Implementation of an Independent Curriculum in Supporting Students' Freedom to Create and Learn

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ABSTRACT
As one of the efforts to improve the quality of teaching in education, the government is trying to produce various necessary policies. This will be important because until now there is still a gap between reality and expectations of learning quality. Currently, the quality of our learning is not in line with what is expected as the presence of an independent curriculum is expected to strengthen learning transformation efforts. The implementation of the curriculum has been repeatedly carried out improvements and changes as an effort to improve the previous curriculum. This research explains and provides an overview of the implementation of the independent curriculum in supporting creative freedom and learning. The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the curriculum in schools in supporting creative freedom and learning has been implemented optimally and is ongoing, although in its implementation there are still many shortcomings and obstacles. To succeed in implementing an independent curriculum, joint efforts and synergy are needed. The Ministry of Religious Affairs is expected to contribute positively to the implementation of the independent curriculum starting in 2023.

Keywords: Independent Curriculum, Implementation, Student Freedom, Creativity, Learning

INTRODUCTION
As an effort to improve the quality of teaching in education, the government is trying to produce various necessary policies. This will be important because until now there is still a gap between reality and expectations of learning quality (Adiyono, 2021). Currently, the quality of our learning (Adiyono, et al.2023) is not in accordance with what is expected so that the presence of an independent curriculum is expected to strengthen learning transformation efforts. To succeed in implementing the independent curriculum, joint efforts and synergy are needed. The Ministry of Religious Affairs is expected to contribute positively to the implementation of the independent curriculum starting in 2023. And it is hoped that schools and madrasah have the intention, determination, and commitment to implement the Independent Curriculum. Because this joint step is important because both schools and madrasah have their respective contributions in enriching the spectrum of

In education there are teachers whose main task is to teach (Marisana, D., Iskandar, S., & Kurniawan, D. T.; 2023). In education, teaching is imparting knowledge to someone in the shortest and most appropriate way (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019). In developed countries, teaching is defined as teaching is the guidance of learning, which means teaching is guidance to students in the learning process (Adiyono et al., 2022; Karwati, 2014). Nowadays, one's professionalism is highly demanded in carrying out a job. This can be proven by the many majors that exist in a college, which aims to make the college alumni more professional and master one scientific field. Anyone who decides to become a teacher also needs special skills to produce excellent students (Adiyono, 2020a; Adiyono, 2021). Therefore, schools have different roles and responsibilities (Adiyono, 2022, Zarkasi, T., Muslihatun, M., & Fajri, M. F. M.; 2022) related to their profession (Adiyono et al., 2023), such as: teaching and guiding students, preparing the necessary learning management and other learning-related activities (Adiyono & Astuti, 2022). This is so that teachers can fulfill their duties and responsibilities (Adiyono et al., 2023), so every teacher must have qualifications to fulfill these duties and responsibilities (Adiyono & Pratiwi, 2021) because qualifications are one of the most important things for teachers (Adiyono, 2019, 2020, Rahmadayanti, D., & Hartoyo, A.; 2022). If the teacher does not have these competencies, then he is not qualified to fulfill his duties and the results will not be maximized (Adiyono & Rohimah, 2021; Adiyono et al., 2022; Julaiha et al., 2023).

If the principal orders the teacher (Adiyono, 2020b; Maulida, 2021) to teach a particular subject, the teacher indirectly (Kabariah & Adiyono, 2023) accepts the order and Muslims are obliged to carry out the order. To complete the task correctly, the teacher must complete the lesson in accordance with the requirements that apply in the world of education, such as: how to make lesson plans, deliver lessons, learning assessments (Djamarah, 2020). Therefore, teachers must have effective learning methods (Rohmawati et al., 2023), know how to make lesson plans, be able to teach in class, understand the curriculum well and know how to make learning assessments (Adiyono et al., 2021; Rohmawati et al., 2021; Saraya et al., 2023).

Kemendikbudristek designed the independent curriculum to provide flexibility and support for quality learning. Students also have the freedom to create and learn. "From the child's side, a wide opportunity is given in certain materials to be able to solve problems that are widely put forward," said Sugiyo at the Ministry of Education and Research's Merdeka Curriculum Festival, quoted Thursday (18/5/2023). He revealed, the toughest challenge is with the teacher. Because teachers must be able to master at the level of implementation the completion of the material is much broader. As a regulation for the implementation of the independent curriculum, the government through the Ministry of Research and Technology has issued Permendikbudristek Number 5 of 2022 concerning graduate competency standards in early childhood education, basic education, and secondary education. These graduation standards are minimum criteria regarding the unity.
of attitudes, skills, and knowledge that show the achievement of students' abilities from their learning outcomes at the end of the education level. "SKL is a reference for the 2013 Curriculum, Emergency Curriculum, and Merdeka Curriculum.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach that is a library study (library research) which functions to build concepts or theories that form the basis of studies in research (V. Wiratna Sujarweni, 2014). Library or literature study can be defined as a series of activities related to library data collection methods by reading, recording and processing previous research materials from various journals. This research explains and provides an overview of the implementation of an independent curriculum in supporting freedom of creativity and learning. The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the curriculum at school in supporting freedom of creativity and learning has been implemented optimally and is ongoing, although in its implementation there are still many shortcomings and obstacles. To succeed in implementing an independent curriculum, joint efforts and synergy are needed. The Ministry of Religious Affairs is expected to contribute positively to the implementation of the independent curriculum starting in 2023.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Indonesian curriculum development

