

Acceptance of independent curriculum in North Kalimantan

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ABSTRACT

Determining the curriculum is the government's authority, in early 2022, the independent curriculum was launched. Implementing an independent curriculum is a challenge in itself for education in North Kalimantan. The reason is educational facilities in this region are not evenly distributed. However, several agencies have made efforts to continue to make the independent curriculum program a success. This research was conducted using the systematic literature review (SLR) method. The results of this research are that the government, teacher groups, and several schools have developed and implemented an independent curriculum. Teaching staff in North Kalimantan experienced various difficulties in implementing the independent curriculum technique, including a lack of resources, such as teaching materials and technology, and confusion due to a lack of understanding. This case is an indication that there is still a need to improve the quality of education, especially in the interior of North Kalimantan.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The pandemic of coronavirus that occurred throughout 2020-2022 had a major impact on various sectors, especially in the field of education. In this case, education has to develop the following policies due to the COVID-19 pandemic so that education can continue to achieve real learning goals. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many obstacles in the learning process in education units which have had quite a significant impact. The impacts on students include affecting their psychological condition due to school closures, lack of interaction with friends, and being hampered in taking courses. In Indonesia, the government designed and implemented an independent curriculum to overcome the learning crisis after the COVID-19 pandemic [1].

According to the website of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia [2], in the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 school years, the Ministry of Education launched a new curriculum called the independent curriculum which is one of the options that academic units can choose. This curriculum framework provides independence for educators to develop contextual academic unit curricula that follow

students' needs. The independent curriculum provides flexibility, makes it easier for educators to apply deeper learning according to student's needs, and focuses on strengthening character. This curriculum focuses on essential material, so educators are more flexible in deepening learning. In its implementation, the education unit curriculum is manifested into differentiated learning or learning appropriate to students' ability levels. In Indonesia's education context, the concept of an independent curriculum proclaimed by the new Indonesian minister of education and culture is considered a significant policy to make education in Indonesia better and more advanced. In addition, the concept of "freedom to learn" has the same direction and goals as John Dewey's progressive educational philosophy. Both offer independence and flexibility to educational institutions to explore the potential of their students to the fullest by adjusting each student's interests, talents, and tendencies. With this independence and freedom, it is hoped that education in Indonesia will become more advanced and of higher quality, which will have a direct positive impact on the progress of the nation and state [3]. The independent curriculum is still very new, and not all education units are ready to implement it due to inequality in the quality of education in Indonesia [4]–[8]. Provinces in Indonesia were grouped into two categories based on educational inequality, namely low education level and good education level, 17 provinces including low education level and 17 provinces including good education level, with a percentage of 50% to 50% [9].

North Kalimantan is a province that is classified as a province with low-quality education. This is because this province is still relatively new and is located on the border, far from the center of power [8]. According to research data [10], more women drop out of school than men in North Kalimantan province. Many educational problems occurred in North Kalimantan, especially in rural areas. Difficult access to transportation and limited internet signal is the main problems in this area. The comparison of school performance in rural areas with schools in urban areas is significantly different. Schools in urban areas are more advanced because they are equipped with more adequate facilities than those in remote areas. Schools in remote areas need more attention [11].

The synergy of various parties is very important in overcoming educational obstacles in North Kalimantan. Not only efforts from the government but teachers, parents, and the community must work together to improve the quality of education in North Kalimantan. Synergy from various parties is a strength in making the independent curriculum program a success. The independent curriculum is a new hope for equal distribution of educational rights, especially for the North Kalimantan region [12].

This article will discuss North Kalimantan's readiness to welcome an independent curriculum when its educational facilities are still lagging compared to other provinces. This article will provide an overview of the educational situation in North Kalimantan related to the independent curriculum, including the readiness of the education units there to implement the independent curriculum in a situation where their educational facilities are still relatively behind compared to other provinces. Through this literature review research, the author hopes to provide information to educational practitioners regarding the condition of North Kalimantan education in the teaching and learning process using the independent curriculum. Furthermore, this research can be used as material for consideration or guidance in considering the right curriculum and learning methods to be applied to maximize the quality of students.

