INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT: IMPLEMENTATION AND RESPONSE FROM TEACHERS AND STUDENTS AT MAN 2 PONTIANAK

Hadi Wiyono
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education-Universitas Tanjungpura, Indonesia
Corresponding E-mail: hadipips@untan.ac.id

Abstract
The aim of this research is to understand the implementation of the independent curriculum assessment and the evaluation of the independent curriculum from the perspective of teachers and students. Curriculum modifications bring changes to the learning and assessment system. Teachers as educators in every school tend not to adapt easily and face challenges, apart from student teachers too. This research was conducted to obtain a description of the findings in the field. Research was carried out at MA Negeri 2 Pontianak regarding the implementation of assessments that were not fully understood by teachers and were still in the process of adaptation. This research method is descriptive qualitative using observation techniques, interviews and documentation studies to obtain answers to research questions. The research sample consisted of 5 teachers and several students. The research results provide valuable insight into the extent to which the Independent Curriculum is implemented and well received by the main actors in the education process at MAN 2 Pontianak. In addition, this research also discusses its impact on students' learning experiences and teachers' teaching methods. Through this understanding, this research makes a significant contribution to understanding the development of education in Indonesia, and illustrates how schools such as MAN 2 Pontianak can adapt to curriculum changes, which aim to improve the quality of education.

Keywords: Independent Curriculum Assessment; Implementation; Response from Teachers and Students
A. Introduction

Education in Indonesia faces very complex challenges. Many problems arise. In fact, it is not only related to the concept of education, regulations and budgets. But it is also related to the implementation of various implementation systems. The millennium era demands that Indonesia prepare itself to face global demands. Pada pendidikan terdapat penanaman karakter. Education is continuous guidance (Rohaenah & Hasanah, 2021). This does not just mean material knowledge. But also adequate skills and knowledge. Education is an activity to achieve real business (Ramadhan, 2023a). The young generation needs to be prepared to become creative individuals, able to make wise decisions, able to solve problems and have good learning abilities and be responsive to future changes and national challenges. Menurut Maunah (2011) Education is all learning experiences that take place in all environments and throughout life (Darmasari, 2023). Since the reform era began, many people have been surprised by the education problems in our country. The Preamble to the 1945 Constitution states that education is important for the intelligent life of the nation (Pratama et al., 2023).

Improving and equalizing the quality of education is the government's main challenge to develop the world of education in Indonesia (Atmaja, 2023). It all started from the evaluation results that the results of education in Indonesia had not achieved the desired educational goals. This is reflected in the decline in morale of the nation's children, lack of work ethic, low skills, increasing levels of corruption, and increasingly high unemployment rates among graduates. This is very worrying for education observers in Indonesia and has led to the conclusion that our education system is experiencing problems that need comprehensive improvement (Kurniati & Kusumawati, 2023). Education has an important role in shaping individual qualities. Quality education allows individuals to adapt to the environment and technological advances. One of the main factors in improving the quality of education is through the curriculum that is implemented. Frequent changes in the Indonesian curriculum reflect efforts to adapt education to societal developments and the needs of students, parents and society. (Ramadhan, 2023c) said that the educational curriculum is the core of forming the character of students to develop personalities who are good-hearted, have good morals, and to increase the generation of a nation that is competitive in facing world relationships. This is also done to improve the quality of education in Indonesia (Afifah, 2017).

