



The Principal's Strategy in Instilling Religious Values in the Independent Curriculum at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok

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Abstract

Tujuan penelitian dari penelitian ini, ialah hanyalah ingin mengetahui pada strategi kepala sekolah dalam menanamkan nilai keagamaan dalam kurikulum merdeka di SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini, menggunakan penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Sehingga dengan metode ini dapat menginterpretasikan objek penelitian sesuai dengan situasi yang terjadi di lapangan. Kemudian untuk pengumpulan data yang diperlukannya, maka penulis menggunakan dua metode. Pertama, penulis melakukan wawancara dengan kepala sekolah SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok, serta guru-guru disana yang berperan sebagai narasumber. Penulis tetap mengadopsi pendekatan wawancara terbuka dalam proses ini. Metode kedua adalah pencatatan lapangan yang melibatkan data hasil wawancara dan observasi terhadap objek penelitian. Selanjutnya untuk analisis data yang digunakan oleh penulis, ialah menggunakan pendekatan yang bersifat mereduksi data atau menyederhanakan data untuk kemudian menguraikan informasi yang terkandung dalam data tersebut. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa strategi yang digunakan oleh kepala sekolah dalam menanamkan nilai keagamaan dalam kurikulum merdeka di SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok terdapat lima hal. Pertama Integrasi Nilai-Nilai agama dalam Materi Pelajaran. Kedua Pengembangan Mata Pelajaran Keagamaan. Ketiga pengembangan kegiatan ekstrakurikuler berbasis agama. Keempat kolaborasi dengan Komunitas Keagamaan. Kelima terakhir, ialah adanya pembinaan karakter melalui bimbingan dan konseling dan penanaman etika dan sikap positif

Keywords: Kepala Sekolah, Muhammadiyah, Kurikulum Merdeka, keagamaan.

Abstract

The research objective of this research is to simply want to know the principal's strategy in instilling religious values in the independence curriculum at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok. The method used in this research uses descriptive qualitative research. So that with this method can interpret the object of research in accordance with the situation that occurs in the field. Then to collect the necessary data, the authors use two methods. First, the author conducted interviews with the principal of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok, as well as the teachers there who acted as resource persons. The author still adopts an open interview approach in this process. The second method is field recording which involves data from interviews and observations of the research object. Furthermore, for data analysis used by the

author, is using an approach that is reducing data or simplifying data to then describe the information contained in the data. The results of this study indicate that the strategy used by the principal in instilling religious values in the independence curriculum at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok consists of five things. First, the integration of religious values in the subject matter. Second Development of Religious Subjects. The third is the development of religion-based extracurricular activities. Fourth collaboration with Religious Communities. The last five, is character building through guidance and counseling and instilling ethics and a positive attitude.

Keywords: *Principal, Muhammadiyah, Independent Curriculum, religion.*

Background of the problem

Education is one of the important factors in shaping the character and morals of individuals, especially in the school environment.(Jannah and Umam 2021) School is not only a place to acquire academic knowledge, but also a place to form good personalities, values, and attitudes.(Nurmadiyah 2020) In the context of Indonesia, which has diverse cultures and religions, religious education has a central role in shaping the character and morals of the younger generation.(Ismatul Izzah 2018)

SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok is one of the private schools affiliated with Muhammadiyah, one of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia.(Darajat 2017) In the face of global challenges and the times, the school strives to ensure that religious values remain an integral part of the curriculum. One of the initiatives taken is to design an Independent Curriculum that better integrates religious values with other educational components.

However, in carrying out these efforts, principals and teaching staff are faced with various challenges and considerations. Some of the background problems that can be identified are several things that include student diversity, curriculum demands, teacher qualifications, balance between academics and religion, changes in the global environment. In addressing this background, school principals need to take a balanced

approach, pay attention to student diversity, integrate religious values well in the curriculum, provide appropriate training for teachers, and create an environment where students can learn to appreciate and apply religious values in daily life.

The principal of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok, has a method that deserves thumbs up in instilling religion in the independent curriculum he implements. So that thanks to his contribution, he was able to provide such a significant lunge in religious understanding to students at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok. This is in accordance with what was expressed by one of the teachers named Mrs. Nurjanah Wijayanti M.Pd as a religious teacher at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok, as follows.

There have been many characteristic changes experienced by the students here since the strategy developed by the principal was implemented in the independent learning curriculum here. One form of change is to cover children covering several things. First have a 5S attitude, that is, smile, greeting, greeting, polite, polite. Secondly, make it a habit to kiss hands on teachers and on people more mature than him. Third, pray before starting the lesson. Fourth, help each other in matters of kindness which include visiting sick friends, lending stationery when a friend forgets to bring it, and others. (Anon n.d.)

