

Problems in the Implementation of Independent Curriculum (IC) A Case Study at SMAN 1 Masbagik in Academic Year 2022/2023

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Abstract: Independent Curriculum is an innovative learning approach that aims to encourage creativity, freedom of thought, and development of students potential. There are several problems such as lack of student involvement, lack of innovation and creativity and limitations in providing material. The Independent Curriculum appears as an alternative that provides a solution to this problem. This study aims to analyze the problems experienced by teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum and its impact on teachers and students. The qualitative case study method was used to investigate the experiences of three English teachers and five student representatives from phase E using questionnaires, interviews, observations and documentation data collection methods. The results of the study found three main problems faced by teachers, namely the lack of training, support and facilities in the learning process, as well as challenges in designing learning tools. The impact felt by teachers due to these challenges included changes in teaching methods, increased pedagogical skills and knowledge, and increased motivation in teaching. While the impact felt by students includes the positive impact and negative impact of students. The positive impacts include increased involvement and motivation to learn, increased creativity and innovation, critical thinking skills, as well as collaboration and communication skills. However, the negative impacts that are felt include the lack of explanation from the teacher and some students feel too free, so they feel entitled to leave their learning obligations according to the curriculum. It can be interpreted that the impact of these problems affects the teaching and learning experience of teachers and students. To overcome these problems, it is necessary to make a comprehensive effort. Teachers need to receive adequate training to understand the concept and methodology of the Independent Curriculum and schools need to provide adequate learning facilities and infrastructure to support interactive and innovative learning.

Keywords: Curriculum, Implementation, Independent Curriculum, Problem.

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is a very important program in the world of education. A curriculum is defined as an educational program that contains various materials and continuous learning plans to achieve certain educational goals. Education cannot take place without a curriculum, a curriculum is an integral part of the educational process (Insani, 2019). According to Sudjana (2005), curriculum is the intentions and expectations outlined in the form of educational plans and programs implemented by school educators. Curriculum is intent and planning, implementation is teaching and learning. Teachers and students are involved in this process.

Since Indonesia's independence on 17 August 1945, the curriculum has undergone various changes, including political changes. Noted that in Indonesian, the curriculum has changed up to 10 times. Quoting from the Ministry of Education and Culture's book High School Curriculum Development in Indonesia, curriculum changed is an integral part of the Indonesian nation's political, social and cultural constellation, which is constantly evolving with each era.

According to the readiness of the educational unit, schools are given the opportunity to choose the categories of autonomous learning, independent change, and independent sharing through IKM (SE BSKAP No. 2774/H.H1/KR.00.01/2022). The terminology has changed, which is the main

change in independent curriculum. The term Learning Objective Flow (ATP), which is a combination of RPP, material, LKPD, glossary, media, and assessment, was used in place of the term syllabus, lesson plans, and other tools in the previous curriculum. These terms included syllabus, lesson plans, modules/textbooks, LKPD, media, and learning assessment (Sujana et al, 2022).

Curriculum changes that continue to experience changes from year to year as an effort to develop the quality of education in Indonesia and adapt to the needs and developments of the times. In addition, this curriculum change is also of course an action to overcome educational problems in Indonesia. Learning loss is a very serious educational problem and should not be underestimated. Therefore, the MEC then adopted the independent curriculum that was previously introduced to be implemented in Cikal schools in the 2020/2021 academic year. The school, which was founded by Najeela Shihab, has officially become one of the partners of the Ministry of Education and Culture in developing the independent curriculum, and has been involved in the trial development phase of the curriculum from the start. After that, an evaluation phase was carried out from the results of the experiment and then it began to be widely applied in various schools in Indonesia.

The independent curriculum has several advantages according to the Ministry of Education and Culture in its implementation trials. In contrast to the 2013 curriculum which is too broad, too much material, and heavy administration. The independent curriculum has the advantages of reducing pressure on students, encouraging students to learn independence, and developing skills in the 21st century.

The covid pandemic has had a serious impact on almost all schools, including SMAN 1 Masbagik. the occurrence of covid caused the school to experience a series of obstacles, due to the fact that learning was transferred to online learning, there were class shifts, and were reduced study hours. This certainly causes students and teachers to not be optimal in the learning process.

METHODS

This research used a case study which is a part of qualitative method that wants to explore a particular case in more depth by involving the

collection of various sources information. Case study, also known as field study, seeks to learn more about the history of a circumstance and an occurrence that is actually taking place, as well as the environmental experiences or specific social categories. Case study is an in-depth investigation of an issue, and the findings give a comprehensive and in-depth picture of the problem. The subject studied were small, but the variables and the emphasis of the research were extremely large (Danim, 2002).