Curriculum change is a necessity because the curriculum is the main element in the education system which needs to be evaluated periodically, is dynamic and innovative in accordance with advances in science and technology and the needs of society. Many changes were encountered by teachers towards students after the transition from online to offline learning (Hardiansyah, M. A., Ramadhan, I., Suriyanisa, S., Pratiwi, B., Kusumayanti, N., & Yeni, 2021). The same is true in the context of the Merdeka curriculum which is in the process of being implemented in educational units. The independent curriculum has different assessments from the 2013 curriculum and the emergency curriculum (during the pandemic). Assessment is an integral part of the learning process that helps facilitate learning and provides comprehensive information as feedback for
students, educators and parents, so that it can guide them in planning their next learning steps. The learning is designed to build the ability to be a lifelong learner. Merdeka curriculum assessments are designed and implemented in accordance with the assessment function, providing flexibility to choose techniques and timing of assessment implementation to effectively achieve learning objectives. The learning process supports the development of students' competencies and character in a comprehensive manner. Assessments are planned in a fair, balanced, valid and reliable manner, so that they can explain learning progress and help determine the next steps in the educational process.

Curriculum changes mean changes to the learning system. The reason for the transition from the 2013 curriculum to the independent curriculum is because the independent curriculum is simpler and deeper, besides that, the standards for achieving the independent curriculum are much simpler compared to the 2013 curriculum (Ramadhan, I., & Warneri 2023).

Thus teachers need to adapt to changes in the education system. Azizi (2021) said that teachers play a role in exploring students' abilities (in (Ramadhan, I., Hardiansyah, M. A., Firmansyah, H., Ulfah, M., Syahrudin, H., & Suriyanisa, 2022)M., Suriyanisa 2022). This research was conducted to obtain answers to research questions, namely regarding the process of implementing assessments and evaluations from teachers and students regarding the implementation of independent curriculum assessments which are different from the 2013 curriculum. This research aims to determine the assessment implementation system and the obstacles experienced by teachers and students. Even though the system for implementing the independent curriculum has previously been provided to teachers, but until now when it has been implemented at MAN 2 Pontianak, most teachers still do not fully understand the assessment aspects of the independent curriculum in particular. Thus, the research was motivated by the problems faced by teachers in carrying out assessments at MAN 2 Pontianak. The importance of this research being carried out is based on the gap in understanding that teachers should have fully understood the implementation of the independent curriculum and its assessments, this is because activities such as training, workshops, webinars and activities carried out by education units and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research and Technology can be followed or accessed at any time by teachers who do not understand the concept of an independent curriculum and its assessments. MAN 2 Pontianak was chosen as the research target due to the many aspects developed by this school, apart from increasing academic and non-academic abilities like schools in general. MAN 2 Pontianak must also consistently and effectively find efforts to instill religious character in its students. The research contribution is finding problems from teachers and students in facing problems or obstacles to implementing the independent curriculum learning and assessment system.

B. Methode

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods. The research was conducted at MA Negeri 2 Pontianak, namely on Jl. General Ahmad Yani No.9, Akcaya, Kec. Pontianak Sel., Pontianak City, West Kalimantan 78121 Data collection techniques used observation
techniques, interviews and documentation studies. The observation method approach is the practice of observing subjects directly without interacting directly with them. In the MAN 2 Pontianak environment, observation methods are used to monitor student behavior, teacher performance, or classroom atmosphere. In the context of data collection in schools, observation allows researchers to collect objective data regarding situations and interactions in the school environment. With this method, researchers can gain a deep understanding of the situations they observe. The interview method is a data collection technique that involves formal conversations between researchers and research subjects.

Data collection through interviews At MAN 2 Pontianak, researchers interviewed one of the teachers and 5 class XI students. This interview data was used to obtain the views and experiences of students and teachers related to the research theme. Interviews allow us to understand individuals' perspectives and dig deeper into their understanding of certain issues. Interviews allow researchers to interact personally with respondents and better understand their perspectives. The research results were analyzed according to Milles and Huberman, then the researchers presented the research results based on the categories of research questions.

C. Finding and Discussion

Implementation of Assessment at MAN 2 Pontianak

Learning is the process of someone participating in certain behavior under special conditions or responding to certain situations. In other words, learning is a special form of education, individuals learn through organizing their environment in order to respond to certain situations or behaviors. Learning is a system that aims to support the learning process of students by designing it specifically to facilitate the learning process that occurs within students. The essence of this learning process lies in the interaction between teachers and students, because both influence each other in the teaching and learning process. Learning activities are focused on students, while teaching tasks are the responsibility of the teacher. Teachers and students are two elements that cannot be separated in this process, and cooperation between the two is needed so that student learning outcomes can be achieved optimally (Crystall, 2016).

