

## RELEVANCE OF CHANGES IN THE INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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### ABSTRACT

The emergence of the coronavirus in various parts of the world raises new challenges in the world of education that demand changes in the learning system. In the process of restoring education in Indonesia, the government is making efforts in the form of launching a new program, namely the Independent Curriculum. Curriculum changes in Indonesia certainly have an impact on the world of education, especially on student achievement. This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type. The data collection technique used is a collection of concepts. The results of this study indicate that curriculum changes have a significant effect on student achievement.

**Keywords:** curriculum change, independent curriculum, learning achievement

### ABSTRAK

*Munculnya virus corona di berbagai belahan dunia memunculkan tantangan baru dalam dunia pendidikan yang menuntut adanya perubahan dalam sistem pembelajaran. Dalam proses pemulihan pendidikan di Indonesia, pemerintah melakukan upaya berupa pencanangan program baru yaitu Kurikulum Mandiri. Perubahan kurikulum di Indonesia tentunya berdampak pada dunia pendidikan khususnya terhadap prestasi belajar siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian deskriptif. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah pengumpulan konsep. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa perubahan kurikulum berpengaruh signifikan terhadap prestasi belajar siswa.*

**Kata kunci:** perubahan kurikulum, kurikulum mandiri, prestasi belajar

### A. Introduction

The coronavirus first appeared in Wuhan, China, which resulted in a mysterious pneumonia outbreak characterized by fever, dry cough, and fatigue as well as gastrointestinal symptoms. The outbreak has spread globally to Thailand, the Republic of Korea, Japan, the United States of America, and the Philippines, Viet Nam on 2/6/2020 at least 25 countries confirmed. WHO designated this disease as Coronavirus Disease -2019 (COVID-19) on 11th February 2020. (Yi-Chi, W. et al., 2020).

The total number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the world from December 31, 2019, to December 17, 2022, was 648,697,175 confirmed cases with 6,645,043 deaths (CFR: 1.02%). The five countries that reported the highest daily average of confirmed cases in the 50th week of 2022 were Japan, Korea, the United States, France, and Brazil. Indonesia is in 20th place. In Indonesia, there were 6,708,737 confirmed cases as of December 17, 2022, with 160,384 deaths (CFR 2.39%) and 6,517,469 recovered cases spread across 514 districts and cities in 34 provinces. The five provinces that reported the most average daily confirmation cases in the 50th week of

2022 include DKI Jakarta, West Java, East Java, Banten, and Central Java (KEMENKES, 2022).

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic at the end of December 2019 became one of the points where the continuity of education, especially in Indonesia, changed. The learning crisis that has occurred, accompanied by the emergency condition of the COVID-19 pandemic, had a profound impact on changes in education in Indonesia. In this case, education must also change and develop the following policies due to the existence of the COVID-19 pandemic so that education can continue to achieve its true learning goals (Nugraha, T. 2022).

Various policies were implemented during the pandemic to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 virus, one of them limiting face-to-face meetings and avoiding crowds (Septiadi et al., 2022). This also has an impact on the learning process, which switches to distance learning due to the limited time to gather and study in class, where this system is ultimately agreed upon by schools and universities due to the urgent situation (Nugraha, T. 2022). On March 24, 2020, a circular letter appeared from the minister of education regarding the online learning process that would be carried out at each other's homes, starting from the elementary level to tertiary institutions (Septiadi et al., 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic is a special condition that causes learning loss or learning loss that varies in the achievement of student competencies. Many national and international studies state that Indonesia has also experienced a learning crisis for a long time (Nurwiatin, N. 2022).

In a study, it was shown that online learning has weaknesses, such as the fact that the learning process becomes rigid and monotonous, and that classic online learning will tend not to be able to accommodate the learning styles of each learner or student, which of course vary, and that learning that only applies in one direction (monotonous) creates opportunities for decreased creativity and innovation from students or students (Nurwiatin, N. 2022).

In addition, the higher intensity of accessing social media during online learning will have an impact on students' interest in participating in learning activities. Because it is not impossible when students tend to be more active on their social media accounts than in online learning activities, The lack of control from teachers and parents, plus the lack of teachers' ability to use online learning applications, will indirectly have an impact on students' interest in learning. Interest in learning is an important element in learning activities (Nurwiatin, N. 2022).

