

Independent Curriculum In Early Children's Education

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Abstrak

This research was motivated by the start of the curriculum independence for driving schools at every level of education, including early childhood education. The independent curriculum is a new curriculum, and compiling a new curriculum is not easy for every educational unit. This is a polemic that is often felt by PAUD educators and their managers every time the curriculum changes. However, the independent curriculum is not yet mandatory for every early childhood education institution. There are three alternative options for implementation. It is important to carry out this research to provide an understanding of the essence and method of preparing an independent curriculum. This type of research is literature study research where the researcher examines and analyzes various theories and existing regulations related to the concept of an independent curriculum and how it is structured in early childhood education units. The research results show that the independent curriculum aligns with the concept of independent learning launched by the Minister of Education and Culture. When preparing an independent curriculum, what needs to be considered is the curriculum's basic framework and structure. National Education Standards as a reference and framework that has been translated into curriculum structure, learning principles, and assessment and learning outcomes. In the independent curriculum, the curriculum structure contains intracurricular activities to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students.

Keywords: implementation, learning, independent curriculum, early childhood

Introduction

Education will always develop from time to time. Moreover, if we look at developments in the 4.0 era, inevitably it will lead people to follow changes in various things. Change is a dimension of the logical consequences of the journey of human life which in essence will always experience change and development in a more advanced and better direction.

The Industrial Revolution is always experiencing development, from Industrial Revolution 1.0, to 2.0, to 3.0 to 4.0 and the readiness of society 5.0. The industrial revolution 4.0 is marked by the development of the internet of things or for things followed by new technologies in data science, robotics, nano technology, etc. The Industrial Revolution 4.0 is often referred to as the digital revolution and the era of technological disruption because of the proliferation of computers and recording automation in all fields. Each country must prepare and respond quickly and precisely

by involving all stakeholders from the public, private, academic sectors to the wider community. (Ghufron, 2018)

Society 5.0 is a definite natural result and is an answer to the challenges that occurred from the emergence of the industrial revolution 4.0 where society 5.0 is a society that can utilize various innovations that were born in the era of the industrial revolution to improve the quality of human life (Rohim & D, 2019). Industry 4.0 and society 5.0 pose big challenges for global society, especially in the field of education. The challenges and demands of technological literacy require educators to carry out transformations in education (Suwandi, 2020)

Education is the development of humans who are not only intelligent but also have religious qualities and skills so that they can benefit the nation and state (Suhelayanti, 2020). Through education, we will be able to improve the quality of each individual to become more productive and shape individual attitudes to be better and more focused, and able to overcome the demands and challenges they face.

Education is one of the main indicators of development and quality of human resources, so that the quality of human resources will always be linked to the quality of education. National development is greatly influenced by education which is directly related to the progress of the nation. In the educational process there will always be a learning and learning process so that it will always experience change. (Tilaar, 2007). The Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) as the leading national education sector certainly has the most important role in realizing the quality of Human Resources in Indonesia. Various policies were taken as steps to realize national education goals as well as in the context of human resource development. (Sherly et al., 2020)

Education will always experience developments from time to time, every rule will always be updated according to the times. Human resources are the most important part in being able to achieve the stated educational goals. Not only human resources, if we talk about education and educational goals it will not be far from curriculum development.

The curriculum is the most important part of learning in the world of education. When viewed from the perspective of national education standards, the curriculum is part of the content standards. Content is the main idea that becomes the basis and guideline in arranging learning activities at school. Without a curriculum, schools will be confused about where to take learning. This is related to learning objectives and what you want to achieve. It is not only universities that must have this curriculum, but every level of education, from PAUD, SD, SMP and SMA.

Early childhood education is a coaching effort provided from birth to age 6 so that children are ready for further education. Various aspects of development ranging from moral religious values, social emotional, physical motor, cognitive and language

are developed every day. Early childhood education is education provided at the golden age which is the foundation for every ability developed in children. This period is the most appropriate time to boost every potential he has. Education during this period should receive more and special attention in relation to the learning crisis in Indonesia which has been going on for a long time and has not improved from year to year.

