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CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN INDONESIA

Naufal Laudza Rifdoh *, Zalifah Muyazaroh, Griselda Jamilatul Jiwanggi, Mohammad Yahya
Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember
Jl. Mataram No.1, Karang Miuwo, Mangli, Kec. Kaliwates, Kabupaten Jember, Jawa Timur 68136, Indonesia
Email: nrifdoh@gmail.com

Abstract

Curriculum development is a dynamic process that must continually adapt to social, political, economic changes, as well as advancements in science and technology. This article examines the fundamental concepts of curriculum development, the historical evolution of Indonesia's national curriculum from 1947 to the emergence of the Merdeka Curriculum, and the ways it is implemented and evaluated in educational institutions. The review shows that each curriculum reform is built on distinct philosophical, psychological, sociocultural, and juridical foundations that reflect the developmental needs of the nation in each era. The findings emphasize that the success of curriculum implementation does not depend solely on the design itself, but is strongly influenced by teachers' competencies, institutional readiness, and the continuity of evaluation processes. As the most recent model, the Merdeka Curriculum provides wider flexibility for schools and teachers to tailor learning to students' needs, yet still faces challenges such as resource readiness and teachers' understanding of differentiated instruction and formative assessment. This study underscores the importance of collaboration among stakeholders, strengthening educators' competencies, and continuous evaluation to ensure that the curriculum meets the demands of 21st-century education and effectively shapes the Profile of Pancasila Students.

Keywords: Curriculum Development, Merdeka Curriculum, Educational Implementation, Curriculum History, Learning Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is one of the fundamental components of the education system because it serves as the main guideline for the teaching and learning process. Through the curriculum, the direction of education, learning objectives, teaching materials, methods, and forms of evaluation can be systematically organized so that the development of students' potential can take place optimally, both in terms of spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and social aspects (Fathul Ma'arif, 2011). The development of the times, marked by globalization, technological advances, social changes, and the complexity of community needs, requires the curriculum to be continuously updated so that it remains relevant and able to respond to the challenges of the modern world. Therefore, curriculum

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development is a dynamic, continuous process that cannot be separated from efforts to improve the quality of national education (Hasanah & Sukri, 2023).

Curriculum changes in Indonesia since independence until now reflect the dynamics of society and educational policies that continue to evolve. From the 1947 Lesson Plan to the Merdeka Curriculum, each curriculum was created with the aim of improving the weaknesses of the previous curriculum while adapting education to the needs of the generation of its time. The Merdeka Curriculum currently being implemented is a form of reform that gives schools the freedom to manage learning in a flexible manner, centered on students and oriented towards strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile through project-based learning. However, its implementation still faces various challenges, such as teacher readiness, understanding of formative assessment, availability of educational resources, and competency gaps between regions (Mawardi, 2017).

Observing these dynamics, a study of curriculum development practices in Indonesia is important not only to understand the concept and essence of the curriculum theoretically, but also to trace the history of changes in the national curriculum and analyze how the implementation and evaluation of the curriculum are carried out in schools or madrasas (Waqfin et al., 2024). Through this study, it is hoped that a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum development process will emerge, from its philosophical foundations to its implementation in the field, so that learning can take place more effectively and be relevant to the needs of students and the development of society (Latifah, n.d.).

With this understanding, Indonesian education is expected to produce students who are not only academically excellent, but also have religious character, noble morals, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration skills, and are ready to face life's challenges. The implementation of a good curriculum does not only depend on curriculum documents, but also requires teacher competence, support from educational institutions, community involvement, and continuous evaluation. Therefore, the discussion on curriculum development is not merely a review of policy changes, but also an examination of concrete efforts to realize quality and sustainable education in Indonesia.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature review. This approach was chosen because the focus of the study lies in an in-depth analysis of the concepts, history, and implementation of curriculum development in Indonesia based on various literature sources and official documents. The research data was obtained from the main paper entitled “Curriculum Development Practices in Indonesia” as the primary source, as well as books, scientific journals, government regulations, and other academic references as secondary sources (Hamzah, 2020). The data collection process was carried out through reading, reviewing, recording, and systematically organizing information from various literature relevant to the theme of curriculum development. The collected data was then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out to select and simplify important information, then presented in the form of a narrative description so that the relationship between concepts could be clearly seen, and finally conclusions were drawn through a process of in-depth interpretation of the entire data (Mochamad Nashrullah, 2023). To ensure data validity, this study used source triangulation and document triangulation techniques by comparing

the contents of the paper with scientific literature and relevant policy documents. This approach enabled the researchers to produce consistent, credible, and academically accountable analyses.

RESULTS

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CONCLUSIONS

Curriculum development is a never-ending process because education must constantly adapt to the times, the needs of society, and the goals of shaping the nation's character. Since independence until now, Indonesia has undergone various curriculum changes, from the 1947 Lesson Plan to the Merdeka Curriculum. Each curriculum reflects the social, political, economic, and cultural conditions of its time, as well as developments in science and technology.

Basically, curriculum development is based on educational philosophy, student characteristics, community needs, and state policies that aim to shape individuals who are faithful, moral, knowledgeable, and capable of playing a role in social life. The principles of curriculum development, such as relevance, continuity, flexibility, efficiency, and effectiveness, serve as guidelines so that the curriculum can be implemented systematically, purposefully, and meaningfully for students.

In its implementation, the curriculum is not merely a document, but requires the active involvement of teachers, educational institutions, and the support of facilities and infrastructure. Teachers play an important role as implementers of the curriculum in the classroom, so that pedagogical competence, learning design skills, and creativity are factors that determine the success of implementation. Curriculum evaluation is also an important part of seeing whether the curriculum is running according to its objectives, as well as a basis for future improvements.

The Merdeka Curriculum, as the latest curriculum, offers greater flexibility, learner-centered learning, and an emphasis on strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile through contextual projects. However, its successful implementation is highly dependent on teacher readiness, understanding of differentiated learning concepts, and adequate learning environment support. Therefore, educator capacity development and continuous evaluation are key to achieving the goal of quality national education.

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