

**ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM
IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES AT MTS INSAN MADANI**

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ABSTRACT

This article is written to discuss the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at MTs. Insan Madani. A curriculum itself is a plan or regulation that contains the objectives, content, learning materials, and teaching methods used as guidelines in the teaching and learning process. The curriculum can also be defined as a set or system of plans and arrangements regarding learning materials that can be used as a guide in conducting teaching and learning activities. In essence, the curriculum can also be referred to as a learning plan. This research is qualitative in nature. The method used is a descriptive approach with data collection conducted through in-depth interviews and observation. The subjects of this study are students at the MTs. Insan Madani education unit, located in Gebang Village, Jatibanteng District, Situbondo Regency. The data collection technique used is qualitative descriptive data, collected in the form of words or images. The results of this study reveal that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at MTs. Insan Madani is influenced by several factors, namely the *natural resources of the institution itself and the transitional process from the previous curriculum. As a result, there are still some teachers who do not fully understand how to implement the Merdeka Curriculum properly.*

Keywords: Implementation; Independent-Curriculum; Teaching; Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Education is very important for the development and progress of a country. In the context of Indonesia, education is still a big challenge. In 2018, the Indonesian government began to launch the concept of an independent curriculum or what is called the independent curriculum to address the problem of the relevance of education to labor needs. The concept provides freedom and flexibility for teachers and learners to choose and develop learning content according to local needs and conditions. By involving the community in the education process, the government hopes to improve the quality of education that is more relevant to the needs of the world of work (Heni Susanti et al., 2024).

The curriculum is a set of plans or arrangements that include goals, content, and learning methods that are used as guidelines in starting teaching and learning activities. Curriculum changes have undergone 9 changes starting in 1952 the beginning of curriculum changes with curriculum adjustments in 1947 so that, until the current year 2024. In this statement, it shows that the curriculum certainly cannot be seen as just a document, but as a tool and also a reference where education implementers carry out the best teaching and learning process to achieve better educational goals (Andari, 2022). Changes-changes in this curriculum that can be of concern to all parties involved in its implementation. Therefore, the government issued a new curriculum, namely the independent curriculum, where this independent curriculum is a new policy program from the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbud RI) which was launched by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Indonesian cabinet of advanced Indonesia. The independent curriculum is a curriculum with a variety of intracurricular learning so that students are more optimal and have concepts and can strengthen their competencies (Jannah et al., 2022).

Where the curriculum in education plays a very important role as an element or component that is positioned to support education and learning goals. The independent curriculum is currently the subject of discussion in the world of education in Indonesia. Likewise, the independent curriculum has a close relationship with students, because the curriculum is designed to meet their learning needs, as well as to improve the quality of learning and the development of students' character and competencies. Meanwhile, the implementation of the independent curriculum has been implemented in other schools in 2022/2023. For example, the implementation of the independent curriculum at the Jami'atul Qurro' Islamic boarding school in Palembang, which has been implemented through a process of coaching, technical guidance, training, learning, by integrating tolerant material into its subjects (Ramadan & Imam Tabroni, 2020). Then the independent curriculum has also been implemented at SMP Muhammadiyah 19 Sawangan, with several challenges when implementing it such as lack of mastering basic skills in learning in the digital era, and lack of adequate facilities (Damayanti et al., 2022).

An example of the implementation above is the difference in the independent curriculum, which can be seen from the more flexible curriculum structure, the targeted lesson hours, to be fulfilled in 1 year, then to focus more on essential material, which means that the achievement of learning is set per phase not per year. Based on the background above, it shows that the independent curriculum is one of the curricula that has a very long journey to be implemented in schools or madrasah. This is due to the changes that always occur. Because of this, researchers are interested in researching the implementation of the independent curriculum at MTs. Insan Madani.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach, namely with literature review. This research was written to find out how the implementation of the independent curriculum at MTs. Insan Madani. The author conducts a literature review through journals and books related to the implementation of the independent curriculum. Then the study is carried out, data collection, followed by the discovery of conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Merdeka curriculum in teaching and learning activities at MTs. InsanMadani.

Implementation is a real process of implementing or carrying out a plan, policy or program that has been previously designed so that it can function effectively in the field and can achieve the stated goals. Implementation is not only limited to carrying out the plan, but can also involve coordination between various parties, the allocation of appropriate resources, and supervision of the implementation process so that the results are as expected. In the context of public policy, for

example, this implementation includes concrete actions from the institution itself or individuals to be able to realize the policy in the field. The success of implementation is strongly influenced by several factors, including:

- 1] Clarity of Purpose
- 2] Available resources
- 3] Organizational structure
- 4] Attitude and commitment of implementers

In other words, implementation is a bridge between planning and final results, which can determine whether a thought or policy can have a real impact on society. Therefore, the implementation of the independent curriculum still requires close collaboration between teachers, students and parents so that the learner-centered learning objectives are optimally implemented. The implementation of an independent curriculum in teaching and learning activities must be carried out by giving teachers the freedom to be able to design learning that is more in line with the needs of students. So that learning can be more learner-centered, where they will be encouraged to be active, creative, and also think critically through various meaningful activities. The teacher's role is also very important because, the teacher is also a facilitator who can help students to further explore their own potential. The material taught is also more flexible and less dense, so that students can focus their learning and understanding on concepts and character development. The evaluation process also emphasizes the assessment of the learning process, not just the final results. In addition, learning is also carried out with a contextual approach, such as project-based learning or with a real introduction, so that students can more easily understand and also relate lessons to their daily lives.

Implementation of the Independent Curriculum Implementation in Teaching and Learning Activities.