2. METHOD

This research uses the literature review method using systematic literature review (SLR) method. There are five stages in conducting a literature review, namely formulating research questions, searching for articles, inclusion and exclusion criteria, summarizing the article. The explanation is as follows.

2.1. Formulating research questions

Research questions (RQ) are created to transform a problem that is found into a fact. This RQ was created according to the needs of the topic taken. The RQ in this study are as: RQ1: what methods have been implemented by schools in North Kalimantan to realize the independent learning curriculum? RQ2: what schools have implemented the independent learning curriculum?

2.2. Searching for articles

The search process is used to obtain relevant sources to answer the RQ and other related references. A literature search was conducted through the Google Scholar and Researchgate databases. After the search was completed, the researcher evaluated the literature search results.

2.3. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The keywords used in finding materials, books, and research results, namely independent curriculum, freedom to learn, independent curriculum in North Kalimantan, application of the independent

curriculum, and education in Indonesia. The literature was filtered using specific criteria so that articles were found that would be sources for this research. These criteria are i) literature following the specified aspects; ii) Literature in the form of journal articles and textbooks published in the period 2015 to 2023; and iii) Literature in the form of journal articles fully accessible to the public or the result proceedings [13]–[17].

2.4. Summarizing the article

Selected articles are summarized in a table using Microsoft Excel. A summary of the article is created by answering this RQ. The summary table that has been created is reported as the result.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A little information from published scientific articles regarding methods of implementing the independent curriculum in North Kalimantan provincial education units. However, three scientific articles have been obtained containing information on evidence of the implementation of the independent curriculum in North Kalimantan (Table 1). State Junior High School 7 Tarakan has begun implementing an independent curriculum using the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) action learning method. The teachers give students the freedom to learn. Students not only learn theory in class, but students can apply the material through robots [18].

Table 1. Implementing the independent curriculum methods in North Kalimantan

No	Method	Subject	Reference
1	Robotic learning with the action method learning STEM	State Junior High School 7 Tarakan	[18]
2	Assessment training for early childhood teachers	Childhood education teachers, Tarakan	[19]
3	Development of an English literacy module based on local wisdom	State Junior High School Malinau	[20]

STEM methods in learning robotics can improve understanding of science, mathematics, communication, and technology material [21]. Learning with this method plays a significant role in changing learning methods. Overall robotics learning also supports students to obtain material that is integrated between the subjects of STEM [22]. Through the STEM integration learning method, students are expected to be able to obtain material that is appropriate to current developments. Apart from that, the STEM method of learning also plays an important role in fulfilling 21st-century skills known as 4C, namely creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration [23].

Early childhood teachers in Tarakan City are taking part in efforts to make the independent curriculum a success by taking part in early childhood school assessment training. This training has proven successful in increasing teachers' understanding regarding early childhood education assessments in the independent curriculum [19]. Assessment is a systematic and systematic process or activity that continuously collects information about the learning process and outcomes of students to make decisions based on criteria and considerations assessment is defined as a process undertaken to obtain information that is used to make decisions regarding students, curriculum, programs, and educational policies. Independent curriculum emphasizes that evaluation must be part of overall learning, especially formative evaluation as a learning cycle [24].

Three Malinau Junior High Schools developed an English literacy module based on local wisdom as learning material for students to master English language material. The preparation of the material in this module is adapted to the independent curriculum. The collection of images presented in the teaching module are photos taken in the Malinau district area. Based on design, content, and language aspects as eligibility criteria for English language teaching modules, local wisdom-based English literacy teaching modules have good criteria. This module is in accordance with the needs and characteristics of students [20].

Elements of the government in North Kalimantan have tried to provide socialization and training regarding implementing the learning curriculum. For example, the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of North Kalimantan Province carried out the Socialization of the independent curriculum and Strengthening the Supervision of Islamic school Learning in 2023 from 19 to 21 January 2023 [25]. North Kalimantan Province is collaborating with BPMP North Kalimantan Province to hold an online webinar to assist in the implementation of the independent curriculum implementation [26].

