

Implementation of the Independent Curriculum Policy at An Nizam Medan Private Middle School

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Abstract

This study aims to review the implementation of the curriculum policy of Independent Learning in private Junior High School an Nizam Medan to achieve the goal of curriculum competence independent learning in order to create a superior generation. The research method used is a qualitative approach. In this study, data collection techniques were conducted through observation, interviews and documentation. The Merdeka curriculum focuses on creative and free thinking. The Ministry of Education and culture has introduced the Driving School Program as one of the programs to encourage the implementation of an independent curriculum in every school. The results obtained are (1) Private Junior High School an Nizam Medan has successfully implemented an independent curriculum. (2) there are strategies that support the successful implementation of the independent curriculum in private Junior High School a Nizam Medan, (3) the challenges faced in the implementation of the independent curriculum.

Keywords: *Independent Curriculum, implementation, Challenge*

INTRODUCTION

The aim of national education, according to article 3 of Law number 20 of 2003, is "to develop the potential of students to become human beings who have faith and devotion to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become citizens. Democratic countries are also responsible." Ki Hajar Dewantara, who is the father of Indonesian national education, defines education as a requirement in the life of children's growth. What this means is that education guides all the natural strengths that exist in children, so that they as humans and as members of society can reach their highest potential. high levels of safety and happiness. Education is a humanistic process which is then known as humanizing humans. Therefore, we should be able to respect the human rights of every human being[1].

Education is an activity to achieve real efforts to realize inheritance from one generation to the next to increase the development of potentials that create progress. To improve the quality of education, it is necessary to develop a curriculum because the curriculum is an important aspect in the teaching and learning process. At this time, the independent curriculum has been used in the

education curriculum. Although it has not been implemented in all schools in Indonesia, this curriculum is starting to be implemented in schools through school mobilizers[2]. The Merdeka Curriculum is a learning design that provides opportunities for students to learn in a relaxed, calm, enjoyable and free from pressure. The Merdeka Curriculum focuses on creative and free thinking. The Ministry of Education and Culture has introduced the Driving School Program as one of the programs to encourage the implementation of an independent curriculum in every school[3].

Based on Permendikbudristek Number 12 of 2024, the Merdeka Curriculum aims to realize meaningful and effective learning in increasing faith, devotion to God Almighty, and noble morals as well as developing students' creativity, taste and initiative as lifelong students with the Pancasila character. Philosophically. The Merdeka Curriculum is based on the ideals of independence and the Pancasila philosophy which aims to educate the life of the nation and realize the life of Indonesian people and society based on: Belief in One Almighty God, just and civilized humanity, Indonesian Unity, and Democracy led by wisdom in deliberation. /representatives, as well as by realizing social

justice for all Indonesian people (Permendikbudristek No. 12 of 2024).

The presence of the Independent Learning Curriculum is the answer to the intense competition for human resources in the world today. In Lukum's opinion, there are still three important competencies, namely the competencies to think, act and live. Thinking competencies include critical thinking, creative thinking, & problem solving. Action competencies include communication, collaboration, digital literacy & technological literacy. Meanwhile, competence for living in the world includes initiative, self-direction, understanding the world and social responsibility [5]. Curriculum change policies will also cause the teaching and learning activity (KBM) process to be readjusted. Teachers must adapt their learning styles to the concepts and ideas of Merdeka Belajar including initiative, self-direction, understanding of the world, and social responsibility. One example of change in learning activities is the freedom to learn. This will change the learning atmosphere that was previously limited to the classroom into a freer atmosphere where students can talk to each other more comfortably and not only depend on the teacher's explanations. This will also provide opportunities for students to grow into intelligent, independent, intelligent, sociable and brave individuals [6].

In the world of education, The curriculum is one of the most important educational components that must be implemented. Every curriculum development can improve the quality of education [7]. Evaluation of previous policies is the basis for the formulation of new policies. Each policy is part of the previous policy and functions as an inseparable series to find patterns that are appropriate and beneficial for the benefit of society. New policies must be created based on evaluation of previous policies and based on improvements to previous policies. basically a Policy implementation links policy objectives and their implementation with the results of government activities. This is because there are policy issues that must be addressed and resolved [8].