The data in this study were analyzed in several stages. First, researchers has distributed questionnaires in the form of a google form which the link has distributed to 3 English teachers and also one class with phase E SMAN 1 Masbagik. The distribution of the questionnaire was assisted by one of the computer room managers because students could not access via cellphone due to quota limitations. Researchers made efforts to speed up and make it easier for informants to fill out questionnaires by turning on hotspots and also giving cellphone in rotation to be used by students who do not use computers. The number of questionnaires filled out by the teachers is 10 points, and students with a total of 5 question points. Second, researchers conducted interviews with three English teachers first, by asking 10 questions and in the interview process the researchers used a recording device in the form of a cell phone. This is also the same with interviews with students. Researchers took representatives from 5 students who were considered capable of providing information regarding the things needed by giving 5 questions. Third, Observations are carried out by providing information to teachers but not providing information to students, because researchers and teachers agree to make observations in order to get natural results as the situation actually happened. The observation process was carried out by the researchers by sitting in the back of the student bench and observing the ongoing learning process. And the final step researchers has analyzed the documents used to teach in the implementation of the independent curriculum in the form of Teaching Modules and LKPD.

FINDINGS AND DISSCUSSION

This chapter focused on two things, namely the problems faced by teachers in implementing the independent curriculum and

the impacts for teachers and students. The researchers used data collection methods in the form of questionnaires, interviews, observation, and documentation. By using this method, researchers can see the problems experienced from various perspectives and obtain a more complete picture of the teachers problems in implementing the independent curriculum at SMAN 1 Masbagik. The following are the findings of the data collection carried out.

Findings

This section presents information obtained from questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documentation. Questionnaires were

distributed through forms involving 3 English teachers and one class of students, namely phase E which totaled 32 people. Then continued with interviews with 3 English teacher informants namely Teacher 1 (T1), Teacher 2 (T2), and Teacher 3 (T3) and five students from phase E class. While observations were made in the process of learning English in class and documentation was used in the learning process. The available data is used to answer research problems.

Teachers Problems in Implementing the Independent Curriculum

a. Lack of training received by teachers



Picture 1. English teacher questionnaire results

The picture shows the results obtained by the researchers through the question "in your opinion, do you need further research to increase understanding in implementing the independent curriculum?". As a result, 66,7% of teachers said that they needed it for further understanding related to implementing the independent curriculum. T1, T2, and T3 said that teachers still lack training, as stated during the interviews. Because this training is still rotating, some teachers have been summoned to attend training related to the implementation of the independent curriculum.

The findings are also the same as those found by researchers in the results of questionnaires and observations, teachers need the training to increase their understanding regarding the implementation of the independent

curriculum. As with the questionnaires and interviews, the researchers found that the obstacles experienced by the three English teachers in the process of implementing the independent curriculum were the lack of training provided by the teachers. As a result, this also has an impact on the teachers understanding of the curriculum itself. Because actually, all teachers need further training on the independent curriculum, meaning this is a new curriculum. At SMAN 1 Masbagik there are driving teachers, as well as teachers who still lack understanding and have not received calls for training directed to share with teachers who have more knowledge.

b. Lack of supporting facilities in the learning process



Picture 2. English teacher questionnaire results

The picture above shows the results obtained by the researchers through the question "do you feel there is a lack of learning materials or resources that support the implementation of the independent curriculum?". As a result, 66,7% of teachers said that they felt there was a lack of materials and resources in the process of implementing the independent curriculum. The findings are also the same as those found by researchers in the results of questionnaires and observations, schools still experience a shortage in providing facilities in the form of networks that can help teachers access learning. In implementing the independent curriculum, SMAN 1 Masbagik has prepared supporting facilities. These facilities include increasing internet bandwidth to three points so that teachers and educators can more easily access online information related to the independent curriculum. In addition, schools have also provided teachers needs in lesson preparation, such as LCDs and projector devices. This aims to

facilitate teachers in presenting learning material to students. However, even though physical facilities have been provided, there are still challenges that need to be overcome regarding internet network access. The additional bandwidth tends to be insufficient given the number of students in the school, so teachers must use their quota to overcome this obstacle. However, schools have planned to make efforts to increase network capacity so that they can meet teachers' needs in accessing information related to the independent curriculum. Another challenge is related to the use of applications or online resources such as YouTube. Teachers realize that in the current era of digitalization, adequate network access is very important, especially in utilizing technology in the learning process.