From the statement made by Nurjanah Wijayanti, it can be concluded that the strategy put forward by the principal of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok, contributed a lot to his students. So that this deserves thumbs up, and can be used as a reference for other schools. On this basis, the author assumes that this phenomenon is very necessary for his study. The goal is none other than to be used as a reference material for other schools. On this basis, the author is interested in conducting a mini research with the title of the principal's strategy in instilling religious values in the Merdeka curriculum at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok.

Research Methods

In this study, the author uses a descriptive research method that aims to describe and interpret the object of research according to the situation that occurs in the field. This method is often referred to as non-experimental because researchers do not control or manipulate research variables.(Anam and Achadi 2023) This research focuses on the principal's strategy in instilling religious values in the Merdeka curriculum at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok. The object of the research was the principal of SMP 1 Muhammadiyah Depok, as well as the teachers on duty there, who provided the data and information needed by the authors in this study.

The research approach chosen by the author is a qualitative approach. This approach was chosen because it fits the title being explored by the authors in this study. The procedure used in qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subject, such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, and other aspects.(Rumbewas, Laka, and Meokbun 2018) These data are then expressed through the use of words that describe the context naturally. The

descriptive qualitative approach also has a natural nature and describes the situation carefully.(Prayogi 2021) Therefore, in this study, the author as a researcher is directly involved in the field, trying to collect data comprehensively in accordance with the main issues related to the implementation of research conducted by the author as a researcher.

In collecting the necessary data, the author uses two methods. First, the author conducted interviews with the principal of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok, as well as teachers there who acted as resource persons. The author nevertheless adopts an open interview approach in this process. The second method is field recording involving data from interviews and observations of research objects.(Mekarisce 2020) This note includes various actions and behaviors observed, as well as documents relevant to the author's research focus, namely on the principal's strategy in instilling religious values in the Independent Curriculum at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok.

Furthermore, in data analysis, the author uses an approach that means reducing data or simplifying data to then elaborate the information contained in the data. This is so that the author can draw relevant conclusions from the data that has been collected.

Results and Discussion

The principal's strategy in instilling religious values in the Merdeka curriculum can involve developing subject matter that integrates religious values, such as ethics, morals, and virtue.(Alfin, Khusaini and Inayati 2022) Holding extracurricular activities that focus on religious values, such as religious studies or social activities based on religious values, can also help. In addition, involving teachers with competence in the field of religion and collaborating with religious communities so

as to increase students' understanding of these values. Education has an important role in shaping the character and morals of students. One aspect that is often emphasized in education is religious values. In the context of the Merdeka curriculum, where schools have more freedom in designing the curriculum, the principal has a strategic role in instilling religious values to students.(Sayidah 2020) However, instilling these values requires strategies that can be used to incorporate religious values into the Merdeka curriculum, especially school principals, as well as several relevant references. This is confirmed by David as the principal that:

"This independent curriculum is a form of renewal of various previous curricula, so that many changes require adjusting to existing provisions, the independent curriculum frees students more in developing their capacity and interferes less with teachers, this affects students' ability to understand religion, therefore I provide strategies with joint meetings between teaching staff to provide understanding of students such as, Integration of Religious Values in Subject Matter, Development of Religious Subjects, Development of Faith-Based Extracurricular Activities, Collaboration with Religious Communities, Character Building through Guidance and Counseling and Instillation of Ethics and Positive Attitudes, this is our way not to be left behind in the religious context".(Abidin Fuadin Nugroho 2023)

The discussion above is a strategy carried out by the school to provide an understanding of religion. The presentation of the strategy used by the principal of Muhammadiyah 1 Depok is as follows:

A. Integration of Religious Values in Subject Matter

The discussion of the integration of religious values in the learning materials of the Independent Curriculum is important to understand how education can reflect

religious values in the context of inclusive national education.(Amin, M., & Setyaningsih 2017) The integration of religious values in the curriculum aims to develop the character and morals of learners,(Anwar 2019) while still upholding the cultural and religious diversity that exists in Indonesia. This can be done by the headmaster to encourage teachers to integrate religious values into various subjects.(Nucci, L., Narvaez, D., & Krettenauer 2014) For example, in history lessons, teachers can discuss the influence of religion on the development of culture and civilization. This kind of integration helps students understand the importance of religious values in everyday life. This is in line with the statement of Nurjanah Wijayanti as a religious teacher that:

"Basically, we as teaching staff have instilled religious values to support students to be able to interact well, this is reflected in religious lessons, although this independent curriculum provides freedom to students, but we do not release it one hundred percent, we still use the lecture method to provide understanding of religious teachings, and connect religious science and general science".(Nurjanah Wijayanti 2023)

The explanation above is one of the strategy in instilling religious values because the liberation of students is one of the concerns of school institutions in absorbing religious teachings, in addition to so that students are able to practice in social life of the community. The integration of religious values in the subject matter is a strategy that can have a significant influence because at the same time with the lessons taught in the classroom, With proper integration, religious education can be an important means in shaping the character and positive attitudes of students in an increasingly diverse society.