From the explanation above, the aim of the researcher in writing this article is to be able to review the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum policy at An Nizam Medan Private Middle School to achieve the competency objectives of the Independent Learning Curriculum in order to create a superior generation.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach. The aim of this approach is to understand context conditions through a thorough and in-depth explanation of conditions in the natural setting. According to Moleong (2005:6), qualitative research is research that aims to understand phenomena experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, etc., as a whole and with descriptions using words and language, in a natural context. and by using various natural methods [9]. In this research technique of Data collection was carried out through observation, interviews and documentation [10]. Observations were carried out by directly observing the implementation of the independent curriculum implemented by An Nizam Medan Private Middle School. Interviews were conducted with informants, namely the deputy principal for the curriculum department and 5 representatives of A Nizam Private Middle School students. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, meaning that the researcher had prepared several questions to ask beforehand. However, asking questions can change depending on the direction of the conversation and the informant's answers. Data and information are obtained through documentation techniques in the form of books, modules, archives, photos and activity reports. The research was conducted at AN Nizam Medan Private Middle School, which implements an independent curriculum.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Public Policy Concept

Policies that relate to the public are called public policies (Sirajuddin, 2016). Public policy is born from existence of

Society's needs and problems shape public policy. The government is responsible for making public policies with the aim of meeting people's needs and for the benefit of society. Public policy is defined as a relationship that achieves the goals and objectives of the final results of actions carried out by the government (Coryanata, 2011). The shortcomings of a public policy can be identified after the policy is implemented, while the success of a public policy can be seen from the impact produced after the implementation of the policy.[11]

Meanwhile, according to Anggara Policy is defined as a collection of interconnected decisions issued by government agencies and officials. A policy is related to the decision-making process which aims to continue the action to be taken. Public policies must be made by holders of mandates given by the public or the people at large because they represent many people[8].

Public policy concerns problems that exist in society, which are prepared and translated into and placed on the political agenda. Policy analysis is needed to determine whether the policy contains information about the problems being addressed and the impacts that may arise from implementing the policy. Political analysis is a reflection procedure that has been known and implemented for a long time in human history[12].

As time goes by, education is now seen not as a sector that provides public services, but also as a productive investment that stimulates growth in various development sectors in Indonesia. Education is a measure of a country's progress and has a very strategic and initiating role in determining a country's progress. Therefore, every education official is expected to be able to produce students who are knowledgeable and meet the expectations of all parties. From there, educational designs, policies and programs are needed that are right on target and can be implemented[12].

Through the Freedom to Learn policy, the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Anwar Makarim wants to create a happy and conducive learning atmosphere for students. According to the Minister of Education and Culture, freedom to learn stems from the desire for educational output to produce better quality and no longer produce students who are only good at memorizing but also have sharp analytical skills, reasoning and comprehensive understanding in learning to develop themselves.

2. Independent Curriculum

Curriculum is a set of educational programs designed and implemented by an organization to achieve educational goals. Ibrahim (2012) explains that the curriculum consists of ideas, plans, processes and results. One of the curricula launched by Mr. Nadiem Makarim is the Merdeka Curriculum, which is designed to overcome learning loss and learning gaps. All levels of education are given the freedom by the government to choose the curriculum. Institutions can choose the 2013 curriculum, emergency curriculum, or independent curriculum. This free curriculum is one that can overcome educational challenges and adapt to the times.[5].

The concept of "independent learning" refers to an educational approach that allows students to take more control over what they learn. This approach encourages students to become more independent, responsible, and active in managing their own learning. This idea aims to help students gain skills such as critical thinking, initiative, problem solving, and the ability to learn throughout life[13].

The revised 2013 Curriculum Policy which was changed to the Independent Curriculum is based on the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 56/M/2022 of 10 February 2022 concerning Guidelines for Implementing Curriculum in the Context of

Learning Recovery. This decision of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology serves as a legal basis and reference for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in schools, madrasas and other educational institutions.[14]

3. Strategy for Implementing the Independent Curriculum at An Nizam Private Middle School

Implementation of the "Freedom to Learn Curriculum" policyU required careful preparation and strong support from variousrelated parties. The following are several strategies that can be used in implementing the independent learning policy:

1. Teacher Training and Development
2. Creation of Guides and Resources Day
3. Facilitate Individual Goal Setting
4. Providing Choice and Control
5. Use of Technology
6. Collaboration and Peer Learning
7. Formative and Formative Assessment
8. Constructive Feedback
9. Mental and Emotional Support
10. Continuous Evaluation and Improvement
11. Parent and Stakeholder Participation
12. Phased Approach[13]

Some of these strategies have been implemented and implemented well at An Nizam Medan Private Middle School. Even though it is not yet optimal, it has been successfully implemented in the Merdeka curriculum policy at A Nizam Private Middle School in Medan

Based on the results of research conducted by researchers, there is a way for students to adapt or prepare themselves to face the Merdeka learning curriculum at An-Nizam Medan Middle School, there is something called an interest and talent test in order to determine students' abilities in learning by writing, interviewing and also filling in data via cell phone. Through the interviews conducted, it can be seen that teachers are active in collaborating on subjects to create a work in the form of ecoenzymes so that students are not too forced to study one subject

at a time. Each class has different work, for example in another class planting cloves and also spices. other. In other lessons, such as the Indonesian language subject, the teacher asks students to create a drama with the theme P5, which later the drama will be performed live in front of the class. In this lesson, students are asked to show their interests and talents, such as when they first entered school from collaborative learning. Ultimately, students can establish harmonious and unified friendships.