c. Teachers face challenge in designing learning devices



Picture 3. English teacher questionnaire results

The picture above shows the results obtained by the researchers through the question "so far, have you felt helped by the flexibility of the independent curriculum in preparing learning materials and methods?". As a result, 100% of teachers said that they were greatly helped by the flexibility of the independent curriculum in the process of preparing learning materials and methods. Teachers feel significant changes in the process of implementing the independent curriculum, especially in teaching methods and also making learning tools. In the independent curriculum, many things have been changed, including terms in the curriculum. One example is the RPP which is converted into a teaching module. This makes teachers who are used to the old term confused. In the independent curriculum the teacher must be able to understand the characteristics of the students, because the learning process is no longer carried out in the same way as the previous curriculum. The teacher teaches each student according to their characteristics and abilities, so that in compiling teaching modules the teacher feels a significant challenge than before. However, teachers also feel helped by the flexibility of the independent curriculum. Teachers are freed to design and make teaching modules as creative as possible and adapt to the character of students.

Impacts for the Teachers and Students in the Implementation of Independent Curriculum

This finding is based on the results of distributing questionnaires, interviews, observations, and also documentation that has been carried out by the researchers with informants, namely T1, T2, and T3. As well as informants from two classes, with students who have interviewed as many as 10 students from phase E and phase F. The impacts of implementing this independent curriculum for teachers are almost the same but students have various opinions regarding the impacts of implementing an independent curriculum.

For Teachers

a. Change in learning media

This change in learning methods provides a meaningful experience. There is a paradigm shift in the teachers approach to students. In the past, teachers may have ignored student complaints, but now they approach students to understand their needs and how students perceive learning. Teachers are currently more focused as

facilitators who help students in the learning process. The conclusion that can be drawn is that teachers are now more involved with students, paying attention to real-world problems, and using technology in teaching. This change aims to increase the relevance of learning and prepare students to face challenges in the real world.

b. Improvement of pedagogical skills and knowledge

The implementation of the independent curriculum provides broad opportunities for teachers to improve their pedagogical skills and knowledge. So this can create a positive impact on the learning process. A teacher must have pedagogical abilities to see the characteristics of students from various aspects such as aspects of life, morals, emotions etc. Through this approach, the Independent Curriculum seeks to provide teachers with better opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge in terms of education. By having qualified teacher it is hoped that the learning experience of students can also improve.

c. Increased motivation of teachers

The application of the Independent Curriculum can have a positive impact on teachers and of course can increase teacher motivation. However, this implementation also presents new challenges that require adaptation between teachers and students and understanding the development of pedagogical skills. The Independent Curriculum can provide flexibility to teachers in designing and adapting learning methods. Teachers can have the freedom to adapt teaching materials and strategies according to the needs and interests of their students. This flexibility helps teachers to explore their creativity in delivering lessons, creating engaging learning experiences, and catering to different learning styles. The use of technology also plays an important role in this regard, because by using technology teachers can explore many things about learning. The implementation of the independent curriculum provides a high motivational boost for teachers. Mastery of learning methods, use of technology, greater control, freedom in the design of learning materials, and creativity are factors that contribute to teacher motivation in implementing an independent curriculum. This shows the importance of paying attention to teacher motivation and providing the necessary support

to improve the quality of independent curriculum implementation.

For Students

The results of the questionnaire are in line with those conveyed by five students as representatives in the interview. Student 1 (SA), Student 2 (SB), Student 3 (SC), Student 4 (SD), Student 5 (SE). In this delivery, it was concluded that there were significant impacts, both positive and negative, felt by students in the implementation of the independent curriculum.

Positive Impacts

- a. Increase involvement and motivation in learning process

Awareness that students can increase involvement and increase student motivation in participating in the learning process in the application of an independent curriculum. Because this independent curriculum requires students to play an active role in finding material and understanding what is directed by the teacher, students are more motivated to learn, moreover students realize that SMAN 1 Masbagik is a driving school, so students try to meet these criteria from an independent curriculum. This shows the important role of students in the successful implementation of the independent curriculum. Student support and involvement in independent and active learning is an important factor in advancing the independent curriculum. Increasing student participation in learning and paying attention to their needs and interests is a key factor for achieving successful learning development with an independent curriculum.

