

## **Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at Insan Mandiri Integrated Islamic Primary School, South Jakarta**

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### **Abstract**

The objective of this research is to analyze the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at the Insan Mandiri Integrated Islamic Elementary School, South Jakarta. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with an evaluation method using primary data obtained through interviews. The research data that has been analyzed produces the following findings (1) SDIT Insan Mandiri plans Independent Curriculum learning by compiling teaching modules, conducting training, and sharing information between teachers who have implemented it; (2) Independent Curriculum learning is carried out by publishing religious books about nationalism. Create market day and donation activities that refer to aspects of the Pancasila student profile, such as independence, creativity and mutual cooperation. The assessments carried out include cognitive and non-cognitive; (3) Evaluation of the SDIT Insan Mandiri curriculum, carried out on teachers through learning communities and students through peer assessment and self-reflection; (4) Barriers to implementing the Independent Curriculum at SDIT Insan Mandiri consist of external obstacles, such as the Independent Curriculum system and internal teacher capabilities. This research provides recommendations for teachers to be able to manage time efficiently in order to understand the unique needs of each student, and schools and education offices must provide adequate facilities and a balanced proportion of teachers.

**Keywords:** Implementation, Merdeka Curriculum, Integrated Islamic Elementary School

### **Introduction**

The curriculum is a set of learning plans related to the objectives, content, teaching materials and methods used and used as guidelines in organizing learning activities to achieve a national education goal. In the education system in Indonesia, education has undergone eleven curriculum changes, starting in 1947, with a very simple curriculum then until the last is the 2013 curriculum. Every change that occurs is the policy of the parties responsible for handling education in Indonesia, in this case, the Ministry of Education and Culture makes a policy for a new curriculum, namely the Merdeka Curriculum. Where the Merdeka Curriculum is interpreted as a learning design that provides opportunities for students to learn calmly, relaxed, fun, stress-free and pressure-free, to show their natural talents. The use of technology and competency needs in the current era are one of the foundations for the development of the Merdeka Curriculum (Marisa, 2021). The Merdeka Curriculum as a complement to the 2013 curriculum, which was established by the government to be the current education curriculum, is the latest innovation in the world of Indonesian education.

The Merdeka Curriculum is designed to provide flexibility and autonomy to schools in developing their curriculum according to the needs of the school and the characteristics of the learners. The Merdeka Curriculum is a new reform in the national education system in Indonesia, according to Yamin & Syahrir (2020: 126-136), this is to build the nation's change and progress to adapt to the times.

In contrast to that, Bunga (2022: 232), said that the Merdeka Curriculum leads to project-based learning which has the aim of developing students' soft skills including leadership attitudes, teamwork, communication skills, integrity, and building character under the Pancasila's student profile.

Where in line with the opinion of Ainia (2020), the teacher as the main subject who plays a role is expected to be able to be a driving force to take actions that provide positive things to students. The learning process in the Merdeka Curriculum at the driving school refers to the Pancasila Student Profile which has the aim of producing graduates and forming human resources who can be competent and uphold character values. In every Merdeka Curriculum activity, students must be ready to produce projects, which the school will later show in exhibitions with the cooperation of parents, and agencies to support the implementation of the event.

Based on the results of researchers' observations in several schools in the city of South Jakarta, there is the Insan Mandiri Jakarta Integrated Islamic Elementary School (SDIT) which is one of the schools that attracted the attention of researchers, because this school was founded in 2003 and already has several branches throughout Indonesia, besides that the Integrated Islamic Elementary School has an educational unit operational curriculum that is under the school background since the establishment of this school. Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers with trusted sources at the school, according to him, 'Insan Mandiri Elementary School has an operational curriculum for education units since its inception, the characteristics of which are almost similar to the Merdeka Curriculum, which currently wants to be established as a national curriculum in 2024'.