This learning crisis, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has seen learning loss and increasing learning gaps. If you look at the distribution of AKSI scores in 2019, there are differences and even gaps in the quality of learning between regions and socio-economic groups.

To overcome the crisis and various challenges, systemic changes are needed, one of which is through the curriculum. This curriculum is closely related to the learning process carried out in class, including the material taught, the methods used by teachers to achieve learning objectives. For this reason, the Ministry of Education and Culture has developed an independent curriculum as an important part of efforts to restore learning from the crisis that has long been experienced

To increase understanding regarding the independent curriculum in Early Childhood Education, a deeper discussion is needed regarding the study of the concept of its content and how the concept is actualized and implemented in educational units.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher conducted an in-depth literature study related to the independent curriculum in Early Childhood Education. The hope is that it can provide more understanding for all parties who will implement this independent curriculum.

Methods

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach and content analysis to answer the focus with the support of evidence, theory development that is in accordance with the immediate situation being described and responsiveness aimed at context values (Hamzah, 2020).

This type of research is library research, where according to Furchan and Maimun (Hamzah, 2020) library research is part of figure studies which are in the four-level quadrant, namely high-level qualitative research. So this research approach includes a qualitative approach.

In this research, the phenomenon explored is the implementation of an independent curriculum in early childhood education. The data was obtained from existing facts and theories, in accordance with what (Hamzah, 2020) stated that library research is qualitative research, with an independent perspective at the level of analysis, namely that data acquisition is not based on the researcher's perception, but based on concepts and concepts. theoretical facts

Result and Discussion

In the 2003 National Education System Law, it is stated that the curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding objectives, content and learning materials as well as the methods used as guidelines for implementing learning activities to achieve certain educational goals.

The curriculum is the main idea or soul of the educational process. In the world of education, changing the curriculum is a common thing, but its implementation is not always easy to understand, especially for educators who are at the forefront of implementing the curriculum. Indonesia is a country that always experiences curriculum changes from time to time. Of course, like it or not, this change must be followed by every educational institution, including Early Childhood Education (PAUD).

In 2022, Indonesia will provide three curriculum options that can be used as alternatives for each PAUD unit in order to implement the independence of learning proclaimed by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbud, 2021). Each educational unit is free to choose according to its conditions and capabilities whether to implement the 2013 curriculum, the emergency curriculum (simplified 2013 curriculum) or the independent curriculum. This curriculum is used of course to achieve the goal of national education, namely to make the nation's life more intelligent. (Munawar, 2022)

The 2013 curriculum is a curriculum that refers to Minister of Education and Culture Regulation 146 of 2014, while the emergency curriculum is the 2013 curriculum which is simplified to suit the COVID 19 pandemic situation which has been endemic in Indonesia for about 3 years. Not long after that, the independent curriculum began to be issued.

Talking about the curriculum, of course you must understand the basic framework and structure of the curriculum. There are directions for curriculum change that must be understood in relation to (1) a more flexible curriculum structure, target learning hours to be fulfilled in one year; (2) focus on essential material; (3) provide flexibility for teachers to use various teaching tools according to the needs and characteristics of students; (4) applications that provide various references for teachers to continue to develop independent teaching practices and various good practices.

The independent curriculum is closely related to independent learning. Freedom to learn is a new policy program implemented by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture which was initiated by Mr. Nadiem Anwar Makarim, Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Advanced Indonesia Cabinet, the concept of which is to create a pleasant learning atmosphere. Fun for everyone involved in the learning process such as students, teachers and parents. (Nasution, 2022)

According to the Minister of Education and Culture, the concept of independent learning is applying the curriculum to the learning process in a fun way. The

development of innovative thinking from teachers is one of the success factors because it can foster a positive attitude among students in responding to each lesson (Fathan, 2020). Merdeka Belajar wants to create educational outcomes that not only make children good at memorizing, but want to build sharpness in analyzing, reasoning and having a broad and complex understanding, and can also help children to develop themselves in various fields, not only developing in terms of their cognitive abilities.