The learning process in the "independent curriculum" concept gives teachers the freedom to design a learning process that suits learning needs and objectives. This learning process must comply with the guidelines set out in Minister of Education and Culture Decree Number 56 of 2022 concerning the Implementation of Curriculum in Learning Recovery (Independent Curriculum). This approach is considered more effective than designing learning without considering the needs of students. The Merdeka Curriculum has characteristics that are simpler and more focused in its teaching. In it, there is 1 hour for core subjects (intracurricular) and 1 hour to strengthen understanding of Pancasila. One of the advantages of the Merdeka Curriculum is its freer learning approach. The Minister of Education and Culture gave schools the policy of autonomy to design curricula according to their own needs (Sanjaya, 2015). The
transition process from the 2013 Curriculum (K13) to the Independent Curriculum requires adjustments in various schools. One of the schools that has successfully implemented the Independent Curriculum is MAN 2 Pontianak. In its implementation, teachers at this school are required to have a deep understanding of the characteristics and background of each student. This is necessary so that teachers can determine learning methods that suit the individual needs of each student in the learning process.

In the independent curriculum implemented at MAN 2 Pontianak, students are involved in a project activity called "Strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile Project." This project activity provides opportunities for students to explore, assess, interpret, synthesize and use information to create various forms of learning outcomes. In this project, students conduct investigations and apply their knowledge to produce products. This process is guided by a project coordinator and facilitator who is led by a teacher at certain stages. This coordinator follows the guidelines that have been set for implementing the project with the theme that has been chosen during the project activities. This guideline must be prepared in the form of teaching materials or modules by a team of project coordinators and facilitators. According to (Anggraini et al., 2022), it shows that high school teachers are able to develop modules for the "Pancasila Student Profile Project" and are able to carry out assessments in accordance with the implementation guidelines for the "Strengthening Pancasila Student Profile Project." Assessment is carried out in the learning process using KKTP (Learning Goal Achievement Criteria), namely a series of criteria or indicators that show the extent to which students have achieved learning competence. Criteria for achieving learning objectives are developed when educators plan assessment, which occurs when educators develop learning plans. These achievement criteria are also an important factor in selecting or creating assessment tools, because not all assessments are in accordance with the goals and criteria for achieving learning objectives. This criterion functions as an explanation or description of the types of abilities that students must demonstrate as evidence that they have achieved the learning objectives. It is not recommended to use absolute numbers, such as 75 or 80, as criteria for achieving learning objectives. Instead, educators should use descriptions. However, if necessary, value intervals can be used. The Merdeka Curriculum is considered a change that has a transformational impact. In this context, teachers face several obstacles in its implementation. Based on the results of an interview with a teacher at MAN 2 Pontianak, he revealed a number of obstacles they faced in implementing the Independent Curriculum. One of the main challenges that teachers often face is time management. In the Independent Curriculum, teachers are required to provide various learning methods and styles according to the characteristics of students. This often requires them to spend a lot of time looking for different reference sources and examples for the same learning material.

