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Implementation Of Independent Curriculum In Education Policy: A Review Based On Siler-Miler Theory

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Abstract: Curriculum Merdeka is an education policy that is expected to address challenges in the Indonesian education system, by providing flexibility and freedom for learners to develop their potential. This study aims to analyze the implementation of Independent curriculum in the context of education policy, using Siler-Miler theory as a framework for analysis. The methodology used in this study is a literature study that examines various articles and research related to the implementation of Independent curriculum at various levels of Education. The results showed that although the implementation of The Independent curriculum has shown progress, there are still significant challenges, such as teacher readiness and adequate educational infrastructure. In addition, support from principals and other stakeholders is critical to the successful implementation of this curriculum. This study concludes that the success of The Independent curriculum depends not only on the preparation of the curriculum itself, but also on the commitment and readiness of all elements of education to adapt to existing changes. The significance of these results indicates the need for a holistic approach in the implementation of education policy in order to achieve the desired goals.

Keyword: Independent Curriculum; Education Policy; Siler-Miler Theory; Implementation; Indonesian Education.

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main foundations in the development of a nation. In Indonesia, education continues to develop, especially in the curriculum aspect, which serves as a guideline in the implementation of learning (Efendi et al., 2023). In recent decades, various curricula have been implemented with the aim of improving the quality of National Education (Fadil et al., 2023). The Independent curriculum, introduced by the government, is the latest innovation designed to address the challenges of the era of globalization and rapid technological development. This curriculum is oriented towards providing flexibility in the learning process and encourages the creation of an innovative, creative, and learner-centered learning atmosphere (Hariyadi et al., 2023).

One of the main advantages of the Merdeka curriculum is its ability to provide greater space for students to explore their potential (Setiawan et al., 2023). This approach is based on the principle that each individual has his own uniqueness, interests and talents that need to be optimally developed. With a project-based approach or project-based learning, students are expected to understand the material in depth through real experiences, while honing 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity (Rizka & Pamungkas, 2023). In addition, this curriculum emphasizes the importance of differentiation learning, in which teaching methods are adapted to the needs and abilities of each learner.

Although it has a noble goal, the implementation of an independent curriculum in the field is inseparable from various obstacles. A study by (Sumarsih et al., 2022) indicates that many teachers do not fully understand the philosophy and mechanism of Independent curriculum. This problem is often exacerbated by the lack of adequate training, as well as the lack of assistance from the government. Other research by (Langoday et al., 2024) highlighting that not all schools have supportive infrastructure, such as access to technology and relevant learning resources. This leads to inequality in the application of the curriculum between schools in urban and rural areas.

In addition, teachers as the spearhead of education in Indonesia face challenges in adapting to the new paradigm introduced by The Independent curriculum (Novalina Salsabilah et al., 2024). Teachers play an important role in integrating technology into the curriculum and learning process (Octafiona, 2024). Teaching habits with conventional approaches are often difficult to change in a short period of time, especially if teachers do not have access to sufficient resources or training (Nazirwan, 2020). This creates a gap between the expectations raised in Curriculum Policy and the reality on the ground (Rusmiati et al., 2023). In addition, the lack of understanding regarding the implementation of relevant formative and summative assessments in the context of the new curriculum is also a challenge (Bahroni & Zulkarnain, 2024).

Meanwhile, research on the implementation of Independent curriculum is still limited. Most studies have focused more on driving schools, which are part of government pilot projects, or on specific levels of education, such as primary education. These studies provide valuable insights, but are not sufficient to illustrate a comprehensive picture of the challenges and opportunities in curriculum implementation across multiple contexts. (Alhayat et al., 2023) and (Sumarsih et al., 2022) agreed that continuous training and intensive socialization is one of the keys to the successful implementation of The Independent curriculum.

This research is here to fill that gap with a broader and deeper approach. Using Siler-Miler theory as an analytical framework, this study aims to explore the extent to which independent curriculum can be effectively implemented at various levels of Education. This theory allows for a more systematic analysis of the interactions between educational policies, policy actors, and the environment in which they are implemented. In the context of Independent curriculum, this approach can help identify relevant inhibiting and supporting factors in curriculum implementation.

Furthermore, this study not only aims to identify problems, but also offers solutions that can help improve the effectiveness of the implementation of The Independent curriculum. One aspect that will be evaluated is the involvement of various stakeholders, ranging from government, educational institutions, to the community. In this case, a participatory approach involving all relevant parties can be an important strategy to overcome various obstacles. The successful implementation of The Independent curriculum depends on the synergy between government policies and school readiness as implementers (Umar et al., 2024). Therefore, it is important to evaluate the extent to which this policy is able to answer the challenges of education in the modern era. Independent curriculum has great potential to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, but without adequate support, the potential will not be realized

optimally (Lembong et al., 2023). Thus, this study is expected to make a real contribution to the improvement of the Indonesian education system.

The purpose of this study is to analyze and evaluate the implementation of Independent curriculum in the context of National Education Policy. By providing recommendations based on empirical findings, this study is expected to help improve the effectiveness of curriculum implementation at various levels of education, as well as provide guidance for stakeholders in designing better implementation strategies in the future.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative approach with literature study method to analyze the implementation of Independent curriculum in education policy in Indonesia. This method was chosen because it allows researchers to collect and analyze data from a variety of relevant sources, including books, articles, journals, and existing education policy documents (Hapsari et al., 2022). The data collection process is done by identifying and reviewing literature related to independent curriculum, as well as Siler-Miler theory used as an analysis framework.

