



EFFECTIVENESS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN DELI SERDANG REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the implementation of the independent curriculum in junior high schools in Deli Serdang Regency, supporting factors and obstacles that occur in schools. The research method used is mix method research with sequential explanatory designs. Data collection through documentation, observation, questionnaires, and interviews. The collected data was analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques. The results of this study indicate that the independent curriculum has been implemented effectively in junior high schools in Deli Serdang Regency, as the results of the questionnaire obtained a very good category, starting from the principal (percentage 84.44%), teachers (percentage 83.92%), and students (percentage 81.95%). Furthermore, this level of effectiveness is reviewed from the optimization of implementation using a transformative learning approach, flexible learning procedures, problem solving through interdisciplinary, meaningful learning, and active student involvement. Supporting factors for the high level of effectiveness of the implementation of the independent curriculum are the high commitment of the school community, learning innovation and teacher creativity, leadership support, and adequate learning facilities. Meanwhile, the obstacles faced are in the form of teachers' abilities in implementing IKM being uneven and there are still teachers who are not yet able to apply sophisticated technology.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis efektivitas implementasi kurikulum merdeka pada sekolah penggerak tingkat SMP Kabupaten Deli Serdang, faktor pendukung serta kendala yang terjadi di sekolah. Metode penelitian yang digunakan ialah mix method research dengan jenis sequential explanatory designs. Pengumpulan data melalui metode dokumentasi, observasi, kuesioner, dan wawancara. Data yang telah terkumpul dianalisis menggunakan teknik

reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kurikulum merdeka telah terlaksana secara efektif pada sekolah penggerak tingkat SMP Kabupaten Deli Serdang, sebagaimana hasil kuesioner yang memperoleh kategori baik sekali, mulai dari kepala sekolah (persentase 84,44%), guru (persentase 83,92%), dan siswa (persentase 81,95%). Lebih lanjut, tingkat efektivitas ini ditinjau dari optimalisasi penerapan menggunakan pendekatan pembelajaran transformatif, prosedur pembelajaran yang fleksibel, pemecahan masalah melalui interdisipliner, pembelajaran bermakna, dan pelibatan aktif siswa. Faktor pendukung dari tingginya tingkat efektivitas implementasi kurikulum merdeka ialah komitmen tinggi sivitas sekolah penggerak, inovasi pembelajaran dan kreativitas guru, dukungan pimpinan, serta fasilitas pembelajaran memadai. Sedangkan kendala yang dihadapi berupa kemampuan guru dalam pelaksanaan IKM tidak merata dan masih ada guru yang belum mampu mengaplikasikan kecanggihan teknologi.

Introduction

Education is oriented towards the embodiment of life values, divine values, human values, social norms and local wisdom values. The provision of these values becomes capital for individuals to develop independently, collaboratively and adaptively to the dynamics of the times they go through. The formation of values, expansion of knowledge insight to skills training obtained by each individual also leads to the continuity of these values, so that education is interpreted broadly as a provision for individuals in navigating the ocean of life (Sulastri, *et.al.*, 2022).

The realization of values in each individual can be achieved through formal, non-formal and of course informal education. In this context, formal education attracts the attention of every society, because as the main implementer of the national learning curriculum (Sugih, *et.al.*, 2023). The existence of formal educational institutions, both state and private, is an important factor in determining the direction of the development of the country's human resources in the future. For this reason, every time transition is periodically compiled a major movement of the state's direction in the education aspect in order to optimize the implementation of quality education in accordance with current and future needs.

The success of education implementation is assessed from the graduates produced and the accreditation achieved by an educational institution. The quality and quantity of education implementation as a determinant of the direction of the nation's future, is responded to progressively by the government through the school mover program. Where, selected schools in the "school mover" category become role models for the realization of quality learning for other schools (Fauzi, 2022; Nugraheni & Siswanti, 2022). This is based on efforts to produce quality human resources.