B. Development of Religious Subjects

The development of religious subjects in the Merdeka Curriculum is an important step to ensure inclusive and balanced education.(Suaedy 2015) In this context, the main objective is to combine religious values with modern education, promoting tolerance, interfaith understanding, and positive life values. Measures such as enriching the material with different religious teachings, as well as incorporating ethical, moral, and social elements in the curriculum, became an important part of this development.(Lickona, 1991)

In addition, the development of the Merdeka Curriculum aims to combine a more flexible and responsive approach to the times, including in religious teaching.(Muslich 2017) The development of religious subjects in this independent curriculum is to create a generation that is not only academically competent, but also has a strong moral foundation and respects religious diversity and beliefs. This can be pursued by the Principal and other teaching staff to design special subjects that discuss religious aspects in depth.(Jackson 2007) These subjects can teach moral and ethical values based on religious teachings, as well as explore a deeper understanding of religious beliefs and practices. In accordance with Khoirum Majid's argument that:

"The development of special subjects of religious studies in my opinion is very important, why? Because students will not be able to practice if they are not familiarized, then this strategy becomes one of the means that can influence the pattern of habits and behavior of students, this is not only the responsibility of the principal, but all teaching staff."(Majid 2023)

The development strategy at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 is a good step because the changes that occur in the curriculum are a form of progress in educational institutions, therefore there is a need for subject development as a form of institutional readiness in the times. The development of religious-related lessons was formed by changes in the curriculum so that changes forced educational institutions.

C. Development of Faith-Based Extracurricular Activities

The development of faith-based extracurricular activities in the Merdeka Curriculum has the potential to provide moral and spiritual dimensions to students. With a broad choice and inclusive approach, these activities can help students develop ethical values, a strong religious identity, and empathy for others. However, care needs to be taken to respect diversity and ensure the quality and accountability of such activities.(Yuliati, L., & Rohaeti, 2018) Extracurricular activities have an important role in the holistic development of students. In the Merdeka Curriculum, this approach prioritizes freedom in learning and teaching.(Harris 2019) The development of faith-based extracurricular activities is an attractive option to provide spiritual and moral dimensions to students, in line with the freedom to choose educational paths that are in accordance with their respective religious beliefs. This is in accordance with Amin Rosadi's statement as the waka curriculum of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok that:

"Changes in the curriculum from the service force institutions to adjust, so that with provisions that

there is no religious basis to instill religious values, it causes additional curricula not to be left behind among scientists. We add faith-based activities that can be absorbed by students as a form of character such as joint salaries, religious lectures and so on, this is done so that students are able to understand religious values."(Rosadi 2023)

The above exposure offers a variety of extracurricular activities that focus on religious values, the principal can give students the opportunity to further explore the spiritual and moral aspects.(Berkowitz, M. W., & Bier 2005) Activities such as religious studies, religious seminars, or social activities based on religious values can support this goal in supporting students' understanding of religious values.

D. Collaboration with Religious Communities

Collaboration with religious communities in the Merdeka Curriculum can be an effective tool to develop moral, ethical, and spiritual aspects of students.(Johnson 2017) It encourages cross-cultural understanding, tolerance, and respect for diversity. However, keep in mind that this kind of collaboration must be done carefully, maintaining a balance between religious values and secular educational principles, and respecting the diverse religious views that exist in society.(Cobb, C. R., & Keener, 2017) Education like this is able to create student character in diversity.

Education becomes an important means in the formation of character and values of society. In this context, collaboration between educational institutions and religious communities can have a significant impact in shaping

individuals who have moral integrity, ethical values, as well as a deeper understanding of life values.(Jackson 2019) Curriculum Merdeka is an educational approach that gives schools greater freedom to develop curricula according to the characteristics of each school, and in this process, collaboration with religious communities can be an important aspect.(Osman, R., & Chang, 2019) Different students' understanding also leads to different views on differences, therefore the importance of collaboration with religious communities at SMP Muhamadiyah 1 Depok.