The operational curriculum is developed and managed by referring to the curriculum structure and standards set by the Government and aligning it with the characteristics and needs of students, education units, and regions. SDIT Insan Mandiri has been implementing the Merdeka Curriculum since 2020 and has become the first batch of driving elementary schools. According to Savitri (2020) and Mulyasa (2021), it is explained that driving schools are an important factor for the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

According to Nia (2024), not many changes were made in the process of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at SDIT Insan Mandiri because, in the learning process, the operational curriculum of the education unit at SDIT Insan Mandiri has almost the same characteristics and principles as the Merdeka Curriculum. This curriculum provides innovations to create a more pleasant learning atmosphere for both students and educators. In this curriculum, the learning process in the classroom and other learning environments can greatly affect the potential of students to achieve the learning objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum, which teaches students not to be distracted.

## Methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with an evaluation method. According to Ramdhan (2021), descriptive qualitative research is a study with a method to describe research results to provide descriptions, explanations, and validations regarding the phenomena being studied. Descriptive qualitative research is a natural and exploratory type of research. The location of evaluation research on the implementation of the driving school program was conducted at SDIT Insan Mandiri South Jakarta, located at Jl. Batu Merah No.71, Pejaten Timur, South Jakarta. Meanwhile, the overall research period is 6 months, starting from the preparation of the proposal, schedule, research instruments, preliminary research (pre-research), data collection, data analysis, and conclusion, with a timeframe from October 2023 to March 2024.

## Result and Discussion

Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu Insan Mandiri adalah sekolah berbasis Islam yang terdaftar di JSIT. (Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu). Sekolah Insan Mandiri juga memiliki beberapa cabang di berbagai daerah seperti di Kalasari, Pasar Minggu Pejaten Timur, Kalimantan, dan Sulawesi. Esta investigación se centra en el estudio de SDIT Insan Mandiri Jakarta Selatan, ubicado en Jl. Batu Merah No.71, Pejaten Timur, Surakarta. Based on the results of the interviews conducted, the process of lesson planning is carried out by teachers through sharing activities conducted internally within the school and between schools regularly. This activity, in addition to discussing the drafting process, involves knowledge sharing and training so that teachers can fulfil their role in imparting knowledge to students. Furthermore, the output generated from this planning is very detailed, starting from the lesson plans to the implemented class projects and their academic evaluations. Thus, this planning is carried out in a

structured manner to formulate short-term to long-term learning plans. (1-2 semesters). In the preparation of teaching modules or RPP (Lesson Plan), it is carried out at one time. In detail, each learning session uses a reference from the prepared teaching module. Then, the project module is compiled twice a year. According to Subject 1 :

“so the teaching module is the same as the lesson plan, the lesson plan is another name for the teaching module. The lesson plan can be made individually or all at once, for example, for mathematics, if there are 4 meetings, the module can be made in one week.” So, from CP it will be reduced to TP, and these many TP can be completed in one day or it could be one TP per meeting or it could take two meetings, practically the teacher knows all that. It's okay if it's done all at once, or even better if it's finished in one day, as long as the teacher is not burdened with the module. Then for the project module, we create it twice a year, in the 1st and 2nd semesters. Actually, it doesn't have to be every semester; it could be completed in 5 or 7 months as long as it's twice a year.“ (S1 : 15).

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum learning conducted by SDIT Insan Mandiri is not much different from the implementation of learning before the Merdeka Curriculum was applied. The Merdeka Curriculum at SDIT Insan Mandiri started in 2022 when it was selected as a driving school. In the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum learning at SDIT Insan Mandiri, there are classroom learning designs, Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Projects (P5), and assessments.