An obstacle that still exists and often occurs is that teachers have not been able to demonstrate how they can interact effectively in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. They often focus too much on theory without providing
concrete evidence in applying this approach to the use of technology. Acceleration in the development of approaches that utilize technology is not yet clear (Sasmita & Darmansyah, 2022). Teachers also often face difficulties in recognizing students' individual needs. Ideally, teachers need to have a deep understanding of student variations in various aspects, including family background, environment, learning style preferences, interests, talents, and level of mastery of prerequisite material. Even though teachers are successful in identifying student needs, it is not certain that they can apply the results of this identification to support customized learning. Teachers must be able to provide material tailored to each student simultaneously. This is related to variations in the level of mastery of prerequisite material between students, as well as different speeds in mastering certain skills or material. Students who are already proficient in the material need to be given enrichment material, while students who are slower in learning need guidance (scaffolding) and remedial support. However, teachers do not really experience difficulties in carrying out diagnostic, formative and summative assessments, they are just constrained in determining assessments that are appropriate to the learning objectives to be achieved, determining assessments during project-based learning is confusing for teachers because there are many types or forms of assessment such as presentations, projects, products, verbal, written and so on. Meanwhile, the obstacle faced by students is difficulty adapting to the new curriculum. Many of them feel the need to change their mindset and must be more accustomed to new learning procedures. Some also expressed that they found it difficult because they had to be more proactive and creative in carrying out project assignments given by the teacher in their lessons.

Teacher and Student Responses to the Independent Curriculum Assessment

The independent curriculum assessment is an evaluation that covers all aspects and encourages students to develop competencies that suit their talents and interests without requiring them to achieve a certain minimum score, which means there are no more KKM in the independent curriculum. Teachers in this curriculum have freedom in carrying out assessments. This approach is in line with Nadiem Makarim's statement in Jakarta on 11 December 2019, which includes four policy pillars, such as the elimination of the National Examination (UN) which is replaced by the Minimum Competency Assessment and Character Survey, as well as giving full autonomy to schools regarding USBN policies, simplification of plans Learning Implementation (RPP), and more emphasis on the zoning system in Admission of New Students (PPDB). The positive impact of implementing the independent learning assessment is that it eliminates the pressure on students and teachers related to achieving the minimum score that students must achieve. However, the negative impact is the lack of student motivation to compete in achieving better results (Alimuddin, 2023).

The process of implementing assessments in the context of an independent curriculum involves a series of procedures and steps that focus on student
development, providing responses, and providing the ability to play an active role in the learning process (Ihsan, 2022). The characteristics of the assessment process in the Merdeka Curriculum is an approach that has several aspects, such as, firstly, assessment is comprehensive, meaning that in the Merdeka Curriculum assessment does not only focus on academic aspects such as taking tests, but also includes aspects of skills, character, and honing critical thinking abilities. Both assessments are formative, this assessment is used so that it can help students in carrying out the learning process, not just to test students' abilities as a reference for giving grades. Teachers can also provide feedback to students so that students can continue to improve their understanding and hone their skills. Third, assessment flexibility, teachers are given the freedom to design assessment methods that are adapted to the learning context and student needs. Flexibility assessment includes various forms of assessment such as assignments, projects, presentations, discussions, portfolios and others. Fourth, emphasizing students' talents and interests, in the Independent Curriculum assessment students are given support to develop their competencies according to their talents and interests. Fifth, there are no Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) and have been replaced with the term Learning Goal Achievement Criteria (KKTP), in the Independent Curriculum, where this aims to make students more capable, skilled and more happy to learn. Sixth Student Independence, in the Merdeka Curriculum assessment students are encouraged to be more self-aware and independent, play an active role in the learning process, be able to plan their learning goals, and students are expected to take a bigger role in self-assessment Seventh Character Development, in the Merdeka Curriculum character development It is also a reference for students to see their development through ethics, responsibility and the application of social norms.