Merdeka Belajar in its concept is a strategy to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. Through independent learning, students will be trained to have communication, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking competencies. With this competency, children will not only memorize lessons, but will be able to create and innovate in various fields, have good character and positive social skills. (Prameswari, 2020)

Through the hashtag "free learning", education administrators need to develop tips to be able to answer the challenges of today's educational needs in order to maintain the quality of education. One of the Ministry of Education and Culture's programs to improve the quality of students' learning is the driving school program. Talking about driving schools, there are 5 types of interventions to accelerate driving schools 1-2 stages more advanced in a period of around 3 academic years. The benefits of this driving school are to improve the quality and quality of students' learning outcomes within 3 years, increase the competence of school principals and teachers, accelerate the digitalization of schools, the opportunity to become a catalyst for change for other educational units, acceleration in achieving the Pancasila student profile, and getting intensive assistance (Munawar, 2022).

In the independent learning program, teachers will present themselves as mobilizers. The key to independent learning is actually the people. Freedom to learn is a natural learning process to achieve what is called independence. The main point is how to learn without being pressured, not stressed, free to be creative and innovate, not shackled. (Saleh, 2020)

Freedom to learn in early childhood education is also known as freedom to play. If this is related to the concept of early childhood learning with the hashtags playing while learning and learning while playing, this concept of independent learning is very suitable

to be implemented and developed in Early Childhood Education (PAUD). Every child who goes to the PAUD unit will enjoy the pleasure of not having to do learning using a drilling system by memorizing, doing Children's Worksheets (LKA), CALISTUNG learning which is taught every day and this will be seen to restrain children in their development which is essentially still in the world of play.

There are advantages to the independent curriculum compared to the previous curriculum, where the content and structure are simpler and deeper, more

independent, and more relevant and interactive. Simpler and deeper means that the selected material is focused on important and essential material and focuses on how to develop students' competencies at the stages of their development. Learning activities are structured in a more in-depth, meaningful way, not too rushed and the most important thing is that the learning activities are designed and applied in a fun way.

More independence means that students can choose according to their interests and talents, educators teach according to the child's developmental stages and developmental achievements, and educational units are free to develop and manage their curriculum and learning in accordance with the characteristics of the educational unit and the characteristics of their students. More relevant and interactive means that learning is carried out through project activities by providing wider opportunities for students to explore to support the development of children's character and Pancasila student profile competencies.

The implications of the independent curriculum for early childhood education are carried out in accordance with the basic policies. The basic policies that serve as the basis are: (1) Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 5 of 2002 concerning Graduate Competency Standards in Early Childhood Education, Basic Education Levels and Secondary Education; (2) Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 7 of 2022 concerning Content Standards for Early Childhood Education, Basic Education Levels and Secondary Education; (3) Ministry of Education and Culture No. 56 of 2022 concerning Guidelines for Implementing Curriculum and Learning Recovery Frameworks; (4) Decree of the Head of BSKAP No. 008/H/KR/2022 of 2022 concerning Learning Achievements in Early Childhood Education, Basic Education and Secondary Education Levels in the Independent Curriculum; (5) BSKAP Decision No. 009/H/KR/2022 of 2022 concerning Dimensions, Elements and Sub-Elements of the Pancasila Student Profile in the Independent Curriculum.

