



The Urgency of the Merdeka Learning Curriculum in Improving the Quality of Learning in Schools

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Abstract

Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar dirancang dengan tujuan untuk meningkatkan kemandirian dan keberanian siswa dalam proses pembelajaran, sekaligus memberikan fleksibilitas yang lebih besar bagi pendidik untuk mengembangkan metode pembelajaran yang sesuai dengan kebutuhan individual siswa. Melalui penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar, setiap sekolah diberikan kewenangan untuk memilih materi pembelajaran dan sistem evaluasi yang sesuai dengan karakteristik dan kebutuhan khusus siswa di lingkungan mereka. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki urgensi kurikulum Merdeka Belajar dalam meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran di sekolah. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini diharapkan dapat menjadi sumber wawasan dan pengetahuan bagi masyarakat. metode yang digunakan dalam penulisan ini adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan (library research). Pendekatan ini melibatkan pengumpulan informasi dari karya tulis ilmiah yang relevan seperti buku, artikel jurnal, internet, dan tulisan lainnya yang berkaitan dengan literature review. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran dalam struktur kurikulum dibagi menjadi dua kegiatan pembelajaran utama, yaitu pembelajaran reguler atau yang biasa disebut intrakurikuler, serta Pembelajaran Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila. Profil Pelajar Pancasila (PPP) menjadi acuan dalam pengembangan Standar Isi, Standar Proses, dan Standar Penilaian, atau Struktur Kurikulum, Capaian Pembelajaran (CP)."

kata Kunci: Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar, Pembelajaran Disekolah

Abstract

The Independent Learning Curriculum is designed with the aim of increasing students' independence and courage in the learning process, while providing greater flexibility for educators to develop learning methods that suit students' individual needs. Through the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum, each school is given the authority to choose learning materials and evaluation systems that suit the characteristics and special needs of students in their environment. The aim of this research is to investigate the urgency of the Merdeka Learning curriculum in improving the quality of learning in schools. Thus, it is hoped that this research can become a source of insight and knowledge for the community. The method used in this writing is a qualitative descriptive method with a library research approach. This approach involves collecting information from relevant scientific papers such as books, journal articles, the internet, and other writings related to literature reviews. The results of this research show that learning in the curriculum structure is divided into two main learning activities, namely regular learning or what is usually called intracurricular, and Project Learning for Strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile.

The Pancasila Student Profile (PPP) is a reference in developing Content Standards, Process Standards, and Assessment Standards, or Curriculum Structure, Learning Achievements (CP)."

Keywords: *Mardeka Learning Curriculum, Learning at School*

Introduction

Education is something that can cause the capacity or ability of the community to develop, can foster desire, and awaken the ambition of a generation of the nation to explore various wills and can develop them optimally in the process of the interests of community development as a whole without being interspersed with complexity. (Rahmasyah n.d.) Education in schools is not just a process related to knowledge, but includes various things related to physical, emotional, and financial aspects. Therefore, education must reflect various real programs and serve the various needs of education service users. A good education must be related to life itself, which implies knowledge in biological, social, emotional, spiritual, psychological, and economic problems. (Mulyasa 2011, p. 9)

In the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which is the juridical and philosophical basis for implementing the curriculum policy of independent learning, freedom of thinking, freedom to innovate, freedom to learn independently and creatively where students and teachers as facilitators have freedom to learn and prepare learning in this case. The Ministry of Education, Education, Culture, Research, and Technology adjusts to the changing times in order to prepare the golden generation in the future, one of which is the realization of quality education through the independent learning program. (Suryani, Muspawi, and Aprillitavivayarti 2023)

The Independent Learning Curriculum is a new policy from the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia which aims to improve the quality of education in schools. This curriculum was introduced in 2020 and is a development of the 2013 Curriculum. The background of the emergence of the Independent Learning

Curriculum is to answer the challenges of an increasingly complex and dynamic era, as well as to develop the potential of students optimally. In the Independent Learning Curriculum, there are several important points that are urgent to improve the quality of education in schools, namely:

1. Student-centered learning

The Independent Learning Curriculum emphasizes student-centered learning, where students become active subjects in the learning process. This aims to develop the potential, interests, and talents of students optimally.

2. Flexibility in curriculum development

The Independent Learning Curriculum provides flexibility for schools to develop the curriculum according to local needs and contexts. Schools can adjust the curriculum to the potential of the region, culture, and the needs of students.

3. Strengthening literacy and skills in the 21st century

The Independent Learning Curriculum emphasizes strengthening literacy and skills in the 21st century, such as critical, creative, communicative, and collaborative thinking. This is done to prepare students to face future challenges.

4. Authentic and holistic assessment

The Independent Learning Curriculum prioritizes authentic and holistic assessment, where assessment does not only focus on cognitive aspects, but also affective and psychomotor aspects. This aims to assess students as a whole. (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. (2020). Independent Learning Guide - Independent Campus. Retrieved from <https://unbk.kemdikbud.go.id/panduan>

-merdeka-belajar-kampus-merdeka/
n.d.)