Reported from the official website of the North Kalimantan Office of Communication, informatics, statistics, and Encryption, secretary to the director general (Dirjen) of early, elementary, and middle education, Sutanto held an audience with the Governor of North Kalimantan H Zainal A Paliwang SH, M. Hum on July 27, 2022, to see the implementation of the independent curriculum in the Province of North Kalimantan. In the audience, the Governor of North Kalimantan conveyed positive thoughts on the independent curriculum because it can strengthen the synergy between the Regional Government and the

Center. It is also considered necessary to see the goals of the curriculum, which wants to improve the quality of learning by exploring students' interests and talents. It is following the mission of the North Kalimantan Provincial Government, realizing the development of healthy, intelligent, creative, and innovative human resources (HR) [27]. The government also supports the implementation of the independent curriculum, one of which is in Tana Tidung district, North Kalimantan. The government provides water transportation for students going to school. This program is assisted by students from the University of Malang and the University of Borneo. The education department prepares a learning development team. The village community also supports education in the mining area. Parents of students help with classroom literacy. [28].

Revisions in each period and era, teachers and prospective teachers must be able to meet the challenges faced during the learning process. However, teachers' understanding of the revised 2013 curriculum has yet to be evenly distributed to remote and border areas in Indonesia but has received new challenges in the form of the idea of independent learning launched by the latest minister in 2020. Educators have a challenge implementing teaching practices in border areas in the middle of the digital era and independent learning challenges. It is corroborated by the results of research from Click or tap here to enter text, which revealed that Primary School Utama 1 Tarakan, North Kalimantan, had implemented the independent curriculum in grades 1 and 4, while grades 2, 3, 5, and 6 still used the 2013 Curriculum, namely thematic. However, the most common and frequently used learning method is the lecture method. When the era began to change, technology began to develop rapidly. Teachers were still found using the lecture method when teaching in class. So that results in conventional learning, where learning becomes teacher-centered (passive learning), where you sit quietly listening to the teacher's explanation, resulting in reduced interaction between the teacher and students [29].

There are several reasons teachers at Primary School Utama 1 Tarakan, North Kalimantan, do not use learning media, including there is no readiness, learning media being sophisticated and expensive, and they do not understanding technology; Teachers not having the knowledge and skills about how to make their learning media [30], [31]. Even in implementing the independent curriculum, one of the most critical components is the support of teaching materials [30]. The development of teaching materials is structured on a multicultural basis using logical systematic including material design, concept references, language skills, organized materials, and multicultural context development [32]

Many teachers are less prepared to implement the independent curriculum. Teachers face obstacles in implementing the lesson implementation plan of an independent curriculum Teachers are confused and forget what indicators need to be taught; therefore, teachers need to know and prepare material and investigate the existing syllabus. Another obstacle is the various formats of lesson plans for freedom of learning, so teachers are confused in preparing lesson plans and assessment techniques for incomplete assessments, and teachers are confused in determining whether to evaluate attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Not only that, but in terms of implementation, several obstacles occurred; there was a maze of information regarding the implementation of the independent learning lesson plan, which was too hasty, resulting in teachers being confused about its implementation. With the trimming of the learning lesson plan components, the teacher is confused about determining learning objectives and activities because they seem simple, and there is a lack of socialization regarding the independent learning lesson plan. Teachers are not ready to change learning tools according to the recommendations of the independent curriculum [33].

4. CONCLUSION

North Kalimantan, a province classified as a new province in Indonesia, retains enthusiasm in welcoming the breakthrough of the independent curriculum. The education unit in Indonesia is not only in North Kalimantan, which is being faced with a new curriculum, namely the independent curriculum, which is a great hope for the development of quality student outcomes. Even though it still has many shortcomings and obstacles in practice, this can happen because it is still in the socialization process. The application of the independent curriculum is still carried out in stages and is not forced. This curriculum is a wise offer from the government to overcome various lags in the sector caused by COVID-19. The constraints described above, the inequality of resources, the unpreparedness of teaching staff, and confusion in the technical application of independent learning curriculum components are familiar in the education sector in Indonesia. If viewed positively, this new curriculum motivates and forces all parties involved to catch up and increase the education gap in Indonesia.

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