Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Improving the Quality of Education in SMA Negri 1 Belitang III

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ABSTRACT

The curriculum is the “spirit” of education that must be innovative, dynamic, and periodic in accordance with the times and science and technology, competencies needed by society and graduate users. The curriculum is seen as objectives, contexts and strategies in learning through programs of developing learning instruments or materials, social interaction and systematic learning techniques in educational institutions. Curriculum changes to ensure the learning process in schools/madrasahs is better. Curriculum changes — thus — are a must. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikburistek) issued a policy in the development of the Independent Curriculum which is given to education units as an additional option in order to restore learning during 2022-2024 and improve the quality of education. Therefore, this article explains the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in improving the Quality of Education implemented at SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG III. This study used a qualitative approach, in collecting data using participatory observation, study documentation, and interviews. In this study, there are 3 aspects in the implementation of the independent curriculum, namely planning the implementation of the independent curriculum, implementing the independent curriculum and evaluating the Independent Curriculum Learning. The purpose of the research in this article is to determine the impact of the implementation of the independent curriculum in improving the quality of education at SMA Negeri 1 Belitang III.

Keywords: curriculum, independent curriculum, quality of education.


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INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is the 'spirit' of education which must be evaluated innovatively, dynamically and periodically in accordance with the times and science and technology, competencies needed by society and graduate users (Scherer & Siddiq, 2019). Curriculum change - thus - becomes a necessity. In fact, periodically in accordance with the times and science and technology, the competencies needed by the community and graduate users (Auliani dkk., 2023; Mustafiyanti dkk., 2023). Curriculum change - thus - becomes a necessity. In fact, the rapid development of science and technology no longer allows the world of education to linger in the 'comfort zone' of the curriculum in force. According to Oliva as quoted by Din Wahyudin (2014: 6), the curriculum is seen as a goal, context and strategy in learning through a program of developing learning instruments or materials, social interaction and systematic learning techniques within educational institutions (Zhu dkk., 2020). Thus the role of the curriculum is very important so that students can achieve educational goals in a structured and sustainable manner. Based on this understanding, curriculum management can be interpreted as management in the curriculum field so that the learning process runs well effectively and efficiently, as well as feedback and interrelationships with one another (Schlenz dkk., 2020).

Since Indonesian independence on August 17, 1945, there have been various changes, including policy changes in curriculum. At this time, curriculum changes have been made from the 2006 Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) to the 2013 Curriculum (Nousheen dkk., 2020). This change is intended to ensure that the learning process in schools/madrasas is getting better. Changes to the 2013 curriculum are a continuation of the 2006 curriculum, so that the components in the 2013 curriculum are developments from the previous curriculum. In order to improve the quality of education in 2005 the government issued RI Regulation number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, this regulation is the government's effort to improve the quality of education in Indonesia (Mulyasari dkk., 2023; Noer dkk., 2023; Wanti dkk., 2023). These laws and government regulations indicate the importance of paying attention to the quality of learning in order to improve the quality of education in schools. The government's good efforts need to be followed up by school education institutions, both public and private, by holding scientific activities that can develop teacher potential through seminars, training, workshops and others on an ongoing basis so that teachers become professionals who have the ability to improve the quality of learning in schools, in turn improving the quality of education will materialize and become a reality.

Opportunities for the development of the internet and technology are the momentum for learning independence. Because it can hack a rigid or non-liberating education system (Al Maarif dkk., 2023; Ranal dkk., 2023; Utami dkk., 2023). This includes reforming the workload of teachers and schools, which are too human, and are always dissatisfied with what they have achieved, wanting to find something new to change things to make things better according to their needs (Riad dkk., 2021). The
Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikburistek) issued a policy in the development of the Independent Curriculum which was given to educational units as an additional option in the context of carrying out learning recovery during 2022-2024 and improving the quality of education. The Ministry of Education and Culture's policies regarding the national curriculum will be reviewed in 2024 based on evaluations during the learning recovery period.

The 2013 curriculum which was used before the pandemic became the only curriculum used by educational units in learning. Pandemic period 2020 s.d. 2021 The Ministry of Education and Culture issued a policy on using the 2013 Curriculum and the Emergency Curriculum (simplified Kur-2013) as curriculum references for educational units. Pandemic period 2021 s.d. 2022 The Ministry of Education and Culture issued a policy on using the 2013 Curriculum, Emergency Curriculum, and Independent Curriculum in Mobilizing Schools (SP) and SMK Centers of Excellence (PK). During the pre-pandemic period, the Ministry of Education and Culture issued a policy on using the 2013 Curriculum and then the 2013 Curriculum was simplified into an emergency curriculum which made it easier for educational units to manage learning with essential material substances.