The main characteristics of the independent curriculum in PAUD units include: strengthening meaningful play activities as a learning process, strengthening the relevance of PAUD as a foundation phase, strengthening love for literacy and numeracy from an early age, a project to strengthen the Pancasila student profile, more flexible learning and assessment processes, The results of the assessment are used as a basis for teachers to design play activities and for parents to encourage children to play in the playhouse, strengthening the role of parents as unit partners. (Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, 2021)

The structure of the Merdeka Curriculum in Early Childhood Education consists of intracurricular learning activities and projects to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. Intracurricular learning activities are designed with the aim that young children can achieve the abilities written in the Foundation Phase Learning Outcomes (CP). In essence, intracurricular learning is meaningful play as a manifestation of

freedom to learn, freedom to play. The activities chosen must of course be able to provide meaningful experiences and must also be fun for children. Learning activities are prepared using real learning resources that can be found in the child's surroundings, for example using living creatures, natural materials or loose parts. If learning resources cannot be presented in real terms, they can be provided through technological support such as learning VCDs or YouTube and can also be from children's reading books.

This project to strengthen the Pancasila student profile is implemented to strengthen efforts to achieve the Pancasila student profile which refers to the Child Development Achievement Level Standards. Pancasila is the basis of the Republic of Indonesia. Every citizen is of course obliged to make Pancasila a guide to life and always practice it in everyday life in the nation and state. Pancasila is also closely related to the educational process. In the learning process at school, of course, Pancasila is not only introduced as ordinary knowledge that students must know, but the values contained in it need to be instilled so that they can be implemented in real life. The profile of Pancasila students in education in Indonesia is summarized into six main points or dimensions as stated in the Decree of the Head of the Educational Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Agency of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Number 009/H/KR/2022 concerning Profile Dimensions, Elements and Subelements Pancasila students in the Merdeka Curriculum (2022) include: (1) having faith, being devoted to God Almighty and having noble character; (2) independent; (3) working together; (4) global diversity; (5) critical reasoning; (6) creative. This Pancasila student profile can be used by stakeholders, especially teachers and students, as a guide in carrying out the learning process. If illustrated, the six dimensions cannot be separated as in the picture below.

The Strengthening Pancasila Student Profile (P5) Project is a special effort so that the character of Pancasila is built from an early age through activities designed in the context of local, religious, national and international celebration traditions. The six dimensions of the Pancasila student profile are integrated into every aspect of learning. The teacher's methods and strategies for incorporating the content and values contained in the Pancasila student profile into learning require high creativity so that the learning activities created can attract children, be fun for children, and connect with real life and the surrounding environment.

The six dimensions of the Pancasila student profile must be integrated into the Learning Outcomes and learning content contained in the School Operational Curriculum (KOS) with the hope that later when children have entered the basic education level they will already have

foundation of the values of the Pancasila student profile. At the PAUD level, achieving the Pancasila student profile can be done through project-based learning. The Ministry of Education and Culture has determined project themes that can be applied

to PAUD units, namely I Love the Earth, I Love Indonesia, Playing and Working Together, and My Imagination. These themes, which are still general in nature, can be further developed into topics that can inspire the creation of project activities. In designing project activities, the PAUD unit can determine more concrete and contextual learning objectives (Sulistiyati et al., 2021)

The structure of learning activities in the Independent Curriculum in Early Childhood Education is divided into three elements of learning outcomes, the implementation of which is carried out in an integrated manner in playing while learning activities. There are three elements of learning outcomes (CP) in early childhood education, namely: (1) religious values and character; (2) identity; (3) the basics of literacy, mathematics, science, technology, engineering and arts.

Religious Values and Character include basic religious abilities and noble morals. The formulation of learning outcomes for this element is that children believe in God Almighty, begin to know and practice the main teachings in accordance with His religion and beliefs. Children actively participate in maintaining personal cleanliness, health and safety as a form of love for themselves and gratitude to God Almighty. Children respect fellow humans with their various differences and practice good behavior and noble character. Children respect nature by caring for it and showing affection for living creatures which are creations of God Almighty.