The driving school program is a selected educational institution unit in implementing the independent curriculum (Sumarsih, *et.al.*, 2022). It is called a driving school, because the government hopes to create quality schools that collaborate and can spread inspiration to other schools so that they can progress and develop together towards improving the quality of learning (Pertiwi, *et.al.*, 2023). The targets for improvement of course include developing students' abilities according to their talents, interests and exploring potential, forming noble characters and making the nation's life more intelligent (Alimuddin, 2023).

Referring to the educational orientation above, it is clear that education must form a complete human being (holistic). Noble personality, breadth of thinking, and acting skills are truly potentials possessed by every student (Alwi, *et.al.*, 2023). However, it takes a variety of strategies and teaching method variants to adjust to the varied learning styles of students. Thus,

students are expected to have an intrinsic spirit for exploring their potential and awareness of the importance of learning, so that students can be themselves (Zakso, 2023).

The curriculum has a central position in creating a superior generation (Hasibuan, *et.al.*, 2022). In this context, the government has formulated quality learning that is oriented towards students according to the needs of the world of work and the current era, namely the driving school program in implementing the independent learning curriculum (Tsuraya, *et.al.*, 2022). Through the independent learning curriculum, it is projected that students can develop optimally, master the digital world, and continue to prioritize positive character in everyday interactions (Suryani, *et.al.*, 2023). Because, the independent curriculum is characterized by competency-based learning, flexible learning and Pancasila character.

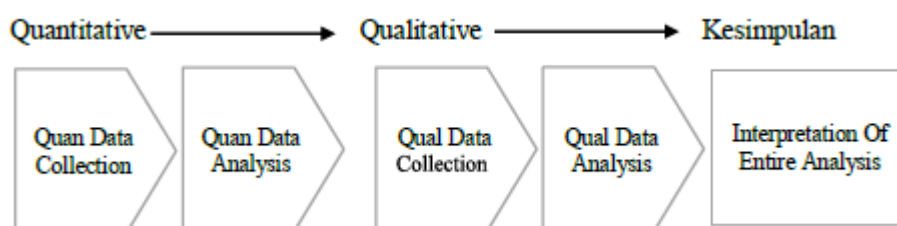
In fact, relevant research discussing driving schools and the implementation of the independent learning curriculum has been reviewed from various scientific disciplines. Among them, discussing the theme of the process of implementing the independent curriculum in driving schools (Rahayu, *et.al.*, 2022), the role of the driving teacher (Jannati, *et.al.*, 2023), implementation of an Islamic-based independent curriculum (Muzakki, *et.al.*, 2023), Comparison of the implementation of the 2013 curriculum and the independence curriculum (Angga, *et.al.*, 2022), the role of the principal in implementing the independent curriculum (Isa, *et.al.*, 2022), Problems of implementing the independent learning curriculum (Wuwur, 2023), Teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the independent learning curriculum (Sunarni & Karyono, 2023), independent learning curriculum policy (Fadhli, 2022), project based learning (Nursalam, *et.al.*, 2023), and differentiated learning (Aprima & Sari, 2022).

The reality on the ground shows that the noble goal of the school driving program in implementing the independent learning curriculum is not that easy in the implementation process. This is based on a new paradigm of learning that leads to massive collaboration and school digitalization. In addition, the age factor is also an obstacle for "senior" teachers, because they are not yet adaptive in using technology in the learning process. So that continuous efforts are needed to improve teacher skills, change student mindsets, and cooperation in realizing quality education. On this basis, an in-depth study is needed on the theme, "*Effectiveness of the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Junior High School Driving Schools in Deli Serdang Regency*".

Reserach Method

This research uses a mix method research approach with a sequential explanatory design type (Mustaqim, 2016). Mixed method research is used to test aspects of outcomes and learning processes related to the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in one study, so that more comprehensive, valid, reliable and objective data is obtained (Sugiyono, 2014). The use of sequential explanatory designs as an effort to find collective data and a combination of qualitative and quantitative findings sequentially, so that they can be proven numerically in detail and interpreted with descriptive narratives.