Implementation of the curriculum is part of the preparation to face the challenges of the future. In the future, the world of work will be filled with educational actors who are currently learning to achieve their goals, they are students (Indar, 1995). Therefore, the curriculum is a reflection of the formation of character education that fully contributes to the future of the nation. The pattern of life is increasingly dynamic as if there are no limits, this is evidenced by the development of the world of technology which is growing rapidly and has a full role in everyday life.

Thus, whatever the policy is the curriculum must be aligned with the objectives that have an influence on nation building, this is because education is not used as an entity that occurs on a stand-alone basis, but education is a major pillar for development, and is closely related to other sectors (Koentjaraningrat, 1985). Among them are economic welfare, political and socio-cultural dynamics that become security stability for the country and have a huge influence on how the direction of educational development. For this reason, it is necessary to have a curriculum policy that has an adaptive and flexible nature in dealing with situations and conditions towards what the development should be like and the approach to be taken in order to get the right policy pattern.

The curriculum has been repeatedly improved or changed in an effort to improve the previous curriculum. In 1947 after Indonesian independence was the beginning of the implementation of Indonesia's first curriculum, which was then improved in 1964 called the 1964 education plan. In 1968 there was a refinement of the curriculum again, namely in the
era of the new order because it was considered that the 1964 curriculum was a product of the old order. Curriculum changes were implemented again in 1975, with the introduction of the term lesson unit. In 1984 there was another change with the introduction of the term CBSA or active student learning and this curriculum lasted for 10 years because only in 1994 the government again improved the curriculum by adding local content as content in the curriculum. The 2004 curriculum by introducing the term Competency-Based Curriculum only lasted two years because in 2006 the government again made improvements known as the Education Unit Level Curriculum. In 2013 the term kurtilas was introduced which was revised in 2018 with the term Curriculum Thirteen Revision. (Ulinniam et al., 2021). And since the beginning of 2021 a new curriculum was born, namely the independent learning curriculum.

The independent curriculum is a response to the challenges in education that have arisen due to the post-pandemic education crisis. The independent curriculum is designed to overcome these problems by formulating new policies that give freedom to institutions and students in implementing the learning process. Conceptually, the independent curriculum emphasizes character development and soft skills based on competencies (Indarta et al., 2022; Rahayu et al., 2022). The principle of freedom in the independent curriculum is in line with Ki Hajar Dewantara's vision of free learning, allowing learners to learn independently and creatively. This freedom motivates learners to explore knowledge and develop independent character (Vhalery et al., 2022). The concept of free learning emerged as a response to various problems in the field of education, especially those related to human resources (Baro’ah, 2020; Yamin & Syahrir, 2020).

The independent curriculum was developed as a curriculum framework that is more flexible and centers on fundamental material and develops the uniqueness and abilities of students. "The Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud Ristek) stated that there are 4 ideas of change that support independent learning programs related to the National Standardized Test (USBN), National Examination (UN), Learning Implementation Plan (RPP), and Zoning New Student Admission Regulations (PPDB)" (Mustagfiroh, 2020, Saleh, 2020, Marisa, 2021).

**Implementation of the independent curriculum**

The independent curriculum has been implemented since the last year. The implementation of the independent learning curriculum is of course with the hope of improving student achievement. In line with that, in the context of nation and state, the curriculum is a very strategic learning tool to sow and shape individual conceptions and behavior regarding identity awareness, according to (Suryaman, 2020). Actually, the ability of teachers is the most decisive thing in every policy enacted by the government, especially in the implementation of this relatively new independent curriculum. The implementation is more or less influenced by the perceptions and interpretations of the teachers, according to (Nurwiatin, 2022). The purpose of this independent learning is so that student teachers
and parents can get a pleasant atmosphere. It is hoped that from this independent learning, teachers and students can be free in thinking so that this can be implemented in teacher innovation in delivering material to students, not only that students are also facilitated in independent learning because students are facilitated in innovation and creativity in learning, (Hutabarat, 2022).

Rebuilding student enthusiasm and attracting students to make achievements again is a new task for teachers after the publication of the independent learning curriculum. According to (Rusmiati, 2017) achievement is the result obtained after carrying out an activity either carried out by an individual or by a group.

In implementing the independent learning curriculum, teachers as implementers of the teaching and learning process at school play an important role in the success of the implemented curriculum. Teachers must be able to innovate and continue to spur themselves to keep up with the times. Through the independent learning curriculum, teachers need to reflect, reflect, and evaluate the challenges of today so as not to be outrun by students. Teachers must not miss information so that students do not seem smarter than the teacher, and teachers must understand the current situation of students. That is why it is important for teachers to have a strategy to balance the demands of the modern era and character education, and instill good values amid the development of information technology.