Identity is a person's assessment and understanding of himself, both as a person and as part of a certain group. Forming a positive identity will of course be very important for young children because this will have several impacts on children, namely (1) making children feel that they are more valuable; build confidence in children; (2) forming a person who is able to think positively, be optimistic, and achieve more academically; (3) make children feel proud to be part of a certain social group; and (4) forming individuals who appreciate, respect and accept the differences that exist in their daily lives so that open-mindedness regarding diversity is developed. The stages of identity formation in children are broken down into the following process. First, children know that they are unique and cannot be compared to other people. Children understand anything related to themselves, for example their physical characteristics, what they like, what they have potential and are able to do well, and so on. Second, children begin to observe and explore the surrounding environment. Third, children realize that they are part of a certain group. Fourth, children interact by receiving positive support from the surrounding environment such as school, parents, peers and the community. Fifth, children feel confident and feel valuable. Sixth, the formation of a positive identity in children. The achievement of learning about identity is that children have a positive attitude and actively participate in maintaining cleanliness, health (through nutritious food and exercise), and personal safety; children can recognize, manage, express their emotions and build healthy social relationships; children show

feelings of pride in their family identity, cultural background, and identity as an Indonesian child based on Pancasila. (Helista et al., 2021)

Basics of literacy, mathematics, science, technology, engineering and the arts. Literacy is not only limited to the ability to read and write, but is also associated with the ability to speak, count, solve problems needed in everyday life, understand and use one's potential abilities. STEAM is an abbreviation for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics. STEAM is able to integrate the five scientific disciplines to answer the problems facing the world. Science is knowledge obtained through the process of observation and experimentation so that it can help understand what exists in nature and how each process occurs in nature. Technology is a product created and developed to meet the needs of living things and their environment. Technology help reveal new knowledge or discover new technology. Engineering through the process of finding problems, designing, creating and developing, students use knowledge related to science or mathematics that they already have to produce new technology. Art has a role in helping humans express their imagination and creativity so that there is a wide space for exploration in finding solutions to problems encountered. Mathematics as knowledge related to mathematical concepts such as the concept of numbers and their operations, patterns, geometry, measurement, and data processing concepts helps in the process of observing and experimenting. Educators must understand these five scientific integrations well. Through an engineering process based on knowledge of science and mathematics, creativity and imagination can be expressed to become a technology that is able to answer the world's needs. (Akkas & Suryawati, 2021) Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) makes young children more creative, makes children connect with their environment, develops imagination. (Sahri, 2021)

The preparation of learning outcomes in Early Childhood Education is of course expected to be able to provide a learning framework for educators in each PAUD unit that can provide the stimulation needed and according to the stages of early childhood development. Meanwhile, the aim of learning in PAUD is to provide direction that is appropriate to the child's age and level of development in every aspect of development. The hope is that by the end of the preschool period children will be able to demonstrate achievement in practicing basic religious values and noble character, have and show pride in their own identity, have literacy skills and the basics of science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics to build children enjoy learning and have a mature readiness to attend elementary education. (Sulistiyati et al., 2021)

The PAUD learning outcomes for the basic elements of literacy and STEAM as stated in the Decree of the Head of the Educational Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Agency of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology number 008/H/KR/2022 (2022) include: Children demonstrate ability recognize and

understand various information such as pictures, signs, symbols, and stories; children are able to communicate thoughts and feelings verbally, in writing, or using various media and build conversations; children show interest and participate in pre-reading activities; children show curiosity through observation, exploration, and experimentation; Children know, develop attitudes of care and responsibility in caring for nature, the physical and social environment; Children demonstrate early ability to use and design technology safely and responsibly; Children demonstrate basic critical, creative and collaborative thinking skills; Children can recognize and see relationships between patterns, symbols and data and can use them to solve problems in everyday life. Children explore various artistic processes, express them, and appreciate works of art.

In the independent curriculum, when linked to the previous curriculum (2013 curriculum), learning outcomes (CP) have positions such as Core Competencies (KI) and Basic Competencies. In its formulation, CP combines attitude, knowledge and skills competencies holistically. One more thing that is characteristic is that CP is the final achievement in the foundation phase (TK B) or when students finish studying in the PAUD unit. (Rahardjo et al., 2021)

The three main elements that have been explained previously, namely religious values and character, identity, as well as the basics of literacy, mathematics, science, technology, engineering and art are the scope of development achievements in PAUD. These three main elements are the result of elaboration of development aspects previously included in the 2013 curriculum, namely aspects of the development of religious and moral values, physical motor, cognitive, social emotional, language and Pancasila values as well as other areas related to optimizing children's growth and development. After understanding what is related to Learning Achievements (CP), the PAUD unit determines learning objectives for each CP element which refers to Learning Achievements (CP) while maintaining the vision and mission of the PAUD unit, the Pancasila student profile, student characteristics, as well as local characteristics and local culture.