With the Independent Learning Curriculum, it is hoped that the quality of education in schools can improve, students can develop their potential optimally, and school graduates can become qualified human resources and be ready to face future challenges. Furthermore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the urgency of the Independent Learning curriculum in improving the quality of learning in schools. Thus, this research is expected to be a source of insight and knowledge for the community in future research, as well as a valuable reference in further studies.

Research Methods

This paper uses a qualitative descriptive method with a library research approach. This approach involves gathering information from scientific papers relevant to literature review without additional data manipulation. A combination of descriptive and qualitative approaches is used in this study. The main sources of information are books, journal articles, the internet, and other writings related to literature review. (Ridwan et al. 2021)

Related to this method: I Made Winarta explained that the qualitative descriptive analysis method involves the process of analyzing, depicting, and summarizing various conditions obtained from a collection of information obtained through the results of interviews or direct observations in the field related to the research problem. (Winarta 2006, p. 155) Meanwhile, Sugiyono defines descriptive qualitative research as a research method that uses the philosophy of postpositivism as its foundation, where it is generally used to conduct research on objective conditions with researchers tasked with being key instruments. (Sugiyono 2008, p. 15)

Results and Discussion

A. Merdeka Learning Curriculum

The term curriculum comes from the Latin word "currere", which means "to run or seek". Then there is the curriculum, which means a race track, a journey, or a track that

a horse-drawn carriage travels. In reality, the curriculum is defined as a path or trajectory of vehicles that leads to a final destination. Along with this Law, Government Regulation Number 57 concerning National Education Standards in 2021 states the same regarding the obligation to develop a diverse curriculum based on the characteristics of regions, educational units, and students. (Wahyuningsari et al. 2022) The Independent Curriculum is an educational curriculum developed by the Indonesian government in 2020. This curriculum is a change from the previous curriculum which was called the 2013 Curriculum. (Oktari, Yanti 2022)

The Independent Learning Curriculum improves students in the aspects of independence and courage in learning, as well as providing flexibility for teachers to develop learning methods that suit the needs of students. (Ansari, Akhmad Hapis, Alpisah, Alpisah, & Yusuf 2022) This curriculum emphasizes on aspects of student character, such as honesty, responsibility, and tolerance. In addition, the Merdeka curriculum emphasizes the importance of developing critical, creative and collaborative thinking skills.

B. Implementation of the Merdeka Learning Curriculum

Education has a very important role in the development of various aspects of human life. Through education, a person can develop their potential optimally and improve their personality and quality of life. With the presence of the Merdeka Learning curriculum, it is hoped that it will provide a potential solution to develop education in Indonesia. The Independent Curriculum is designed to facilitate the creation of a student-centered learning environment and responsive to the needs and characteristics of students in their respective regions. (Muhammad Afriansyah Novianto and Munirul Abidin 2023)

The role of educators in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum can be analogized as a Culinary

Chef. The spices and raw materials provided by the government are in the form of learning outcomes that will ripen into delicious dishes in the form of learning objectives so that they can be enjoyed by our students. So as an educator, we are obliged to support the government's efforts to improve the quality of education in our country. Through the Independent Curriculum, we are given the widest freedom and convenience to develop the curriculum and explore according to the talents and potentials of our students. Learning is also centered on essential materials so that both educators and students do not feel burdened in completing learning achievements.

Uharsono and Mardikantoro argue that the Mardeka Learning Curriculum is a potential solution to develop education in Indonesia. The Independent Curriculum is designed to facilitate the creation of a student-centered learning environment and responsive to the needs and characteristics of students in their respective regions. The implementation of the Mardeka Learning Curriculum is expected to improve the quality of learning and the relevance of education to the world of work. Despite facing various challenges, the implementation of the Mardeka Curriculum is very important to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. The government, schools, teachers, and the community need to work together more effectively to encourage the implementation of the Mardeka Curriculum for widespread and sustainable learning.

In the sense of implementing the learning curriculum mardeka provides freedom for schools to choose their own materials, methods, and learning evaluations, based on the needs of their students. This is expected to lead to more creative and innovative learning, which is more in line with the needs of the modern world. In turn, this should make graduates more competitive in today's global market. Successful implementation of change in a school environment often requires acceptance from administrators and staff, who need to be assured that the proposed change is not too

different from the existing school culture and will benefit student achievement (Heni Susanti et al. 2024)

C. The Concept of Mardeka Learning

The concept of independent learning is interpreted as a concept that provides an understanding of the existence of independence in learning, namely in providing the readiness of students both at school and in universities, both public and private, to be able to develop in accordance with the development of the times in such rapid changes. (Nafisah and Muaddab 2023, p. 1) Freedom of Learning is a vision based on the thinking of the Father of Indonesia's Education, Ki Hadjar Dewantara, who stated that independence is the goal of education, as well as an educational paradigm that must be understood by all stakeholders. Ki Hadjar Dewantara stated that freedom has a greater meaning than freedom of life.