The curriculum needs to be periodically and innovatively evaluated in order to reflect the times, advances in science and technology, as well as the skills that the society and graduate users are looking for. The "spirit" of education is found in the curriculum. Curriculum change is now required as a result (Suryaman, 2020). The Merdeka Curriculum strives to advance students' reading and math abilities. The Merdeka Curriculum will offer a solution for curriculum enhancement, which may be implemented in stages based on each school's readiness. Since the 2021/22 academic year, 2,500 schools have adopted the Independent Curriculum, an innovation that is a part of a new outlook on education. The following educational facilities are listed in the data: the Mobilizing School Program (PSP) and an estimated 901 Centers of (SMK PK) Excellence Vocational Schools (Pengunaan et al., 2022). Evaluation for independent planning In order to support educational units in evaluating the stages of readiness for the introduction and execution of the Independent Curriculum, the government creates a variety of questionnaires (Hamdi et al., 2022).

Starting with the most fundamental education, such as TK-B, SDLB grades I and IV, SMP and SMPLB grades VII, SMA, SMALB, and SMK Grade X, this independent curriculum is implemented. In the interim, each educational unit can decide and adjust to its readiness to implement the independent curriculum during the academic year 2022–2023.

Merdeka learning prioritizes a learning process that is able to foster student creativity through approaches and methods that can train students’ thinking skills, the learning process allows the creation of independent students who have self-confidence, are
able to know themselves, self-understanding, self-actualization or self-direction have consistent emotional and intellectual abilities and achieve a stable and independent personality level. And all of that is inseparable from integrative efforts to support and realize students to continue to excel.

The implementation of the independent learning curriculum is expected to be a learning development strategy, so that it can produce a comprehensive profile. With a combination of face-to-face and online-based learning, students can be increasingly motivated by the many online-based activities to improve achievement. Improving student achievement must be an effort of creativity and innovation, so that renewal and the spirit of achievement continue to be encouraged. Because student achievement is a very proud result both for themselves, parents, teachers, and schools.

Therefore, through the independent learning curriculum, it is expected that student achievement must be strengthened. Given that it is now in the new normal era education phase which must develop dynamically according to the times, so that activities to improve student achievement must be carried out and student achievement is also able to accompany the times. The implementation of independent learning in learning has meaning and has a positive impact on teachers and students. Understanding from previous literature that the meaning of independent learning is freedom of thought, freedom to innovate, freedom to learn independently and also creatively (Lao & Hendrik, 2020) in Daga (2021). The idea of independent learning refers to Ki Hadjar Dewantara's thinking in Ainia (2020) that his thoughts on education lead to the stage of student development starting from teaching for change and benefitting society. Education as a means of increasing self-confidence, developing potential and balanced by character behavior and skills in life.

Education units have three alternatives when it comes to implementing the Independent Curriculum for the 2022–2023 academic year, in line with the Independent Curriculum. Start by applying some of the Independent Curriculum’s guiding principles while keeping the earlier ones in place. Second, using pre-made teaching resources to implement the Independent Curriculum. Thirdly, putting in place a customized curriculum and individually producing different instructional materials (Putri et al., 2022). The Independent Curriculum places a strong emphasis on fundamental knowledge and the staged development of students' talents. deeper, more meaningful, leisurely, and less rushed The second benefit is his greater independence. Since high school does not provide a specialist program, students select the courses they are interested in based on their skills and objectives. Teachers who engage in classroom activities can adjust their lessons to the academic and developmental stages of their students. When schools follow an independent curriculum, they are allowed to develop and oversee a curriculum as well as instructional strategies that are specific to the students and educational unit. The third advantage is that it is more participatory and relevant (Susilawati et al., 2021). To encourage critical thinking, students are free to investigate, delve into, and describe the most recent rumors, including
those about the environment, the circular economy, sanitation, and other topics. According to the Pancasila Learner Profile, character development and child competences include the ability to plan ahead and solve complicated problems; in this context, learning is primarily accomplished through project work.

At first glance, based on the stipulated rules, it can be concluded that the Merdeka Curriculum has several advantages over the 2013 Curriculum. Among other things, it provides wider space for teachers and students to be creative and decide on learning priorities (essential material); education units and teachers have the authority to develop the curriculum and its completeness according to the needs and context of the school at this stage allows schools to develop the curriculum according to the potential of the surrounding environment so that a link and match for graduates will emerge; and administratively there is no coercion in its implementation so that education units can decide whether or not to implement it according to their abilities and readiness. The stages of implementation are categorized into three, namely independent learning, independent change, and independent sharing.

CONCLUSION

To succeed in implementing the independent curriculum, joint efforts and synergy are needed. The Ministry of Religious Affairs is expected to contribute positively to the implementation of the independent curriculum starting this year. And it is hoped that schools and madrasahs have the intention, determination, and commitment to implement the Independent Curriculum. Because this joint step is important because both schools and madrasah have their respective contributions in enriching the spectrum of implementing the Independent Curriculum.

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