The Independent Curriculum at SP/SMK-PK is a breath of fresh air in efforts to improve and restore learning which was launched for the first time in 2021. The year 2024 will determine the national curriculum policy based on an evaluation of the curriculum during the learning recovery period (Fadiyah dkk., 2023; Fiqih dkk., 2023; Hermansyah dkk., 2023). This evaluation is a reference for the Ministry of Education and Culture in taking follow-up policies after the recovery of learning. The Independent Curriculum was developed as a more flexible curriculum framework, while also focusing on essential material and developing the character and competence of students (Pamuji & Limei, 2023). The main characteristics of this curriculum that support learning recovery are (1) Project-based learning for the development of soft skills and character according to the Pancasila student profile (2) Focus on essential material so that there is sufficient time for in-depth learning of basic competencies such as literacy and numeracy. Flexibility for teachers to carry out differentiated learning according to the abilities of students and make adjustments to the context and local content.

The use of the independent curriculum at SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG III is currently not evenly distributed because the teaching staff and supporting facilities are not ready to deal with changes to the existing curriculum. Therefore, the implementation of the independent curriculum only applies to class X and class XI, while the class XII still uses the 2013 curriculum.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative research with a case study. Qualitative research according to Kristiawan and Elnanda (2017) is one of the research procedures that produces descriptive data in the form of words, writing, and the behavior of people being observed. Whereas case study according to Yuliani and Kristiawan (2017) is a
method for understanding individuals that is carried out in an integrative and comprehensive manner in order to obtain a deep understanding of these individuals and the problems they face. According to Nazir (2009: 57) case study is research on the status of research subjects with respect to a phase of a specific or typical phase of the whole personality.

Data collection was carried out by observation, interview and documentation techniques. The collected data was then analyzed using interactive data analysis techniques which consisted of three interacting activities, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification (Caskurlu dkk., 2020). Researchers describe something that happens to research targets which are words, behavior or activities and reality from research sources. Therefore qualitative research is carried out in natural conditions which are of a discovery nature so that the researcher is the key instrument. Researchers ask, analyze, and construct the object under study related to the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum to increase student learning achievement. The research was conducted at SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG III. The data source in this study was the deputy head of the SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG III curriculum, namely Mr. Sutiono, S.Pd., M.Si

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of the implementation of the independent curriculum in improving the quality of education in SMA Negeri 1 Belitang III

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Curriculum

Etymologically, the curriculum comes from the Greek, namely curir which means runner and curare which means place to race (Azizah dkk., 2022; Nicholas dkk., 2023; Putri dkk., 2023). So the term curriculum comes from the world of sports in Ancient Roman times in Greece, which means the distance that must be traveled by runners from the starting line to the finish line. It can be understood that the distance that must be traveled here means the curriculum with the contents and subject matter which is used as the period of time that must be taken by students to obtain a diploma. According to S. Nasution (1989), curriculum is a plan designed to expedite the teaching and learning process under the guidance and responsibility of the school or educational institution and its teaching staff. Next, Nasution explained a number of theorists

The curriculum argues that the curriculum does not only cover all planned activities but events that occur under the supervision of the school (Holly dkk., 2023; Vicky dkk., 2023). So in addition to formal curriculum activities which are often called co-curricular or extra-curricular activities (co-curriculum or extra-curriculum). According to Hasbulloh (2007) curriculum is the entire program, facilities, and activities of an educational or training institution to realize its vision, mission and institution. Therefore, the implementation of the curriculum to support the success of an educational institution must be supported by the following things. First, there are competent personnel. Second, there are adequate facilities (Levan’s dkk., 2022; Saputra
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dkk., 2022). Third, the existence of auxiliary facilities as a support. Fourth, the existence of educational support staff such as administrative staff, supervisors, librarians, laboratories. Fifth, there are adequate funds, sixth, there is good management. Seventh, maintenance of supporting culture; religious, moral, national and others, eighth, transparent and accountable visionary leadership.

Independent Curriculum

The Independent Curriculum is a curriculum with various intra-curricular learning where the content will be more optimal so that students have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competence (From the Gender Equity in Medicine (GEM) workgroup dkk., 2019). Teachers have the flexibility to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be adapted to the learning needs and interests of students. Projects to strengthen the achievement of Pancasila student profiles are developed based on certain themes set by the government. The project is not directed to achieve certain learning achievement targets, so it is not tied to subject content. The Independent Curriculum is an optional curriculum that can be implemented by educational units starting in the 2022/2023 school year (Amrina dkk., 2022; Fathia dkk., 2022; Maryati dkk., 2022). The Merdeka Curriculum continues the direction of the previous curriculum development (kurtilas). If you look at the policies that will be adopted by policy makers, later before the national curriculum is evaluated in 2024, educational units will be given several curriculum options to be implemented in schools. The Independent Curriculum is provided as an additional option for educational units to carry out learning recovery during 2022-2024. The national curriculum policy will be reviewed in 2024 based on evaluations during the learning recovery period.

