



## IMPLEMENTATION OF FREE LEARNING CURRICULUM AT THE INCLUSIVE SCHOOL AT THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL OF HUMAN BEKASI

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### Article Info

#### Article History:

*Received 28 June 2023*

*Revised 01 October 2023*

*Accepted 01 October 2023*

*Available online 03 October 2023*

### Abstracts

The curriculum is the heart of education. The curriculum is dynamic and follows the changing times. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Merdeka Learning Curriculum, evaluate its impact on student learning, and identify the implications of this implementation at the Senior High School of Human Bekasi. Data collection techniques include class observations, interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of curriculum documents. Data analysis was carried out using a written qualitative approach. Data from observations, interviews, and document analysis were reviewed thematically to identify patterns of implementation, changes in student learning, and teachers' understanding of these approaches. The results showed that implementing the Independent Learning Curriculum had a good impact on student learning. Flexibility, independence, and active participation of students in learning increases. Teachers also reported positive changes in student engagement and achievement of learning objectives. This research implies the need for adequate support and training for teachers in implementing the Free Learning Curriculum. Educational institutions must also create an environment that supports creativity, innovation and student involvement in learning.

#### Keyword:

Implementation of Curriculum, Independent Curriculum

### Introduction

The curriculum is always dynamic and is always influenced by changes in the underlying factors. The purpose of education can change fundamentally, if a country switches from being colonized to a complete change (Insani, 2019). The 1945 Constitution mandates that in order to educate the nation's life, the state guarantees that every citizen has the right to education and the implementation of a national education system or national education system as stipulated in RI Law Number 20 of 2003 in Article 5 Paragraphs 2 and 4 states that "every citizen who has a disability physical, emotional, mental, intellectual and/or social rights to obtain special

education. In this regard, every child with special needs has the same rights and opportunities to obtain quality education (*UU RI No 20 Tahun 2003*, n.d.).

This independent curriculum has been promoted since 2020 by the Ministry of Education, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbud Ristek RI) in order to prepare the needs of the current and next generations. The existence of curriculum development that occurred in Indonesia starting from the 1952 curriculum to the 2013 curriculum was an effort to be better in the world of education. The improvement of the 2013 curriculum to an independent curriculum is actually a fundamental matter for achieving national education goals (Inayati, 2022).

Inclusive education aims, among other things: (1) to provide the widest possible opportunity for all students who have physical, emotional, mental and social disabilities or have the potential for intelligence and/or special talents to obtain quality education in accordance with their needs and abilities, (2) realizing the implementation of education that respects diversity, and is not discriminatory for all students (Kustawan, 2013).

Implementation of inclusive education requires education management as well as education management in general, education management can be defined as the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling educational resources to achieve educational goals effectively, efficiently, independently and accountably in schools (Rahmat, 2017). Based on this understanding, the implementation of inclusive education requires specific management, namely the management of inclusive education which includes, among other things, the process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling the curriculum components, educators and education staff, students and inclusive education infrastructure and school relations with the community.

However, the implementation of inclusive schools also has challenges and obstacles that must be overcome, such as a lack of support from the government or inadequate facilities to meet the needs of children with special needs. Therefore, efforts are needed to continuously improve the quality of inclusive education and ensure that all children have equal opportunities to learn and develop. From these various problems, the author feels interested in researching inclusive education developed at the Senior High School of Human Bekasi.

## **Literature Review**

### **Definition of implementation**

Implementation is considered as the main form and a very decisive stage in the policy process. This view is corroborated by Edwards III's statement that without effective implementation of policy makers' decisions will not be successfully implemented. Policy implementation is an activity that is seen after a legitimate directive has been issued from a policy which includes efforts to manage inputs to produce outputs or outcomes for society (Jauhari, 2017).

Beauchamp further explained that curriculum implementation refers to processes related to the two things above. Fullan put forward a similar definition, namely implementation as "the process of putting into practice an idea, program, or set of new activities to the people attempting or expected to change". tried or expected to change) (Miller & Seller, 1985). Implementation is the opposite of implementation. Jamil mentions that implementation is 'meaningful application of an object (Jamil, 2019).