Furthermore, the sequential explanatory research model (qualitative evidence sequence) is shown in the scheme below:



Source: (Sugiyono, 2014)

Scheme 1: Sequential Explanatory Combination Research Method

Furthermore, data collection through documentation, observation, questionnaires, and interviews. The collected data were analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques. The research population was taken from 3 (three) junior high schools in Deli Serdang Regency including the Principal, Teachers, and Grade VIII Students (with different teacher and student populations), namely SMPN 1 Labuhan Deli (66 Teachers and 336 Students), SMPN 3 Hamparan Perak (16 Teachers and 57 Students), and SMPN 4 Tanjung Morawa (54 Teachers and 317 Students).

From the population above, the researcher took samples using the proportional stratified random sampling technique, namely a sampling technique in a heterogeneous and stratified population by taking samples from each sub-population whose number is adjusted to the number of members of each sub-population. Furthermore, the table below shows the distribution of research samples.

Table 1. Distribution of Research Samples

No.	Work unit	Population	Population Total	Samples Total
1.	SMPN 1 Labuhan Deli	Headmaster, Teacher, Class VIII Students	1, 66 (teachers), 336 (students)	1, 66 (teachers), 34 (students)
2.	SMPN 3 Hamparan Perak	Headmaster, Teacher, Class VIII Students	1, 16 (teachers), 57 (students)	1, 16 (teachers), 57 (students)
3.	SMPN 4 Tanjung Morawa	Headmaster, Teacher, Class VIII Students	1, 54 (teachers), 317 (students)	1, 54 (teachers), 32 (students)

Furthermore, descriptive statistics with percentage techniques are used in conducting data analysis techniques. Quantitative data analysis in this study uses three steps, namely scoring respondents' answers, adding up the total scores of each component, and grouping the scores obtained according to the research components and quantitative analysis.

Quantitative data analysis was conducted by counting the number of checklists contained in the research questionnaire and using percentages to calculate each item. Data analysis was based on the scores of respondents' answers (principals, teachers, and students). The analysis was conducted by looking at the comparison between the answer scores and the ideal scores on each statement item using the following formula.

$$N\% = n \times 100\%$$

Information:

% = Percentage of a particular variable

n = Value obtained

N = Total value of all

The descriptive percentage data will be entered into the answer category and then conclusions will be obtained regarding each aspect analyzed. This answer category starts from 1% - 100%. The following is the format of the respondent's answer category level.

Table 2. Respondents' Answer Level Categories

No.	Answer Level	Conclusion
1.	80%-100%	Very Good
2.	70%-79%	Good

3.	60%-69%	Medium
4.	50%-59%	Not good
5.	0%-49%	Not Very Good

Source: (Bandono, 2020)

Results

Effectiveness of Implementation of Independent Curriculum in Junior High Schools in Deli Serdang Regency

1. Use of Transformative Learning Approach

The following is a description of the results of using the transformative learning approach in the table below:

Table 3. Results of the Transformative Learning Approach

No.	Statement	Score	Percentage	Category
1.	Teachers understand the structure of the independent curriculum	11	91,7%	Very Good
2.	Readiness to learn is well prepared	10	83%	Very Good
3.	The learning process in class is carried out in a differentiated manner	10	83%	Very Good
4.	Teachers prepare good and student-centered learning strategies	9	75%	Good
5.	Holistic education has been implemented in schools	9	75%	Good
6.	The teacher reflects at the end of the lesson	11	91,7%	Very Good
7.	Teachers are able to use transformative learning approaches	11	91,7%	Very Good

Source: Processed Research Data Results

Based on the research results above, it is interpreted that for the aspect of the transformative learning approach in this study, the results obtained a very good category. This is reviewed from the answers to all items that represent the statement of the transformative learning approach by the Principal in the very good category.

Furthermore, the results above are in line with the interview quote from the researcher with the Principal of SMPN 4 Tanjung Morawa (Mara Jaman Hasibuan), who said the following:

"...so it's true, Sir, that the optimization strategy in implementing holistic learning with a transformative approach carried out by teachers is good, by developing all of the students' potential, both intellectual, emotional, social, aesthetic and so on".