Improving the Quality of Education Through Learning

Syafial sagal (2005:63), states that learning has two characteristics. First, the learning process involves the thinking process. Second, in the learning process, build a dialogic atmosphere and a continuous question and answer process that is directed to improve and improve the thinking ability of the students, which in turn the thinking ability can help the students to obtain the knowledge that they construct themselves. From the description above, it can be understood that a good learning process can be done by students both inside and outside the classroom, and with the characteristics possessed by students, it is expected that they will be able to interact and socialize with their friends in a good and wise way (Liam dkk., 2023; Saskia dkk., 2023). With high intensity and continuous learning, it is expected that the process of social interaction among friends can be created well and in turn they appreciate and respect each other even though in their journey they have different opinions that in the end they foster a democratic attitude among themselves.

The current paradigm of educational methodology whether it is realized or not has experienced a shift from behaviorism to constructivism which demands that teachers in the field must have the requirements and competence to be able to make a change in implementing the learning process in the classroom. Teachers are demanded to be more creative, innovative, not to be the only source of the learning process (teacher centered),
placing students not only as objects of learning but also as subjects of learning and ultimately leading to a learning process that is pleasant, joyful, and democratic that respects every opinion so that in the end the substance of learning is really appreciated.

In line with the opinion above, learning according to constructivism is: 'Learning is built by humans little by little, the results of which are expanded through a limited (narrow) context and not suddenly. Learning is not a set of facts, concepts or rules ready to be picked up and memorized. Humans must construct that learning and form meaning through real experience' (Rahmi & Ramdhan, 2021). The implementation of the constructivism approach in learning is realized in the form of student-centered learning (Student Center). Teachers are required to create a learning atmosphere in such a way that students work together in mutual cooperation (cooperative learning). To create the expected situation in the statement above, a teacher must have what conditions are needed in teaching and building student learning so that it is effective in class, working together in learning so as to create a pleasant and mutually respectful (democratic) atmosphere.

From the opinion above it can be explained that teachers have very heavy duties and responsibilities towards the progress and improvement of students’ competencies, where the results will be seen from the number of students who pass and fail. Thus, the responsibility for improving the quality of education in schools is borne by teachers. We believe that currently there are many teachers who have implemented constructivism theory in classroom learning but the volume is still limited, because in reality we still find many teachers who in teaching still seem to be only carrying out their obligations. He does not need a strategy, a method of teaching, what is important for him is how a learning event can take place. This is an erroneous and unlawful opinion to follow, if you don't want to be said to be lazy and unprofessional.

**Independent Curriculum Learning Planning**

Learning planning is the development of learning in the form of an integrated system and consists of several elements that interact with each other. Planning for the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG III starts with the management of the principal in implementing the independent curriculum. Following are the results of interviews with curriculum representatives for SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG III. SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG III has become a driving school since the 2021/2022 academic year. Even though it was hindered by the pandemic, all school members worked together and shared tasks according to their respective roles as part of the driving school to run the curriculum which has now been formalized as an independent curriculum. Based on the results of interviews with curriculum representatives for SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG III, he revealed that in learning planning there are differences between the Merdeka curriculum and the previous curriculum

a. No longer know KI and KD, but CP (Learning Outcome);
b. Syllabus becomes ATP (flow of learning objectives);
c. RPP becomes a Teaching Module;
d. In the Merdeka curriculum, schools only facilitate student learning, so where does the learning go, students determine, but schools also take part in directing students to achieve their learning goals.

**Implement the Independent Curriculum**

Curriculum implementation is an action or curriculum implementation of a plan that has been prepared in a mature and detailed manner. The following is the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum at SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG II based on the results of interviews with Curriculum Representative Mr. Sutiono S.Pd., M.Sc:

a. Until 2023 there is still the option to run curriculum 13, emergency curriculum, or independent curriculum but in 2024 must run an independent curriculum without further selection;

b. For now the independent curriculum is applied only to grades X and XI;

c. Learners become the center of learning

d. Learning is mostly carried out in groups, in order to build mutual cooperation among students according to the profile of Pancasila students

e. The diversity of students is highly valued

f. Project-based learning. It doesn't always produce products, but it's more about habituation and changes in attitude/character (mutual cooperation, critical reasoning, independence, creativity, etc. according to the Pancasila Student Profile) within a certain target time

g. Raising an entrepreneurial spirit

h. At the beginning of implementation, the responses of students were confused and silent, but over time students and teachers began to get used to the changes and implementation of this independent curriculum.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the discussion above it can be concluded:

1. SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG III has made an independent curriculum learning plan in the form of learning tools in accordance with the guidelines for making independent curriculum learning tools, namely analyzing learning outcomes (CP) to develop learning objectives and the flow of learning objectives, planning diagnostic assessments, developing teaching modules that adapt learning with the stages of achievement and characteristics of students and formative and summative assessment planning.

2. SMA NEGERI 1 BELITANG III has implemented an independent curriculum that begins with carrying out a diagnostic assessment, carrying out learning according to project-based teaching modules both short-term projects and long-term projects, learning in class according to the characteristics of students, as well as facilitating and directing the wishes of students in the learning process and achieve the desired learning objectives.
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