### 1. Classroom Learning Design

Based on interviews with the subjects, it was found that in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum learning at SDIT Insan Mandiri, new programs were created, the learning was conducted gradually, and a new learning atmosphere was created, such as studying in the garden. The programs being implemented include creating religious nationalism books, literacy, and storytelling. The religious nationalism books are expected to instill a sense of patriotism and nationalism in the students. Before the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, the learning program conducted by SDIT Insan Mandiri was almost the same as the Merdeka Curriculum. None of the students are held back; this is achieved through learning while playing. This aims to create a learning atmosphere that is not boring for the students. SDIT Insan Mandiri also believes that by playing a lot, students will understand their lessons better. However, unlike upper-class students, upper-class students are directed to learn using television media or sports media. Then, during the final assessment, SDIT Insan Mandiri also created materials tailored to each student's abilities. After that, the assessment obtained will be given to the subject teacher to create a report card.

### 2. Project to Strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile (P5)

The activities to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile are very diverse in their implementation. In addition to market day, students are taught Pancasila values such as sharing, tolerance, and other positive values in each of their programs, as explained below:

"Every Ramadan, we collect donations where the money collected will be given to those in need. These donations are beneficial for everyone, and then there are donations for natural disasters and Palestine. From this, we encourage each other to share." (S1:9)

From the interview above, it is known that both market day activities and donations have several dimensions under the Pancasila student profile, including the dimensions of independence, creativity, and cooperation.

### 3. Assessment of learning in the Merdeka Curriculum

The assessment conducted by SDIT Insan Mandiri is an assessment of cognitive and non-cognitive evaluations. Cognitive assessment includes the scores from practice exercises, but these scores only serve as evaluation material for the students. Whereas non-cognitive assessment is the summative score per subject. In addition to assessments, SDIT Insan Mandiri also conducts observations of its students' intelligence. SDIT Insan Mandiri also facilitates the intelligence possessed by each child. SDIT Insan Mandiri believes that every child is intelligent with their unique abilities, including musical, bodily

kinesthetic, interpersonal, verbal linguistic, logical mathematical, naturalistic, intrapersonal, visual spatial, and spiritual intelligence. It is concluded that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum learning conducted by SDIT Insan Mandiri, starting from the design of classroom learning through teaching materials designed to align with the curriculum, also makes the teaching and learning activities more varied with many learning situations created to enhance comfort and improve effectiveness in learning. This is also always communicated with the parents. Next, in the context of the Pancasila Student Profile (P5), which is an important point in the Merdeka Curriculum, SDIT Insan Mandiri offers various programs such as market day and donations that have several dimensions under the Pancasila student profile, including the dimensions of independence, creativity, and mutual cooperation. Next, in terms of assessments conducted by SDIT Insan Mandiri, there are cognitive and non-cognitive assessments. With this assessment system, SDIT aims to evaluate various aspects to maximize the potential of its students.

The research results in the point of Curriculum Merdeka Learning Evaluation from the interviews conducted are as follows: The evaluation implemented by SDIT Insan Mandiri is the evaluation of the class teacher with the students and the evaluation of students with students. The class teacher conducts evaluations through a learning community to assess the students' learning abilities, while the students evaluate themselves through peer assessments and self-reflection.

Reflection on students is intended so that students can identify their learning abilities by using three types of cards: a red card for dislike, a yellow card for neutral, and a green card for liking the lesson given. SDIT Insan Mandiri also incorporates Islamic values into its curriculum so that students understand that their lessons are related to their lives.

"We also encourage reflection among children on how they should be present in the learning process." For example, using red, yellow, and green cards already reflects their feelings: red for dislike, yellow for neutral, and green for like. And don't forget to incorporate Islamic values into the lessons, so they know that it relates to their lives. (S1:23)

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This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with an evaluation method. According to Ramdhan (2021), descriptive qualitative research is a study with a method to describe research results to provide descriptions, explanations, and validations regarding the phenomena being studied. Descriptive qualitative research is a natural and exploratory type of research. The location of evaluation research on the implementation of the driving school program was conducted at SDIT Insan Mandiri South Jakarta, located at Jl. Batu Merah No.71, Pejaten Timur, South Jakarta.