This problem raises various challenges in the field of education. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbud Research and Technology) is trying to make efforts to restore learning. One of the efforts made by the Ministry of Education and Culture and Research and Technology to overcome the existing problems is to launch an independent curriculum.

The Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum with a variety of extracurricular learning where the content will be more optimal so that students have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competence. Teachers have the flexibility to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be adapted to the 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 (KEMDIKBUD, 2022).

## **B. Research Method**

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type. The data collection technique used is a collection of concepts. The research was carried out by analyzing journals and making various summaries relating to the questions and objectives of the research, as well as a regular literature search through the database of journal providers, which can be accessed

through several websites. The analytical technique used is content analysis, which involves searching for and seeing the patterns or themes presented by the data and their suitability, and then comparing them with the hypothesis. Even though we believe we are aware of it or not, we will use narrative or discourse analysis techniques because we feel the research objectives and content analysis techniques are suitable.

The data sources used are secondary data sources. This data source can help explain and find out the impact of the presence of COVID-19 on student achievement. In this secondary data, we will find out about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world of education, as well as the problems of online learning or distance learning during the COVID-19 period, obstacles to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, and student learning achievements during the COVID-19 period.

**C. Result and Discussion**

**Curriculum Development in Indonesia**

Implementation of the curriculum is part of the preparation that will be faced in the challenges of the times in the future. In the future, the world of work will be filled with educational actors who are currently learning to achieve their goals; they are students. Therefore, the curriculum is a reflection of the formation of character education, which fully contributes to the future of the nation (Marisa, M. 2021).

The superiority of a nation's education does not lie in its curriculum but in terms of curriculum policies, which must be aligned in one direction in the national development plan at a macro level (Marisa, M. 2021).

Thus, whatever the policy is, the curriculum must be aligned with the goals that influence the development of the nation. This is because education is not used as an entity that occurs on an independent basis, but as the main pillar for development and is

closely related to other sectors (Marisa, M. 2021). So it is necessary to have curriculum policies that are adaptive and flexible in dealing with situations and conditions in various circumstances so that they get the right policy patterns and are following what is expected (Marisa, M. 2021).

There are major factors in curriculum development that are in line with political changes marked by cabinet changes. As well as community developments related to national development needs, this has resulted in revisions always occurring to continue to provide the latest innovations to keep pace with the times (Marisa, M. 2021).

**Table 1. Development of the Indonesian Curriculum**

Year	Political Period	Curriculum	Educational Foundation
1945-1949	Physical Revolution	1947 Lesson Plans	
1949-1950	RIS		Education Act 1950
1950-1959	Parliamentary Democracy	Lesson Plan Unraveled 1952	Education Act 1954
1959-1966	Old Order	Education Plan 1964	Presidential Decree No. 19 of 1965 regarding the main points of the Pancasila National Education System
1966-1968	the new order	1968 curriculum	
		1975 curriculum	
		1984 curriculum	
		Curriculum 1994	UU no. 2 of 1989 concerning the National Education System
	Reform Era	Curriculum 1994-1999 Supplements	
		Competency Based Curriculum (KBK) 2004	UU no. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System
		2005 Education Unit Level	pp. No. 19 of 2005

		Curriculum (KTSP)	
		2013 National Curriculum	pp. No. 32 of 2013
		Independent Learning Curriculum	

**Independent Curriculum and the Impact of Changes**

Curriculum changes in Indonesia are one of the most significant changes in the world of education. At this time, the independent learning curriculum is only used as an option in the world of education because the Ministry of Research and Technology is conducting socialization beforehand so that this independent curriculum can become the national curriculum. So that the independent learning curriculum does not have to be implemented in all schools (Rahmadhani, P. et al., 2022).

This independent learning curriculum focuses on developing character, and student competence, and honing children's interests and talents. So that it can reduce the number of learning materials provided and assignments for students. Meanwhile, the 2013 curriculum only focuses on developing and improving attitudes, skills, and knowledge of students (Rahmadhani, P. et al., 2022).