In addition to providing freedom and flexibility to education units, the implementation of this independent curriculum can also design learning according to local needs and contexts, and can also encourage the development of character and independence of students. The indicators of the achievement of the implementation of an independent curriculum include aspects, ranging from equal participation of students, effective learning, so that there is no lagging of students in providing learning. This achievement can also be seen from the ability of students to show behavior and habits that are in accordance with the agreement, the development of non-academic skills, for example, having a critical mindset, and collaboration, as well as student-centered learning. An example of an independent curriculum implementation outcome is as follows:

- a) Equitable learner participation.
The independent curriculum also aims for all learners, regardless of background, to have equal opportunities to access quality education.
- b) Effective learning.
This outcome indicator can show that learning is successful in improving learners' understanding and skills.
- c) No lagging behind.
The independent curriculum seeks to ensure that no learner is left behind in learning, so that all learners can achieve the expected competencies.
- d) Good behavior and habits.
Learners who are able to demonstrate good behavior and habits in accordance with the agreement show that they have internalized the values that have been taught in the independent curriculum.
- e) Non-Academic Skills.
The independent curriculum also emphasizes the development of skills such as being able to think critically, being able to collaborate, and also having high creativity because it is important to support students' future success.
- f) Learner-centered learning.
Teachers here are designed to facilitate learning to suit the needs and interests of students, so that they can learn more effectively and have more fun.
- g) Holistic evaluation.
The assessment in the independent curriculum does not only measure the cognitive aspects, but also the effective and psychomotor aspects, in order to provide a more complete picture of the progress of students.

h) Support from the environment.

The successful implementation of the independent curriculum also depends on the support of the principal, teachers, parents, and the surrounding community, in order to create a conducive learning environment.

With the implementation of the independent curriculum, it is hoped that the learning process will become more relevant and meaningful, and be able to prepare students to face the challenges of an ever-evolving era. As the head of the madrasah, I strongly support the implementation of this independent curriculum and am committed to ensuring that all elements in MTs. Insan Madani are ready to adapt and innovate for the advancement of education. The implementation of the independent curriculum in teaching and learning activities places great emphasis on the learner-centered learning process, by providing a space for freedom for teachers and students in adjusting teaching methods and materials according to their individual needs and conditions. In its implementation, the approach used must be more flexible, no longer fixated on the syllabus, but on the learning outcomes that must be achieved in implementing the independent curriculum. The learning process is also directed so that students can become active subjects when learning, not just receiving information. Teachers must also act more as facilitators who can guide learners to discover and also build their own knowledge through various activities that are contextual and also meaningful.

Learning activities can involve collaborative projects or real-world problem-solving, so as to explore the surrounding environment. In the implementation of the independent curriculum, assessment is no longer focused on the end result, but on the process. Assessment is also carried out on an ongoing basis in order to better understand the learning development of students, including through reflection, portfolios, and constructive feedback. This aims to encourage deep understanding, not just memorization.

The implementation of this independent curriculum requires teachers' ability to design adaptive learning and understand the characteristics of individual learners. In addition, the involvement of the school community and family can be the key to making learning more relevant and can also support the development of the character and competence of students. Therefore, researchers analyzed the implementation of the independent curriculum in teaching and learning activities at MTs. Insan Madani.

Learning focus

A learning focus is the main concern or core of the learning process to be achieved in learning activities. This learning focus refers to certain knowledge, attitudes, skills, or values that can be the main goal of learning. Based on the results of the study, to implement the independent curriculum, the principal, along with other teachers, need to take part in prior training on the independent curriculum in the teaching and learning process (Ariesanti et al., 2023). In the context of education, a learning focus can help:

- 1] Can determine what learning objectives can be mastered by students after learning is complete.
- 2] Can direct teaching methods and strategies, so that teachers better master the appropriate approach to achieve the focus.
- 3] Can help assess learning outcomes, focus on assessing whether students can achieve the expected competencies or not.

For example, if the learning focus is "Understanding the concept of ecosystems and the relationships between living things in them" then all activities, meters, and evaluations can be directed to support students' understanding of the learning focus topic.

The Role of the Teacher

The role of the teacher is a responsibility and function that must be carried out by the teacher in the education process in order to help learners to grow and develop as a whole. A teacher is not only tasked with delivering learning materials, but also educating, guiding, and shaping the character of students. In their daily lives, teachers also have a role to lead in the classroom, which directs the learning process to run effectively and in accordance with educational goals. According to the old view, the teacher is a human figure who should be followed and imitated (Jainiyah et al., 2023).

Quality of Education

The quality of education is a measure or level of the extent to which the education system can achieve its goals, such as creating graduates who are competent, think critically, have good moral values, and are ready to face the challenges of life and the world of work. The quality of education in a nation is one of the determinants of the nation's progress (Kurniawati, 2022). On the other hand, the quality of education is not only seen from the learning outcomes but also from other supporting systems.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the research analyze the implementation of the independent curriculum in teaching and learning activities at MTs. Insan Madani resulted in the following conclusions: Implementation of the independent curriculum at MTs. Insan Madani shows that this curriculum change can have a positive impact on the learning process, although it still faces a number of challenges. The application of a flexible approach can provide space for teachers to adapt the material to the conditions of students and the madrasah environment. Students can be more active, creative and also emotionally involved in learning, especially through project-based activities that are contextualized and can touch their daily lives. Implementation of the independent curriculum at MTs. Insan Madani also has a positive impact on the mindset of teachers and students in the learning process. Although there are still obstacles such as limited facilities and the need to improve teacher competence, the implementation of the independent curriculum at MTs. Insan Madani can show a positive direction of change. Having a collaborative spirit among educators and openness to innovation can be the main key in strengthening the teaching and learning process in the madrasah.

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