In addition, the headmaster can also establish cooperation with local religious communities.(Haynes 1997) By involving religious leaders or spiritual figures in school activities, students can gain a broader view of religious values and their application in daily life. In accordance with the principal's statement that:

"We usually work with other religious institutions to conduct religious trips as a form of actualizing differences and providing real knowledge to students".(Abidin Fuadin Nugroho 2023)

E. Character Building Through Guidance and Counseling

Character building through guidance and counseling has an important role in the independent curriculum. Through this approach, students can develop positive attitudes, moral values, and social skills necessary for success in their personal and professional lives.(Berkowitz 2012) Collaboration between teachers, counselors, and parents is the key to ensuring the success of character building in the context of independent curriculum education.(Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro 2013) Character

building is one of the important aspects of education that aims to develop students' attitudes, values, ethics, and morality.(Westheimer, J., & Kahne 2004) In the context of an independent curriculum, which emphasizes the development of individual potential, character building through guidance and counseling has a crucial role in forming a generation that is resilient, ethical, and has the ability to face life's challenges.

The principal can ensure that the school's guidance and counseling program also includes character building based on religious values. Counselors can work closely with teachers and parents to provide moral direction and support students' spiritual development. This helps students in forming character and accepting differences, be it religious, cultural and ethnic. This was confirmed by Wahid, a grade 8 student of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok that:

"Schools usually bring in counselors who give the meaning of differences and how we should behave, during these activities I am more able to interpret the importance of differences".(Wahid 2023)

F. Periodic Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular monitoring and evaluation in the strategy of instilling religious values in the Merdeka curriculum is an important tool to ensure that the objectives of character education are well achieved.(Sayidah 2020) Using appropriate monitoring methods and a regular evaluation schedule, schools can measure the effectiveness of religious values implementation, identify areas for improvement, and consistently improve

their religious education approach.(Sudrajat 2018)

Monitoring is the process of observation, measurement, and recording on an ongoing basis the implementation of educational programs. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that the implementation of the curriculum and the inculcation of religious values proceed according to the established plan. Periodic evaluation is a stage of more in-depth analysis carried out at specific time intervals to assess the effectiveness of implementing educational strategies and programs.(Nurhayati 2019) In this case, periodic evaluations focus on the extent to which religious values have been instilled and have a positive impact on the character development of learners.

The principal needs to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented. Through collecting feedback from teachers, students, and parents, schools can assess whether religious values are successfully integrated well in the Merdeka curriculum. So that SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok provides an evaluation of the policies that have been determined by the school. It is confirmed by Amin Rosadi that:

"We from the teaching staff evaluate the curriculum to see how significant the policy is to the effect on changing student character better, this is what we always do for evaluation".(Rosadi 2023)

G. Instilling Ethics and Positive Attitudes

Instilling ethics and positive attitudes in the strategy of instilling religious values in the Merdeka Curriculum is a crucial step to form a generation with integrity and empathy.(Nucci, L., & Turiel 2009) With an integrated and applicable

approach, students can internalize religious values in their daily actions, helping to create a better society overall in an educational context, the inculcation of religious values has an important role in shaping the character and personality of better individuals. Curriculum Merdeka is an educational framework that provides more flexibility to schools to develop curricula according to the needs and characteristics of students. (Lickona, 1991) In the strategy of instilling religious values in the Independent Curriculum, the cultivation of ethics and positive attitudes plays a central role in shaping the younger generation with integrity, empathy, and social care.

In addition to teaching religious aspects, principals can emphasize on instilling ethics and positive attitudes that can be integrated in students' lives. This includes aspects such as compassion, tolerance, empathy, and respect for diversity. In accordance with Jamal's statement, a grade 9 student of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok that:

"I learned a lesson that led to respect for differences so that I could feel religious values, and it was so beautiful if I was together without barriers, it became a feeling that I did not find before". (Jamal 2023)

It is important to remember that the integration of religious values in the Merdeka curriculum must be done with an inclusive approach, respecting the diversity of religions and beliefs of students. School principals must be in constant communication with all parties involved, including teachers, students, parents, and communities, to ensure that the approach taken is relevant and effective in achieving the desired moral and religious education goals in implementing them. The principal

of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok needs to ensure that the approach taken respects the diversity of students' religions and beliefs, and avoids potential controversy or discomfort for certain individuals or groups.

In addition, to face challenges and opportunities in instilling religious values in the Merdeka curriculum, school principals need to adopt a holistic approach that involves various elements such as teachers, students, parents, and communities. With proper collaborative efforts, schools can create an environment that supports students' spiritual and moral development in accordance with upheld religious values. This is actualized by SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok which incidentally has many differences, such as ethnicity, culture, customs and so on.

Conclusion

Strategy The principal in instilling religious values in the independent curriculum at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok is an effort to instill religious values so that they become the character of students. Strategy taken by the head There are five things in school. First, the Integration of Religious Values in the Subject Matter. Second, the development of religious subjects. Third, the development of faith-based extracurricular activities. Fourth, collaboration with Religious Communities. The last fifth, is character building through guidance and counseling and the cultivation of ethics and positive attitudes. This is a way for the principal at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Depok not to miss the religious context. So that this is able to change the old pattern into a modern thing and compete with educational institutions first developed and developed.

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