Any implementation of curriculum policies imposed by the government is largely determined by the teacher's ability to implement them correctly. This implementation is more or less influenced by the perceptions and interpretations of the teachers (Rahmadhani, P. et al., 2022).

The teacher's perception and interpretation of the curriculum are rooted in the teacher's own knowledge and experience. The curriculum includes at least four main components: 1) Educational goals to be achieved. 2) Knowledge, knowledge, data, activities, and experiences from everywhere 3) Methods and ways of

teaching and guidance that students follow to encourage them to what is desired and the goals that are designed. 4) The methods and methods of assessment used in measuring and assessing the results of the educational process designed in the curriculum (Nurwiatin, N. 2022).

Curriculum changes have positive and negative impacts on students' education. Their positive impact is that the student learning process can keep abreast of increasingly advanced times with the support of school principals, teachers, teaching staff, students, and even the institution itself. Where the principal must have good relations with his superiors and foster good relations with his subordinates, then qualified teachers, in other words, the teacher must be able to deliver lessons that are easily digested by quality students and students, meaning that students can study well, be active, creative in every problem solving, as well as critical in every lesson. The negative impact is that the quality of education decreases, and as a result of changing the curriculum so quickly, it causes a decrease in student achievement because students cannot adapt to the learning system in the new curriculum (Rosmana, P. et al., 2022).

When a curriculum is formulated, developed, and implemented in the school system down to the classroom, the implementation mechanism influences learning practices, which in turn affects student learning outcomes. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that the teacher will implement curriculum policies according to government expectations. The impact of changing education curriculum not only hurts students whose achievements are getting lower, but this change can also have an impact on schools, namely the goals or vision of a school will also fall apart (Rahmadhani, P. et.al. 2022).

For example, if a school has one goal or one vision, of course, it will try to achieve its goals and fulfill its vision. It certainly takes a short time, but when they have focused on the vision that has been prepared, suddenly the curriculum is changed, and of course, the school must change the goal to be achieved. Maybe the government feels that curriculum changes can provide better changes to the quality of education, but in fact, this is not the case (Nurwiatin, N. 2022).

The following are some of the impacts on students that were caused during the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Student Losses on Assessment

There are so many losses that affect students, such as the fact that students should take their exams, but because of this pandemic, the exams will be postponed or even canceled. Assessments for schools may not be urgent, but for parents of students, assessments are very important because these assessments will have an impact on the students' futures and their ability to continue their studies at the university of their dreams. Case of students in tertiary institutions Assessment of students may have measurement errors, unlike the usual measurements that are done. For example, in European countries, companies have different values for educational credentials, such as the classification of degrees and the average value for selecting applicants from among college alumni. Until this affects how applicants from universities or colleges are matched with their work and matched with their expected wages, Meanwhile, in Indonesia, until now, no company has announced how new graduates can take part in the company's selection. However, the Indonesian government offers a pre-employment card, which is a card to re-train the skills

of college graduates in preparing university graduates to work in the future after Covid-19 ( Septiadi, M. 2022 ).

2. Impact on School Graduates

Students and students who are looking for work this year have been affected. They find it difficult to find work during this pandemic. So many of them are unemployed. How come so many factory workers have been laid off? Layoffs and also workers who are still working. In addition, their final students also experienced teaching disruption when they were at the end of graduation, the impact they experienced directly, but in this way, they were all graduated by the school. In addition, graduates from universities who have the opportunity to work at an appropriate salary because of this pandemic have to get low wages, which has a competitive effect on their careers. University graduates who initially had predictions of work and also had appropriate and adequate wages due to this pandemic had to think again about this because the wages they would receive would not be the same as their predictions. In addition to the impacts above, we have other impacts, such as COVID-19 starting to spread throughout the world, especially in Indonesia, where the spread of the COVID-19 virus has increased, causing several schools and universities to be temporarily closed for two weeks to prevent the spread of the virus. However, it seems that the virus has not yet suppressed its spread, which is very fast, forcing people to stay in their homes to stop the spread of the virus.