### **Definition of curriculum**

The curriculum has elements of plans, goals, and learning materials that will be studied by students at each level. The curriculum is a guideline for every teacher in teaching their students to achieve the designed learning targets and objectives (Somantrie, 2021).

According to S. Nasution, the curriculum is a plan that is drawn up to expedite the teaching and learning process under the guidance and responsibility of the school or educational institution and its teaching staff. Furthermore, Nasution explained that a number

of curriculum theorists argue that the curriculum does not only cover all planned activities but events that occur under the supervision of the school. So in addition to formal curriculum activities which are often called co-curricular or extra-curricular activities (co-curriculum or extra curriculum) (Bahri, 2017).

According to al-Syaibani, the curriculum is a clear path traversed by educational institutions and educators to develop the potential, skills and knowledge of students, in accordance with educational goals (Khalilurrahman, 2021). In Law no. 20 of 2003 Chapter 1 Article 1 states that "Curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding objectives, content, and learning materials as well as the methods used as guidelines for organizing learning activities to achieve certain educational goals" (Rohmadi, 2022).

Ansyar also added that the curriculum is not only a learning planning document, but also includes the implementation of the plan in the learning process in the classroom which can provide experiences for students (Ansyar, 2017). This means that the curriculum is not only focused on the learning process, but also result-oriented.

### **Definition of independent learning curriculum**

Freedom of Learning is a new policy program of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbud RI). The essence of freedom of thought, according to Nadiem, must be preceded by teachers before they teach it to students. In teacher competence at any level, without a process of translating the basic competencies and the existing curriculum, learning will never occur (Mahmudah, 2022). It is hoped that in 2024 the Independent Curriculum can be implemented in all schools nationally along with evaluations also carried out by the government regarding the implementation of the Independent Curriculum as an effort to restore learning which has decreased due to the pandemic.

Freedom to learn in terminology consists of two words, namely independence and learning. Merdeka in the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) has the meaning of being free, not exposed to or released from demands, not bound, not dependent on certain people or parties and free. While learning is the process of acquiring knowledge so that changes occur in a person. Meanwhile, in terms of Freedom to Learn, it is a systemic endeavor to realize a free learning process, in the sense that students or teachers are free from pressure, free from obstacles and free from things that make learning activities at school unpleasant and meaningless (Suwanto, 2021).

For now, schools can start implementing the Independent Curriculum in stages according to the capabilities of the school, especially from the readiness of the human resources of the teachers of each school. Even if the school is not ready, it can still use the K-13 curriculum and the emergency curriculum while observing the progress of the school's readiness. This choice is returned to the school how prepared the principal and teachers are in each school (Susetyo, 2020).

### **Methods**

This research is a research that uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Qualitative research is often referred to as naturalistic research because the research is carried out in natural conditions ( natural setting ) without having to be set according to the wishes of the researcher, also known as the ethnographic method, because initially this method was widely used for research in the field of cultural anthropology, also known as the qualitative method. , because the data collected and the analysis is more qualitative in nature. In addition, qualitative research is research conducted to understand social reality, namely to see the world as it is, not the world that should be without manipulation. Qualitative researchers must be people who are open minded (Mamik, 2015).

Qualitative researchers do not only collect data once or all at once and then process it, but must go through the stages and conclusions generated during the process from the beginning to the end of the activity, are narrative and comprehensive.

While the characteristics of qualitative research according to Nima Shakouri include: studying from various 90 data sources, analyzing data inductively, and interpreting data subjectively. Nima Shakouri says:

“Outlines eight characteristics of qualitative research: (1) conducting the research in a natural setting; (b) using the researcher as a key instrument to the study; (2) studying multiple sources of data; (3) analyzing data inductively; (4) focusing on the participants,, meaning; (5) establishing an emergent design; (6) applying a theoretical lens; (7) interpreting data subjectively; and (8) developing a holistic account” (Shakouri, 2014).