In line with the above, the Principal of SMPN 3 Hamparan Perak (Saini) said that:

"...What we do is teachers must have a plan related to a series of activities for a transformative learning approach. Where, teachers measure the success of children in transferring holistic learning through a transformative approach, teachers are more

flexible in implementing learning in the classroom, as obtained by teachers in teacher training activities, in order to realize the school's mission effectively and efficiently.”.

The interview excerpt above confirms that the implementation of learning using a transformative approach has been carried out very well at the junior high school driving school in Deli Serdang Regency. Thus, students' learning needs can be developed, including academic, emotional, and intellectual aspects or students' knowledge insights. As each teacher has been provided with active, effective, and enjoyable teaching variants during the training of the Driving Teachers.

2. Flexible Learning Procedures

The following shows the results of the flexible learning procedure questionnaire answered by students.

Table 4. Flexible Learning Procedures by Students

No.	Statement	Score	Percentage	Category
1.	Teachers use a variety of learning models in class so that students do not get bored.	363	75,6%	Very Good
2.	Teachers are able to create flexible and meaningful learning procedures	411	85,6%	Very Good
3.	Independent curriculum makes students achieve	362	75,4%	Good
4.	The learning that is created is meaningful learning and involves all elements of the school	419	87,3%	Very Good
5.	Teachers help students in preparing for their future careers	390	81%	Very Good
6.	The teacher conducts a diagnostic test at the beginning of learning	441	91,9%	Very Good

Source: Processed Research Data Results

The results of the questionnaire above show that the flexible learning procedure by student respondents was obtained in the very good category. This is based on the reason that teachers are able to create flexible and meaningful learning. Through this, teachers are also able to deliver students to excel according to the independent learning curriculum learning corridor, as well as active involvement of all elements of the school. As stated by a student named M. Alfarizi (a student of SMPN 3 Hamparan Perak) who stated that he felt more enthusiastic about learning, and a student named Robi Kurniawan (a student of SMPN 3 Hamparan Perak) who stated that he felt that learning was much more enjoyable.

Thus, it can be interpreted that flexible learning has been implemented very well at the SMP-level Mover School in Deli Serdang Regency. This can be seen from the results that students feel that the learning that is carried out is more enjoyable and provides meaningful experiences, thus encouraging students to be more enthusiastic about learning and achieving achievements. In addition, teachers also display effective communication and interaction skills with students as the key to the success and meaningfulness of a flexible learning process.

3. Problem Solving Through Cross-Disciplinary Studies

The following shows the results of the questionnaire of teachers of junior high schools in Deli Sedang Regency regarding problem solving through cross-disciplinary sciences.

Table 5. Problem Solving Through Cross-Disciplines

No.	Statement	Score	Percentage	Category
1.	There was a KOSP preparation meeting which was attended by all subject teachers	440	82,1%	Very Good
2.	There was a meeting to prepare a project to strengthen the Pancasila lesson profile which was attended by all class teachers or subject teachers.	437	81,5%	Very Good
3.	There is a meeting between teachers and the educational practitioner community	438	81,7%	Very Good
4.	There are meetings between teachers and parents in the implementation of IKM	440	82,1%	Very Good
5.	Problem solving through cross-disciplinary learning by teachers	443	82,6%	Very Good
6.	Morals and character are also fostered through the Pancasila student profile character in the independent curriculum.	447	83,4%	Very Good

Source: Processed Research Data Results

The results of the questionnaire above show that problem solving through cross-disciplinary science by teachers, on average obtained a score of 83% (Very Good category). The application of problem solving through cross-disciplinary science by teachers has been fully applied in the classroom during the learning process or activity. Problem solving through cross-disciplinary science is very necessary today, because one problem can no longer be solved with just one discipline, but across disciplines.

In line with the results above, a teacher at SMPN 1 Labuhan Deli (Mariati) said that:
"...in every learning process, it is necessary to have a broad perspective that involves various scientific disciplines. This is intended to train students' wise behavior and attitudes in solving a problem. Furthermore, students are invited to understand the concept of objectivity and contextuality in solving a problem".