- b. Development of creativity and innovation

The independent curriculum has a significant positive impact on students. This curriculum allows students to have a more impactful learning experience as it incorporates real practice in entrepreneurship, love of nature, leadership, and others. These practices increase student interest and motivation and encourage innovation in learning. In the independent curriculum, students have greater freedom to be creative and enhanced in learning activities. They are given space to express themselves and find learning materials for themselves that have a positive impact on the quality of student learning. The independent curriculum also prohibits students from being independent in seeking

information and introducing themselves in world lectures.

- c. Improve ability in critical thinking

The independent curriculum provides opportunities for students to be actively involved in every lesson. Students are expected to be active in practice, memorization, and learning theory. In the independent curriculum, students are often given directions and are required to seek information before presenting it to the teacher. This encourages an increase in students' thinking levels because they have to be good at managing information, like searching on Google for example.

This conclusion shows that the independent curriculum provides an active learning experience, encourages critical thinking, and trains students to be independent, creative, and use technology wisely. It is important for teachers and educational institutions to continue to pay attention to students needs, provide adequate explanations, and develop learning strategies that promote critical thinking and student independence in accessing and managing information.

- d. Improved collaboration and communication capabilities

The implementation of the independent curriculum emphasizes more practical and collaborative learning. Students are expected to work in groups, work together, and communicate well in completing practices or assignments. Group learning encourages cooperation, communication, and student creativity. In the independent curriculum, students often work in groups and are directed to work together with group mates or classmates. They are required to have good communication skills and work collaboratively. Students are also given the freedom to be creative in work groups.

The importance of group work in the independent curriculum can be seen from the practices carried out in groups. Students sometimes need to gather at friends' houses to do certain assignments or practice. This shows that group work and discussion are an integral part of learning in the independent curriculum. Its main aim is to encourage collaboration and cooperation among students.

Negative Impacts

Besides the positive impact on students related to the implementation of the independent

curriculum, it is inseparable from the negative impact that not a few students also have difficulties in the learning process using this independent curriculum. understand, and the concept of an independent curriculum that promotes students to be independent has not been well and wisely accepted by students. From the interview results obtained the following results.

a. Lack of explanation and guidance

The implementation of the independent curriculum faces several challenges that need to be addressed. One of the main challenges is the understanding and readiness of teachers in teaching the independent curriculum. Until now, there are still many teachers who do not fully understand what an independent curriculum is and how the process of teaching and learning an independent curriculum is carried out. This has an impact on students' understanding of the independent curriculum, as many students do not fully understand the concepts and principles of the independent curriculum. Weaknesses that arise are the lack of textbooks and minimal explanation from the teacher. There are difficulties for students who depend on the teacher's audio and visual teaching methods, so they experience difficulties and are left behind in understanding the material. Some students also have difficulty understanding material that is not taught directly.

b. Excessive self-demanding

Some students have difficulty finding material directed by the teacher because of a lack of specifications. This difficulty also has an impact on students' understanding of the material, thus slowing down their understanding. The independent curriculum requires students to look for material on their own, which causes some students to become lazy.

Students difficulties in finding and understanding material can affect the effectiveness of learning in the independent curriculum. Lack of clear instructions from the teacher in determining the material and students lack of understanding of the material can hinder their learning progress. In addition, the necessity of students to find material on their own can also be an additional burden for some students.

This conclusion shows the important role of the teacher in providing clear directions and supporting students in finding and understanding the material. Teachers need to provide more

specific guidance and provide adequate understanding to students to speed up the learning process. In addition, it is also important to consider learning strategies that can help students find and understand the material more effectively.

Discussion

This discussion discusses the problems faced by teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum. This study aims to find out what problems teachers experience in implementing an independent curriculum, and what are the impacts of implementing an independent curriculum on students and teachers. This discussion is based on data collected from questionnaires, interviews, observations and documentation with english teachers and students who have implemented the Independent Curriculum.

The Independent Curriculum is a learning approach that gives more freedom to students in the learning process. However, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum also raises challenges and obstacles for teachers in the implementation process. The following are the problems experienced by teachers in implementing the independent curriculum.