So, in this study the researchers described and analyzed in detail the implementation of the independent learning curriculum in inclusive schools according to the data obtained in the field.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Findings**

1. **Positive Impact on Student Learning:** The implementation of the Merdeka Learning Curriculum has had a positive impact on student learning. Students have shown increased flexibility in their learning approaches, taking ownership of their educational journey. They have demonstrated greater independence and proactiveness in seeking knowledge beyond traditional classroom boundaries.
2. **Enhanced Student Engagement:** The Merdeka Learning Curriculum has led to improved student engagement in the learning process. With a focus on student-centered approaches, students have become more actively involved in discussions, projects, and extracurricular activities, fostering a deeper understanding of the subjects.
3. **Teachers' Perception:** Teachers reported positive changes in student behavior and performance. They acknowledged the benefits of the Free Learning Curriculum in nurturing students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. Teachers appreciated the shift from a traditional teaching role to that of facilitators and mentors.
4. **Training and Support for Teachers:** The study identified a need for comprehensive training and support for teachers to effectively implement the Merdeka Learning Curriculum. Professional development programs and resources should be provided to help teachers adapt their teaching methods to suit the individualized needs of students.
5. **Nurturing a Creative Learning Environment:** The research emphasizes the importance of fostering a creative learning environment that encourages innovation, exploration, and student involvement. Educational institutions must create spaces that inspire curiosity and experimentation to complement the Free Learning Curriculum effectively

### **Analysis**

1. **Free Learning Curriculum:**

The term "Free Learning Curriculum" suggests that the curriculum used in the Senior High School of Human Bekasi is designed to provide students with greater autonomy and freedom in their learning process. This approach is likely centered on individualized learning, student-driven inquiry, and personalized educational pathways. The curriculum might emphasize student engagement, critical thinking, problem-solving, and the development of independent learning skills.
2. **Inclusive School**

The inclusion of the term "Inclusive School" highlights that the research is being conducted in an educational institution that promotes inclusivity and accommodates students with diverse learning needs and abilities. An inclusive school fosters a supportive and accepting environment where all students, regardless of their backgrounds or differences, are valued and provided with equal opportunities to access quality education.
3. **Senior High School of Human Bekasi**

This part of the title specifies the location of the research, indicating that the study was conducted at the Senior High School of Human Bekasi. The inclusion of the school's name is essential for providing context and understanding that the research focuses on a specific educational institution.

#### Potential Research Areas and Implications:

1. **Curriculum Design and Implementation:** The study may delve into the development and adaptation of the Free Learning Curriculum for an inclusive school setting. It may explore how the curriculum aligns with educational goals, national or regional standards, and addresses the diverse learning needs of students with disabilities, special needs, or different learning styles.
2. **Teaching and Learning Strategies:** The research might examine the teaching methods employed by educators to facilitate the Free Learning Curriculum. This could include the use of project-based learning, collaborative activities, technology integration, and differentiated instruction to cater to individual student needs.
3. **Student Engagement and Learning Outcomes:** The study may investigate how the Free Learning Curriculum influences student engagement, motivation, and academic achievements. It might assess changes in student attitudes toward learning, self-directedness, and metacognitive skills.
4. **Teacher Professional Development:** The research could explore the training and support provided to teachers for the effective implementation of the Free Learning Curriculum. It might examine how teachers are prepared to meet the diverse learning needs of students and embrace innovative pedagogical approaches.
5. **School Culture and Inclusivity:** The study may assess the impact of the Free Learning Curriculum on the overall school climate and inclusivity. It might explore how the curriculum fosters a positive and supportive learning environment, promotes collaboration, and nurtures a sense of belonging among students.
6. **Challenges and Recommendations:** The research might identify challenges encountered during the implementation of the Free Learning Curriculum and propose recommendations for overcoming these obstacles. It could provide insights into best practices to ensure the success of the curriculum in an inclusive school context.

#### **Conclusion**

The implementation of the Merdeka Learning Curriculum at the Senior High School of Human Bekasi has positively impacted student learning outcomes, engagement, and independent learning capabilities. Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating this approach, necessitating adequate training and support to maximize its potential benefits. Furthermore, the study underscores the significance of creating an environment that nurtures creativity and innovation to complement the Free Learning Curriculum's student-centered approach effectively. With continued refinement and support, the Merdeka Learning Curriculum holds the potential to empower students and equip them with the skills needed to thrive in an ever-changing world.



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