The interview quote above confirms that learning will be meaningful if teachers are able to convey broad, objective, and contextual attitudes and perspectives to students. This is attempted through cross-disciplinary problem solving, so that students are not only fixated on one discipline, but are able to observe from various scientific disciplines. In addition, students are also invited to involve the community where they are before a solution to a problem is determined. Thus, the wisdom of thinking and acting will be achieved in students, in accordance with the target of the independent learning curriculum which produces a generation with the character of a Pancasila student profile.

Discussion

The independent learning curriculum is present as an effort to create flexible, valuable, meaningful, enjoyable learning, in accordance with student development, differentiation, variation, and containing local wisdom. This is realized through transformative, flexible, continuous learning between disciplines as capital for problem solving, meaningful learning, to learning that actively involves the entire community supporting learning activities in schools (Maulana, *et.al.*, 2022; Assingkily, 2020).

Transformative learning is oriented towards changing each individual's perspective in responding to the learning process, thus producing individuals who are more mature, adult, wise, independent, and able to reflect self-awareness of the importance of learning (Al Fasya, *et.al.*, 2022). Digital era learning demands the presence of flexibility in the interaction between teachers and students. This is based on the fulfillment of the need for learning media that is also flexible, can be used anywhere and anytime through sophisticated technology. Contemporary conditions related to this learning will help the development of students to easily and quickly adapt, as well as teachers in implementing the independent learning curriculum (Davani, 2022).

Problems are common in a community, including schools. Problems in schools should be the main step for organizers in creating harmony and optimizing the achievement of learning goals. Because, problems are not things that should be kept away from students or teachers, but rather become a stimulus for finding wise solutions in the learning process (Anggraini, *et.al.*, 2022). So far, problem-based learning projects have been implemented according to certain fields of study or subjects. This is certainly good, but it requires a broad perspective for students for the future, because responding to the complexity of problems that arise along with the sophistication of technology (Velmurugan, 2023). For this reason, problem solving is needed through cross-disciplinary sciences, so as to enrich the scientific knowledge, perspectives, and solution-finding abilities of students in the future.

The world of education's awareness of the integration and interconnection of science, leads to the understanding that education has an interconnected or interrelated nature (Sembiring, *et.al.*, 2022). Therefore, solving a problem must prioritize the aspects of objectivity and contextuality. This is an important capital for achieving the expected profile of Pancasila students in the implementation of the independent learning curriculum. Driving schools as educational units selected to implement the independent learning curriculum are the mainstay of policy implementers to produce people according to the profile of Pancasila students (Siddiqui, *et.al.*, 2022; Hamzah, *et.al.*, 2022).

In this context, students from junior high school level at SMPN 1 Labuhan Deli, SMPN 3 Hamparan Perak, and SMPN 4 Tanjung Morawa are guided by teachers of the driving school in creating a conducive, flexible, meaningful, objective learning culture across disciplines, and active involvement of various elements to achieve learning goals. Furthermore, in accordance with the naming of the driving school, the educational unit is obliged to inspire other schools of the same level to actively participate in realizing the profile of Pancasila students and implementing the independent learning curriculum.

Conclusion

Based on the description above, it is concluded that the independent curriculum has been implemented effectively in junior high schools in Deli Serdang Regency, as the results of the questionnaire obtained a very good category, starting from the principal (percentage 84.44%), teachers (percentage 83.92%), and students (percentage 81.95%). Furthermore, this level of effectiveness is reviewed from the optimization of implementation using a transformative

learning approach, flexible learning procedures, problem solving through interdisciplinary, meaningful learning, and active student involvement. Supporting factors for the high level of effectiveness of the implementation of the independent curriculum are the high commitment of the driving school community, learning innovation and teacher creativity, leadership support, and adequate learning facilities. Meanwhile, the obstacles faced are in the form of teacher abilities in implementing IKM which are not evenly distributed and there are still teachers who are not able to apply sophisticated technology.

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