summative, and is also equipped with reports on student learning outcomes. Formative and summative assessments are two types of assessment related to learning activities, but in formative assessment the aspect that is focused is more on student assessment, so student development is less conditioned (Rohim, 2021; Supriyadi et al., 2022).

Second, there was also a change from the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) to a teaching module for implementing the Independent Curriculum in elementary schools. Educators feel that there is something different between the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum, especially related to the change from KI (Core Competencies) to CP (Learning Outcomes) in the Merdeka Curriculum. The difference lies in the time allocation required to achieve the learning objectives that have been designed. CP in the Independent Curriculum explains ATP (Learning Objective Flow). Changes to the Teaching Module aim to enrich pedagogical instruments for teaching staff in teaching and learning activities. The Independent Curriculum provides freedom to allocate time for teaching and learning activities in each field of science and the Teaching Modules in this Curriculum provide flexibility to teaching staff when implementing the learning process, thereby creating an atmosphere that suits the needs of students. Freedom in time allocation is also to influence the improvement of Teaching Module components that are commensurate with students' environmental conditions (Laila et al., 2022; Rindayatu et al., 2022). (Laila et al., 2022; Rindayati et al., 2022).

Third, in implementing it at the elementary school level, there are problems in the operational preparation section which are confusing for teaching staff. The comparison between the previous curriculum in 2013 and the current curriculum causes difficulties in planning teaching and learning activities. Even

though various face-to-face and virtual counseling has been followed, several teaching staff still have difficulty designing teaching models. In this section, a criteria strategy is needed in the basic teaching model preparation section, namely the concept of learning content based on the results of learning experiences and across disciplines. (Ardianti & Amalia, 2022). There are several steps that need to be taken by teaching staff in preparing a teaching model, namely observing the situation and needs of teaching staff, students, and educational unit institutions regarding the perception of the Pancasila student profile. Next, determine the progress of learning activities, develop teaching models according to existing elements, carry out learning activities and reflect on next steps (Rustianah, 2021).

And the last one is about creating a project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. Strengthening character is one of the important focuses in the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum, where in the Merdeka Curriculum there is a strengthening of the character of Pancasila student profiles. Character education itself has been regulated in article 3 of the Constitution of the Indonesian education system which aims to cultivate and grow the character and progress of the nation. In the Merdeka curriculum, character strengthening is carried out by applying Pancasila values. Strengthening the profile of Pancasila students is an effort to prepare the nation's future generation to provide peace, safety and security. In preparing the project module for strengthening the Pancasila student profile, it can be allocated at least 25% or even more of the entire time allocation for learning activities for one year and carried out at the end of the semester (Ardianti & Amalia, 2022).

4. CONCLUSION

Curriculum is a comprehensive process that involves identifying learning objectives based on various factors, such as identifying learning needs, selecting appropriate learning materials and methods, creating learning materials and activities, and evaluating learning outcomes by considering student development. This curriculum is a very important component in both institutional and educational settings because it functions as a learning tool that guides the planning of learning activities, thereby producing knowledge and experience obtained from a sequence of educational tasks.

The independent learning curriculum allows students to cultivate their individual interests and talents while also focusing on improving their literacy and numeracy skills. The ultimate goal of the independent curriculum is to improve education throughout Indonesia by offering a variety of intracurricular learning opportunities. The independent curriculum is implemented through the three elements mentioned above, which are available in SD/MI units.

Educational institutions apply the principles of an independent learning curriculum by using the 2013 curriculum structure in its development for learning and assessment. The independent learning approach applies from PAUD, grades 1 and 4 for elementary school, while grade 7 for junior high school, and up to grade 10 for high school. Curriculum structures and principles are used in developing the independent curriculum and institutions have the freedom to choose teaching and assessment tools from the Merdeka Mengajar platform. Educational institutions can also create their own teaching tools when implementing shared curricula independently.

From the results of the analysis we have carried out, it can be understood that there is a policy of independent learning, in which teaching and learning activities in schools have experienced relevant and regular improvements for the development of high quality learning methods. The learning process can be carried out well and quickly anywhere, as long as the facilities can support the learning process itself to support it. Research findings show that the aim of the independent curriculum is to advance education throughout Indonesia by offering diverse intracurricular learning opportunities. This statement is in line with the principles of learning in the 21st century, which means that it helps equip students with the skills and skills needed to overcome contemporary challenges.

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