The learning concept in the Independent Curriculum uses *the Teaching At The Right Level* (TaRL) approach. The process approach prioritizes effective interventions or methods taken by educators by providing learning inputs that are relevant and in accordance with what is encountered in the classroom. So it can be said that TaRL is a concept of a learning approach centered on the level of achievement, learning style, and cognitive ability of students. The Independent Curriculum provides the widest possible freedom for students to choose learning materials. Through the Independent Curriculum, the learning process will be maximized so that students have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen their competencies.

D. The Urgency of the Mardeka Learning Curriculum

The Independent Curriculum is the 15th episode of the independent learning policy out of 22 policy episodes that have been issued. The presence of the Independent Curriculum provides a glimmer of hope for Education in our country in the Post-Pandemic Era. This curriculum was born as one of the efforts to improve learning in work units. The structure of the Independent Curriculum is also more flexible so that

educators can more freely teach according to the needs and characteristics of students. Educators can also use various relevant learning tools according to the stages of their levels. Learning in the curriculum structure is divided into two main learning activities, namely regular learning or commonly referred to as intracurricular learning and Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project Learning. The Pancasila Student Profile (PPP) is a reference in the development of Content Standards, Process Standards, and Assessment Standards, or Curriculum Structure, Learning Outcomes (CP).

Learning outcomes are formulated into six phases with a period of time according to the level of competency of students. Usually for the extension of elementary school, each phase has a time interval of two years. Then, what are the phases in the Independent Curriculum? The term phase is different from class. Phase shows the level of competence of each student towards a learning. In one class, the possibility of the student's learning achievement phase is different, for example, student A is in grade 4 which belongs to phase B. Apparently, the student's competency level is in phase A. So, the teacher concerned must provide material according to the understanding of student A, namely phase A material. Phase B is for levels 3 and 4, and Phase C is for levels 5 and 6.

The Independent Curriculum has a main source of strength that distinguishes it from the previous curriculum, namely the emphasis on the use of initial assessment. Initial assessment is an effort made by educators to obtain accurate data or information from students, both in terms of competence, learning style, and academic ability. The results of the assessment will be a benchmark in designing the learning process. The results of the initial assessment can also be a reflection material for educators to improve the learning process that has been implemented.

The Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP) is a collection of learning objectives

that are systematically and logically assembled in phases as a whole and according to the order of learning from the beginning to the end of a phase. This flow is arranged linearly as the sequence of learning activities carried out from day to day to measure Learning Outcomes. The flow of learning objectives is compiled through teacher collaboration between phases. The stages in the preparation of the flow of learning objectives include analyzing learning outcomes, lowering learning outcomes into learning objectives by identifying which include competencies and content, then compiling the learning objectives from the beginning to the end. The flow of learning objectives is also used as a reference in designing learning in teaching modules.

There are 2 assessments in the Independent Curriculum, namely formative and summative assessments. No longer know the terms daily assessment, midterm assessment, or end-of-semester assessment. In the Independent Curriculum, students are assessed to be carried out holistically. Some of the simplification also lies in the unification of subjects such as science and social studies and integrated into IPAS which is taught in Phase B and Phase C. In addition, the Cultural Arts subject is divided into four, namely theater art, dance art, fine arts, and musical art. Students are welcome to choose the art subjects they like.

In contrast to the previous curriculum, where the education unit can determine the time allocation per week, in the Independent Curriculum the education unit can determine the time allocation per year. So that the education unit can determine the time allocation flexibly in accordance with the JP set. Another flexibility we can also find in the setting of the hour duration, educators can set the duration of the hours depending on the complexity of the material content.

Finally, the Independent Curriculum is a flexible curriculum. The curriculum is able to adjust to the situation and conditions in the era of educational transition. The Independent Curriculum is also able to

answer doubts because it does not only focus on the content or material that must be completed but on increasing the competence and potential of our students. The Independent Curriculum is also able to transform according to the characteristics of the social and cultural conditions in the educational unit.

Conclusion

In our role as educators, it is our obligation to provide support to the government's efforts to improve the quality of education in this country. The Independent Curriculum gives us wide freedom and convenience to develop the curriculum and develop the potential and talents of students to the maximum. The learning approach focuses on essential materials, so that both educators and students can feel more free in pursuing learning achievements without feeling burdened.

Freedom of Learning is a vision based on the thought of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, the Father of Education of Indonesia, who stated that independence is the main goal of education and a paradigm that must be understood by all stakeholders. Ki Hadjar Dewantara revealed that freedom has a broader meaning than just freedom in daily life. The Independent Learning Curriculum comes with the aim of increasing the level of independence and courage of students in the learning process, as well as providing a wider space for teachers to develop learning methods that suit the needs of students. The implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum gives each school the freedom to choose learning materials and evaluation systems that are tailored to the needs of their students.

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