- a. Lack of training received by teachers
- b. Lack of supporting facilities in the learning process
- c. Teachers face challenges in designing learning devices

Teachers experience difficulties in understanding the concept of an independent curriculum and how to apply it effectively due to the lack of training received by teachers. SMAN 1 Masbagik has involved 10 teachers in the independent curriculum training in stages. However, in this study, 3 English teachers became informants, and only 1 teacher had attended training related to the independence curriculum. Based on data from the questionnaire results distributed to 3 teachers, as many as 33% said that the lack of training related to the independent curriculum was one of the problems in implementing the independent curriculum. As well as 66.7% said teachers needed to increase their understanding of the independent curriculum, needed training to increase their understanding, and experienced problems with a lack of resources and facilities that support the learning process. The facilities needed by

teachers are internet networks, because internet networks are a bridge to access many things related to learning material needs. such as accessing applications used in the learning process as well as accessing Google which requires the internet to facilitate access for students and teachers in finding material

Related to the impact felt for teachers and students in implementing the Independent Curriculum. This discussion is based on data collected from questionnaires, interviews, observations and documentation with teachers and students who have implemented the Independent Curriculum. The following is the impact felt by teachers and students, where this impact is not only positive but there is also a negative impact that comes from the results of research with students as informants.

For teachers, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has had several significant impacts. First, teachers experience changes in learning methods. They need to adapt to a more creative and interactive learning approach, replacing conventional methods. Second, the teacher feels an increase in pedagogical abilities and knowledge. By facing the challenges of implementing the Independent Curriculum, teachers become more skilled and knowledgeable in designing and delivering effective learning. Third, teachers also experience increased motivation in teaching. The presence of the Independent Curriculum provides an opportunity for teachers to further explore their creativity in teaching, which in turn increases their enthusiasm and enthusiasm in the teaching profession.

For students, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has a significant positive impact. First, they experience increased engagement and motivation in the learning process. With a more interactive and interesting learning approach, students feel more motivated to actively participate in learning. Second, the Independent Curriculum encourages the development of student creativity and innovation. Students are encouraged to think outside the box and explore creative solutions to problems. Third, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum improves students' critical thinking skills. They are invited to analyze, evaluate, and solve problems critically, improve their ability to think rationally and logically. Fourth, the Merdeka Curriculum also

improves students' collaboration and communication skills. Through projects and group activities, students learn to work together, share ideas, and communicate well with their peers. However, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum also has some negative impacts on students. First, some students may experience a lack of explanation and guidance from the teacher. A more open approach in this curriculum can cause students to find it difficult to understand the material in depth. Second, some students may feel too free and excessively demanding of themselves in the learning process. This can cause psychological stress that impacts academic performance and emotional well-being of students. In dealing with these impacts, the role of teachers and schools is very important to create a balanced learning environment, provide appropriate guidance, and overcome problems that arise so that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum can provide maximum benefits for teachers and students.

These two points of findings are by the initial goal of the researchers to find out what problems teachers experience in implementing the independent curriculum and what the impact is for teachers and students. These findings are supported by a previous research study conducted by (Rahayu et al., 2022) which concluded that the role of school principals and teachers is very important in the successful implementation of the independent curriculum. Because the teacher is a facilitator and the principal is the driving force for the teacher. This research is also supported by previous research by (Manalu et al., 2022) related to digitalization which is the main factor in the emergence of an independent curriculum and also related to changes in learning methods which were initially limited to classrooms but are now wider even to several directly related place.

Besides the research being supported by previous research, this study also has differences with previous a study by Enjelli Hehakaya and Delvyn Pollatu (2022) at the Ambon State Christian Religion Institute (IAKN), the problem found is the lack of supporting media in the process of implementing the independent curriculum and teachers who stutter in using technology. This study also did not intend to find out the impact of implementing an independent curriculum for students, because the success factor in implementing an independent

curriculum was not only teachers but also students.

Although this research provides valuable insight into the problems faced by teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum, this research is not free from several limitations, namely the limited number of samples and limited research time. Apart from that external factors are also a limitation in that the implementation of the independent curriculum is influenced by external factors such as education policies, school administrative support, and student characteristics. These factors were not fully controlled in this study.

CONCLUSION

Based on research on the problems faced by teachers in implementing the curriculum, there are several problems encountered, namely the lack of training received by teachers, limited supporting facilities in the learning process, and challenges in designing learning tools that cause difficulties for teachers. These problems have an impact on the teaching and learning experience for teachers and students, where teachers experience changes in teaching methods, which require increased pedagogical skills and motivation in teaching. On the other hand, the impact on students includes positive and negative impacts, by increasing student involvement and motivation in learning, as well as the development of creativity and critical thinking skills. However, the research results also show that the implementation of the independent curriculum has negative impacts on students, such as a lack of explanation and direction from the teacher, so that some students feel too free and lack enthusiasm for learning. Therefore, to improve implementation of the independent curriculum, further attention is needed to teacher training and support, as well as a deeper understanding of students' learning needs. The results of this study are expected to provide improvements and improve quality for the development of the independent curriculum in the future.

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