Learning assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum aims to support students in self-empowerment and overall competency development. In this framework, assessment is not just a means of assessing grades, but also a tool for directing learning, stimulating reflection, and encouraging students' motivation to continue improving their abilities. In carrying out learning assessments in the Independent Curriculum, you are involved in a series of stages and processes that place greater emphasis on student development, providing feedback, and giving them an active role in the learning process. This transition in learning methods forces various parties to choose which path they can take to enable the learning process, and that choice is to use technology as a learning medium (Mardiyanti, L. R., Imran, I., Ramadhan, I., Asriati, N., Al Hidayah, R., & Suriyanisa, 2023). Assessment in the Independent Curriculum Framework aims to build a more active learning atmosphere, which focuses on students, and emphasizes the comprehensive development of student skills. This is intended to better prepare students for real-world realities as well as provide greater encouragement for them to improve their learning abilities (Bahri, 2023). The Merdeka Curriculum places greater emphasis on understanding concepts, mastering basic competencies, developing students' character, using competency-based assessments, variations in assessment
methods, deeper understanding, and encouraging character development. This curriculum also shows higher responsibility to changes and new developments in the world of education. In contrast, previous curricula tended to prioritize the acquisition of factual knowledge, a more rigid structure in the curriculum, the use of knowledge-based exams, an emphasis on written exams, an emphasis on memorizing material, a primary focus on academic achievement, and perhaps less responsive to developments in the world of education. It all starts with an assessment that educational outcomes in Indonesia have not achieved the desired educational goals. This is reflected in the decreasing morale of the nation’s children, low work ethic, low skills, increasing levels of corruption, and increasingly high unemployment rates among graduates (Ramadhan, 2023b).

Assessments are carried out in a planned and continuous manner with the aim of gathering information regarding student progress and learning outcomes. This information is used as a basis for making decisions based on certain criteria and considerations. In a broader context, these decisions may include evaluation of student achievement, adjustments to curricula, programs, or the formulation of educational policies. Assessment is a series of steps that include selecting, collecting and interpreting information to decide or assess the weaknesses of a product or program. This is also used to assess the extent to which an approach can successfully solve problems and achieve set goals (Mujiburrahman et al., 2023). In implementing the Independent Curriculum, assessment is directed to experience a shift in orientation compared to the assessment model in the previous curriculum. In the previous paradigm, emphasis was placed on summative assessment, where the results of the summative assessment became the basis for compiling reports on student study results. However, in this new approach, the focus is on implementing formative assessments. The results of the formative assessment are used as a basis for making improvements and improvements in the subsequent learning process (Nasution, 2021).

The Merdeka Curriculum represents an effort to increase the flexibility and relevance of the curriculum in Indonesia. In terms of assessment or assessment of this curriculum, students show various responses. They tend to respond positively to assessments in the Merdeka Curriculum because this gives them the freedom to determine the focus of learning according to their individual interests and potential. This allows them to be more involved in the learning process and feel they have control over the assessments they receive. A more flexible and personalized assessment system allows students to better explore their interests. Students' responses to assessments in the Merdeka Curriculum also show that they have a need to be more independent and have the ability to understand and measure their own progress. They can assess their own abilities, seek feedback, and reflect on their learning outcomes. This allows for the development of better metacognitive skills and self-responsibility. In this research, there were five students at MAN 2 Pontianak who the researchers interviewed regarding learning assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum. The five of them said in unison that there were many new things in this independent curriculum assessment.
The form of questions given in each assessment varies greatly. If we look at the assessments in the 2013 Curriculum, the form of questions is not far from multiple choice or essays. Meanwhile, in the Independent Curriculum, the forms of questions can be varied, they can be multiple choice, essays, matching, and so on.

With this variation of questions, students feel more interested and motivated to learn and improve their abilities in each assessment given. So it can be said that the assessments in the Independent Curriculum are able to have a positive influence and impact on students' interest and motivation to learn. Overall, MAN 2 Pontianak students' responses and responses to assessments in the Merdeka Curriculum illustrate dynamics that reflect the plurality of individuals in learning. These various responses lead us to understand that each student is unique in facing an assessment system that provides freedom and flexibility. Overall, the assessment approach in the Merdeka Curriculum encourages students to take a leading role in their own learning, promoting independence, reflection and personal growth. In directing the development of a more adaptive and inclusive curriculum, attention to student responses is an important foundation for building a meaningful and empowering education system.

E. Conclusion


G. Bibliography