Based on the research results above, the author found the following research findings: Learning planning is not done arbitrarily, but by considering various aspects that can influence the outcomes. This includes considering factors that can affect students such as ability, interest, and motivation, as well as the learning environment that can influence the learning process. In addition, lesson planning also takes into account the available resources to support the success of the learning process, such as teaching materials, facilities, and human resources. The main goal of lesson planning is the achievement of the desired learning objectives, so its primary focus is on reaching those objectives. Therefore, lesson planning must be carried out systematically and well-planned to ensure the success of the learning process. (Yuniati & Prayoga, 2019). As for the planning of the Merdeka Curriculum learning conducted by SDIT Insan Mandiri, it involves preparing teaching modules for the students, conducting training, and sharing sessions with teachers who have already implemented the Merdeka Curriculum. The components in the teaching modules applied by the teachers are under and refer to the teaching modules provided by the government. However, it is adjusted again by the teachers of SDIT Insan Mandiri by considering the school's conditions and the student's abilities.

In the preparation of teaching modules based on the Merdeka Curriculum, SDIT Insan Mandiri makes several adjustments based on learning objectives and the student's abilities. These adjustments include re-evaluating learning achievements and objectives, designing assessments, and adjusting teaching modules to determine sustainable phases. Determining these sustainable phases aims to ensure that the learning does not overlap and can continue to the next class. Researchers assess that the cognitive and non-cognitive assessments conducted by SDIT Insan Mandiri are still in the adjustment phase of the Merdeka Curriculum, but their implementation is not significantly different. In the Merdeka Curriculum, the assessments conducted are formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments are more frequently used to monitor students' learning progress and are heavily emphasized in the Merdeka Curriculum, while summative assessments function to determine the continuation of students' learning process.

The evaluation conducted by SDIT Insan Mandiri includes evaluations between teachers, teachers and students, and students with each other. The evaluation carried out by the teachers at SDIT Insan Mandiri involves providing summative assessments by evaluating the end of each sub-chapter of the learning material. Subsequently, the teachers conduct evaluations through learning communities to assess the student's abilities and determine the next steps. In addition, students are also given the opportunity for peer evaluation, which is done through presentations followed by peer assessment. The assessment is also a form of reflection on the lessons conducted. The teachers at SDIT Insan Mandiri suggest reflecting on their learning using cards, so the students can show cards according to the level of difficulty. There are three cards: the red card is the most difficult level, the yellow card is the regular level, and the green card means the student enjoys their learning.

## Conclusion

Based on the research findings discussed in the previous chapter, it can be concluded as follows: The planning of the Merdeka Curriculum learning at SDIT Insan Mandiri involves preparing teaching modules for the students, conducting training, and sharing sessions with teachers who have already implemented the Merdeka Curriculum. The components in the teaching modules applied by the teachers are under and refer to the teaching modules provided by the government. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum by SDIT Insan Mandiri specifically published a book on religious nationalism, with a program consisting of 15 units related to morals and education such as literacy and storytelling. Creating a market day or charity event program that encompasses several dimensions of the Pancasila student profile, including the dimensions of independence, creativity, and mutual cooperation. Cognitive and non-cognitive assessment evaluations are conducted by SDIT to assess various aspects to maximize the potential of its students.

The evaluation implemented by SDIT Insan Mandiri involves teachers conducting evaluations through learning communities to assess whether the student's learning abilities are effective, while the students evaluate themselves through peer assessments and self-reflection. The obstacles in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SDIT Insan Mandiri include external challenges, such as the Merdeka Curriculum system not aligning with the learning objectives in the textbooks. Additionally, teachers are required to number the chapters in each meeting, which is a systemic challenge that must be addressed by the teachers. However, it doesn't stop there; internally, the school also faces challenges, including a relatively large number of teachers, which is inefficient, and the limited time allocated by teachers to students, making it difficult to provide additional support to the students.

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