The first step in this study was to conduct a search of relevant literature through academic databases and digital libraries. Researchers use keywords such as " independent curriculum", " education policy", and " Siler - Miler theory " to find sources related to this topic. After collecting the data, the researchers conducted a content analysis to identify the main themes, challenges, and solutions faced in the implementation of The Independent curriculum at various levels of Education (Helmiyah et al., 2022).

Furthermore, researchers evaluate and compare results from various sources to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness and challenges in curriculum implementation. The analysis also includes an assessment of the support provided by stakeholders, such as teachers, principals, and governments, in the implementation process (Priyono et al., 2015). The results of this analysis are then compiled in the form of a narrative that describes current conditions and recommendations for improvement.

With this approach, the study aims to provide in-depth insight into the implementation of The Independent curriculum and its contribution to education policy in Indonesia, as well as to provide evidence-based recommendations to improve the effectiveness of its implementation in the future.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to analyze the implementation of Independent curriculum in education policy based on the perspective of Siler-Miler theory, by highlighting the challenges, opportunities, and alignment between research results with existing literature. The main findings show that the implementation of The Independent curriculum has a diverse impact in various regions of Indonesia, depending on teacher readiness, infrastructure support, and educational stakeholder engagement.

The implementation of The Independent curriculum has created significant opportunities in increasing the flexibility of learning and creativity of students (Saragih & Marpaung, 2024). However, various challenges still need to be overcome, including the unevenness of the educational infrastructure and the readiness of teachers to understand and apply new teaching methodologies (Nurhidayah, 2023). Support from principals, government, and parents was also found to be a key factor in the successful implementation of this curriculum.

In particular, Siler-Miler theory highlights the importance of synchronization between policy, implementers, and beneficiary societies. In the context of The Independent curriculum, the synchronization has not been fully achieved, especially in areas with limited resources. This study departs from the question of how education policy, especially the implementation of The Independent curriculum, can drive the transformation of education in Indonesia. The findings

suggest that, although these policies are designed to improve the quality of education, their implementation faces a variety of structural and non-structural constraints. For example, schools in urban areas adopt independent curricula more quickly than rural schools, which are often under-resourced. This indicates an imbalance in policy implementation, which is relevant to Siler-Miler's theory of the importance of cohesion between Central Policy and local implementation.

Teacher readiness is one of the main issues in this study. Many teachers feel less confident in implementing an independent curriculum due to lack of adequate training (Gani et al., 2024). In addition, the use of technology in learning is also a challenge, especially in areas with minimal internet access. This finding is in line with previous research by (Alhayat et al., 2023), which emphasizes the need for intensive training for teachers to ensure successful implementation of the curriculum. However, this study adds a new dimension: the importance of emotional support and collaboration between teachers, which has not been widely discussed in the previous literature.

Furthermore, Siler-Miler theory highlights that policy success is highly dependent on the active involvement of stakeholders. The study found that schools with supportive principals, collaborative communities of teachers, and active participation of parents tended to be more successful in implementing independent curricula. The findings of this study are consistent with several previous studies that emphasized the need for Teacher Capacity Building and the provision of adequate infrastructure for curriculum implementation. For example, research by (Sumarsih et al., 2022) demonstrating that driving schools in urban areas are successfully adopting independent curricula thanks to access to training and resources. However, the study identified significant differences in implementation between urban and rural areas, indicating the need for more inclusive education policies.

This finding confirms that the implementation of The Independent curriculum is not only about implementing new policies, but also about transforming the educational culture in Indonesia. The government needs to ensure that support for curriculum implementation includes technical training, provision of resources, and the construction of an inclusive education ecosystem. By integrating Siler-Miler theory, this study makes an important contribution to understanding how education policy can be effectively applied across a variety of contexts.

The results of this study provide several important implications:

1. Continuing Education Policy

The government needs to focus on providing ongoing training for teachers to improve their understanding of the Merdeka curriculum. In addition, there needs to be investment in educational infrastructure in disadvantaged areas to ensure equality in curriculum implementation.

2. Collaboration Among Stakeholders

Governments, principals, teachers, and parents need to work together to create an environment that supports the adoption of an independent curriculum. The establishment of discussion forums and best practice sharing platforms can help improve implementation effectiveness.

3. Continuous monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring the implementation of The Independent curriculum needs to be done periodically to identify obstacles faced in the field. The results of the evaluation can be used to improve policies and support schools in the adaptation process.

Although the implementation of The Independent curriculum faces various challenges, this study shows that this policy has great potential to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. With a more inclusive and collaborative approach, the Independent curriculum can be an important milestone in the transformation of National Education. Siler-Miler theory

provides a relevant framework for understanding the dynamics between policy, implementers, and communities, as well as a guide for improving curriculum implementation in the future.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the implementation of Independent curriculum in education policy through the perspective of Siler-Miler theory, which highlights the importance of the relationship between policy, implementers, and beneficiaries. Key findings show that while independent curricula offer flexibility and encourage learning innovation, their success is strongly influenced by teacher readiness, infrastructure support, and stakeholder engagement.

The implementation of The Independent curriculum reflects the potential to improve the quality of education, especially through a student-centered approach. However, the study also identified significant challenges in the form of uneven access to educational resources, particularly in remote areas. Siler-Miler theory provides a relevant conceptual framework for understanding that the success of education policy depends on the synchronization between the central policy level and implementers in the field. This research contributes to the development of Education Science by adding a collaborative dimension in supporting the implementation of education policy. Thus, the study not only enriches the literature on independent curricula, but also offers guidance for policymakers to create more inclusive and effective strategies.

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