The next step is to prepare a Learning Implementation Plan. At this stage, educators prepare learning implementation plans according to and based on the learning objectives that have been set. Learning objectives that have been created in the school's operational curriculum are reduced to daily or weekly activity objectives. Educators can choose to make weekly or daily lesson plans depending on the situation and class needs. In essence, daily or weekly plans must be simple and educators have plenty of time to accompany children in the process of playing while learning. An important thing that must also be considered is that the plans that have been made are only plans and can change to accommodate the child's interests and ideas. Children are involved in determining the topic. Even though the topic changes, the learning

objectives can still be achieved where these topic changes can be recorded in the daily assessment. (Rahardjo et al., 2021)

There are several principles of assessment that need to be understood in the independent curriculum, namely: (1) Assessment is an integrated part and cannot be separated from the learning process, facilitating learning, providing holistic information to educators as material for review, feedback, students and parents so that can be a stepping stone in finding further learning strategies; (2) The design and implementation of the assessment is adjusted to the assessment function, providing flexibility to determine the technique and timing of the assessment so that the learning objectives become more effective and efficient; (3) The assessment design is fair, proportional, valid and trustworthy so that it can provide an overview of the child's learning progress or deficiencies so that next steps can be determined; (4) the prepared report on learning progress and student achievements is simple and informative, so that it can provide useful information related to the character and competencies that the child has achieved, as well as being the basis for determining follow-up strategies; (5) The results of the assessment are also used by students, educators, education staff and parents as reflection material to improve the quality of learning. (Rahardjo et al., 2021)

The preparation of an independent curriculum in PAUD units has a clear process and structure. The government, in this case the Ministry of Education and Culture, has provided the option for each PAUD unit to implement the independent curriculum in various versions depending on the readiness of each unit to implement the independent curriculum. In fact, the 2013 curriculum did not change completely and lost elements of the independent curriculum. Regarding learning objectives, learning outcomes and other terms, they are still related to the 2013 curriculum. There are simplifications and new things that are simpler and more interesting in their implementation in learning. The Pancasila student profile is a form of translation of national *deeieikan* goals. The project to strengthen the Pancasila student profile as part of the implementation of the independent curriculum will always be linked to the three elements of Early Childhood Education Development Achievements, namely Religious Values and Character, Identity, and the Basics of Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Engineering and the Arts.

This independent curriculum is in accordance with the concept of independent play in Early Childhood Education. This curriculum provides opportunities for educators and students to develop their imagination and creativity through various choices of activities in learning activities. It is not easy to switch from the previous curriculum to the new curriculum. However, this change was carried out as an effort to improve national education in accordance with the nation's ideals as stated in the preamble to the 1945 Constitution, namely to make the nation's life intelligent.

Conclusion

The independent curriculum is in line with the concept of independent learning launched by the Minister of Education and Culture. When preparing an independent curriculum, what needs to be taken into account is the basic framework and structure of the curriculum. The objectives of National Education related to the Pancasila Student Profile are (1) having faith, being devoted to God Almighty and having noble character; (2) independent; (3) working together; (4) global diversity; (5) critical reasoning; (6) creative. National Education Standards as a reference and framework that has been translated into curriculum structure, learning principles, and assessment and learning outcomes. In the independent curriculum, the curriculum structure contains intracurricular activities to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. There are learning outcomes that must be achieved in accordance with three elements, namely (1) Religious Values and Character; (2) Identity, (3) Basics of Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Engineering and Arts.

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