Several teachers at An-Nizam Medan Private Middle School have conveyed the objectives and learning models at the beginning of learning according to modules that have been previously designed by each teacher. The teachers at the school also use learning media to make it easier for students to understand the material and not make students bored with the presence of this media. In this school, the bk teacher acts as a coordinator to implement the psychological well-being of students who need guidance on problems faced by students, such as problems that interfere with students' learning concentration, problems at home, or between friends.

Then, the results of interviews conducted with curriculum teachers at An-Nizam Medan Private Middle School relate to how the independent learning curriculum can have an impact on student learning, namely that the independent curriculum refers to students, so the learning system must be student-centered. The facts in the field found differences, namely in the understanding of teachers who did not yet understand the methods of the independent curriculum. Most teachers also understood and used a variety of learning media but this would be adjusted according to government requests.

There are definitely changes in the way students learn in the independent curriculum, such as in mathematics subjects when there was an independent curriculum the teacher was fully in control but currently learning has been shifted to a group system, after which students are given assignments and will then present them in front of the class. In this way, students' talents can be seen from the other side. It could

be that the student is weak in mathematics, but on the other hand, his artistic work when making the PPT is very interesting. In fact, the concept of learning in the independent curriculum is that we cannot force students who only develop in one subject but are given freedom in the hope that they can develop in others. There are clear changes to the independent curriculum, in the independent curriculum the teacher creates learning that is as independent as possible for students, of course by following the school's directions with the hope that other interests and talents will emerge when learning. When interest and talent are visible, they will continue to be developed with the hope that students will be on the right track, for example, last year there was one student who had very good swimming skills, he took part in competitions, this is where the teacher's role is to pay more attention to the student. So that students do not miss out on other learning, they are given free time when entering the classroom. This is where learning for teachers means that it turns out that each student has different interests and talents. Through the interests and talents that have been carried out at the beginning of entering school, they can be looked back at and compare the facts that occur in the field and what the students have achieved will then be developed.

The way the independent learning policy can help teachers develop learning that is more impressive for students is through student-centered learning. This has existed even before the independent learning curriculum, if we compare it with K13, actually has similarities, starting from PBL and PJBL assignments, but the difference is in the curriculum. Independence is deepened so that students can discover their interests and talents from another perspective. The first challenge that teachers must know when entering the classroom, teachers must understand the students' character, so in the independent curriculum there is no reason not to complete it and there is also no reason not to learn because the lessons are adapted to the students, for example some use lectures, videos are what make teachers have to be extra and This is also

what makes the curriculum difficult to implement because knowledge must be fully mastered, but when this learning process is actually implemented then the development of a teacher is easier, which makes it difficult when teachers have to study and have to upgrade the existing curriculum.

4. Challenges of Implementing the Independent Curriculum at AN Nizam Private Middle School

The challenge in implementing the independent curriculum at An-Nizam Medan Private Middle School is the understanding of the teachers at the school when the media and learning materials must be completely changed starting from the teaching modules, the treatment of children in class must change and this must be mastered over time, that is the biggest challenge according to one of the teachers who was interviewed regarding the facilities and infrastructure that the school can work on.

The policy of An-Nizam Medan Private Middle School is to implement policies for teachers, namely by creating a principal program where the program is made by the school curriculum, in this program all teachers must be supervised and the schedule is made by the curriculum. schools, in supervision all teachers are required to prepare lesson media needs that have been designed to be displayed during supervision later, and in addition the school curriculum asks all teachers to report every month directly face to face and from here the curriculum teacher explores the process The independent curriculum is running well or vice versa, in class or not in class plus evaluations from the learning community at An-Nizam Medan Private Middle School. The learning community is held on Saturdays at exactly 12.00 WIB after school, this is where the teachers make complaints in class and then the teachers will work together to find a solution to the problem. If the supervision carried out is not in accordance with what the school wants, this may happen but it can be minimized by

checking again the proposal that the teacher uses as a guide.

Apart from that, there are challenges faced by teachers in the curriculum development process, it is important to align the curriculum content with the needs of students in the class. Teachers must take the time to create innovative, creative and challenging lessons every day. Human Resources (HR) is also a challenge to encourage teachers to change their perspective and get out of their comfort zone. The changes made by the principal will be in vain if the teacher does not want to change[15].

CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum has been successfully implemented at An Nizam Private Middle School in Medan and uses strategies that support the successful implementation of the Merdeka curriculum even though there are obstacles in the implementation process. Thus, the Merdeka curriculum focuses on creative and free thinking. The Ministry of Education and Culture has introduced the Driving School Program as one of the programs to encourage the implementation of an independent curriculum in every school. The Merdeka curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for students to learn in a relaxed, calm, enjoyable and free from pressure.

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