The spread is increasing so that many fields are taking action, one of which is the field of education, where they are issuing letters to students to study online at home for two weeks. Referring to a circular letter from the Minister of Education and Culture Number 3 of 2020

concerning the prevention of COVID-19 in education units and Number 36962/MPK.A/HK/2020, teaching and learning activities are carried out online to prevent the spread of Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19). This government policy was taken so that the transmission of the COVID-19 virus would quickly subside, and this policy applies to all levels, from kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, high school, and even university. Apart from that, studying on campus also adopted some policies which caused, starting from the end of the even semester, all activities in lectures to be switched online, starting from midterms, final exams, even to practicum and also their semester assignment guidance to be carried out online (Septiadi, M. 2022).

### 3. Impact on Students

In addition to the loss of assessment for students and the impact on graduating students, there is also an impact due to this pandemic. As a result of this pandemic, their learning has decreased because the material conveyed is less clear and less understood compared to face-to-face learning. In addition, students also become less enthusiastic about learning, one of the factors caused by the environment, so that they become lazy. Some students feel burdened because their lecturers will give assignments outside of class hours and also change class hours suddenly. Apart from having a negative impact, students also have a positive impact, namely: 1. Learning continues even in a difficult situation. 2. Students feel a little relaxed and free when attending lectures, and they can do other activities. 3. Students become independent because most of their lecturers will give brief material through files, and we inevitably have to look for other definitions so that the

material provided by the lecturer can be understood clearly, and we also get broad material not only based on the explanation of the material provided by the lecturer. From the explanation above, we know the positive impact of online learning. This can make us independent and give us a very broad insight into the material we are looking for, and we can compare the material given by the lecturer with the material we find on the website. If there are differences, we can ask the lecturer directly, and we will also become less dependent on other people (Septiadi, M. 2022).

### **Student Learning Achievement after Implementation of the Independent Curriculum**

Various studies have been carried out in both journals and articles and found variations in results regarding the impact of curriculum changes on student achievement. The research conducted by Arisetya has a positive relationship to the pattern of the curriculum in the field of biology studies, providing a 38.1% increase in student achievement. In Ashori's research, he stated that the developed curriculum could also provide developments in students' scientific integrity, science and technology, and IMTAQ. Nahdiyah conducted research and stated that school curriculum development can produce both academic and non-academic achievements. Of course, this can have positive results because of the teacher's role, which emphasizes patience as well as diligence in teaching (Rosmana, P. et al. 2022).

There is research that states that the application of the 2013 curriculum to online learning systems has resulted in several problems. This indicates that there must be readjustments regarding the curriculum implemented in this online learning. This also has similarities with research conducted

showing that the application of the 2013 curriculum online is less efficient in achieving achievement as well as developing student character. It is said that curriculum changes have an effect on student learning motivation but have no relationship with student achievement, giving a value of 11.6% to the role of the curriculum on learning motivation while the rest comes from other factors. Furthermore, in other studies conducted, the results show that the success of the learning process can be influenced by internal and external factors. This indicates that curriculum changes will still be influenced by other factors. In the study of journals, it was found that the results stated that curriculum development affected student achievement. Meanwhile, other journals state that behavior change does not have a significant role in student achievement because there are still other factors such as community environmental factors, family, teacher skills, and students' abilities (Rosmana, P. et al., 2022).

#### D. Conclusion

A curriculum is a tool in the implementation of learning that can support the realization of educational goals. That way, there must be adjustments to the curriculum that is applied. The curriculum must be adapted to the needs of students in line with the level of achievement that must be met. This requires changes or development of the curriculum to be carried out regularly, which of course affects student achievement.

Just like other things, changes to the independent curriculum also experience pros and cons where the changes have various impacts, especially on student learning achievement. The positive impact is the improvement in the quality of education adapted to the times, which is expected to make students better prepared to face

various challenges in the future. While the negative impact is the decreased quality of education, which is characterized by a decrease in student achievement, changes to the curriculum lead to students not achieving educational targets at the start of implementing the new curriculum it is usually caused by a lack of competence of teachers who have not been able to implement the new curriculum as a whole and a lack of adequate facilities so that students cannot adjust to the learning in the new curriculum system.

Therefore, it cannot be denied that every role of all parties will support the level of success of a policy, including the education curriculum, so awareness and self-control are needed to build a better generation in the future.

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