JURNAL IMPIAN
Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen dan Pendidikan

Evaluation of the Merdeka Curriculum P5 in the Perspective Islamic Education Management

Evaluasi Kurikulum Merdeka P5 dalam Perspektif Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

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Abstract : The ministry of education and culture has officially launched the Merdeka Curriculum as a response to global challenges. This new curriculum has been implemented by various schools in Indonesia. The implementation of this learning process has encountered various obstacles to date. Therefore, an evaluation is necessary. This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach based on primary and secondary data. The data analysis used was inductive from the beginning of the research until conclusions were drawn. The results of the study show that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum for the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) still faces various obstacles. These include differences in the level of understanding and readiness among teachers in various regions regarding the characteristics of the curriculum, a lack of teacher training and mentoring, and a lack of readiness in educational infrastructure, such as a lack of internet access or digital based learning tools. These problems can be minimized by maximizing the available facilities. However, the obstacles experienced to date have not been optimally resolved, especially in remote areas due to limited internet access. Therefore, continuous evaluation is needed as an improvement and planning for the next educational process.

Keywords: Evaluation, Merdeka Curriculum, Islamic Education Management, P5

Abstrak: *Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan telah meresmikan Kurikulum Merdeka sebagai jawaban atas tantangan global. Kurikulum baru ini hampir diterapkan oleh berbagai sekolah di Indonesia. Pelaksanaan proses pembelajaran ini tentunya telah mengalami berbagai kendala hingga saat ini. Sehingga perlu adanya evaluasi. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif yang bersumber dari data primer dan sekunder. Analisis data yang digunakan bersifat induktif sejak awal penelitian hingga menarik kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Program Proyek Penguatan Profil Mahasiswa (P5) Pancasila masih mengalami berbagai kendala. Perbedaan tingkat pemahaman dan kesiapan antar guru di berbagai daerah mengenai karakteristik Kurikulum, kurangnya pelatihan dan pendampingan guru, serta kurangnya kesiapan infrastruktur pendidikan seperti kurangnya akses internet atau alat pembelajaran berbasis digital. Masalah ini dapat diminimalisir dengan memaksimalkan fasilitas yang tersedia. Namun, kendala yang dialami hingga saat ini belum terselesaikan secara optimal, terutama di daerah terpencil akibat minimnya akses internet. Sehingga perlu dilakukan evaluasi berkelanjutan sebagai perbaikan dan perencanaan untuk proses pendidikan selanjutnya*

Kata kunci : *Evaluasi, Kurikulum Merdeka, Manajemen Pendidikan Islam, P5*

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INTRODUCTION

The Merdeka Curriculum is an education system reform designed to respond to global challenges. This new idea is designed to provide freedom in the education process, both for students and educators. Freedom of Learning gives schools the freedom to adapt their curriculum and learning to local conditions (Ummi Salamah et al., 2024). According to Nafisah and Muaddab (2023), Merdeka Belajar is based on the thinking of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, the Father of Indonesian Education, who stated that independence is the main goal of education and is a paradigm that must be understood by all parties involved. He emphasized that independence has a much deeper meaning than just freedom of life (Lael, 2024). Fitriyah and Rizki (2022) revealed that the obstacles to implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at the elementary school level were caused by teachers lack of understanding of the characteristics of the Merdeka Curriculum. Curriculum changes make teachers feel burdened and reduce their enthusiasm (Nisa et al., 2023). This curriculum has been implemented in various schools in Indonesia to date. However, obstacles are still encountered in some areas, especially in rural areas where access to technology is inadequate.

Previous studies have discussed the obstacles faced by teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum for the Pancasila Learning Strengthening Project. For example, research by Edi Mizwar, Jarjani Usman, and Sri Suyanta on the obstacles faced by PAI teachers from elementary schools or Madrasah Ibtidaiyah to junior high schools or Madrasah Aliyah in Bireuen Regency (Mizwar et al., 2024). In addition, research by Ira Wantiana and Mellisa examined the obstacles faced by teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum (Wantiana & Mellisa, 2023). The Merdeka Curriculum is part of the Pancasila Student Strengthening Project program that has been implemented in Indonesia to date.

This study was conducted to fill the gaps left by previous studies. Researchers responded to and addressed urgent issues related to three topics: First, how did this issue arise. The Merdeka Curriculum has been implemented in almost all schools in Indonesia to date, but obstacles in its implementation are still encountered, especially in rural areas. Second, why did this issue arise. The obstacles arise due to various factors, such as lack of internet access, minimal understanding among teachers, and diverse learning styles among students. Third, what are the implications of the issues discussed. Obstacles in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum will affect the learning process because they result in inefficiency. Therefore, evaluation must be carried out for improvement and future educational planning.

This research was conducted to respond to and address the problems arising from obstacles in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which is a new idea in response to the challenges faced by Indonesian education in terms of quality, relevance, and flexibility of the education system itself. To overcome these problems, arguments and approaches need to be tested. First, the Merdeka Curriculum is adaptive so that it can be adjusted to school conditions, students are given the opportunity to learn according to their potential, and teachers are given the freedom to determine their teaching models. Second, to overcome the obstacles that arise, educational institutions can make maximum use of available facilities. Third, evaluation is an important step in educational curriculum management because it is a stage in improving shortcomings.

The Merdeka Curriculum Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Program (P5) is a learning process that combines various intellectual insights to respond to events around us. The Ministry of Education and Culture officially launched the Merdeka Curriculum in 2023 with the theme of freedom of learning for students. The curriculum model emphasizes the learning process with the primary role being that of the student, fostering independent behavior, and providing meaningful lessons using the concept of Project Based Learning (Maharani et al., 2023). So this curriculum emphasizes the use of resources and focuses on teaching meaningful material.

Students are encouraged to develop values such as honesty, responsibility, and cooperation. Project based learning activities and social interactions provide students with opportunities to apply these values in their daily lives. KMA No. 347 of 2022 states that Pancasila students are those who demonstrate perspectives, attitudes, and personalities that reflect the noble and universal aspects of Pancasila, tolerance to achieve national unity and prosperity, and universal prosperity (Hanan & Rahmat, 2023). So that students have a competent personality in their daily lives.

The curriculum is the main guideline in determining what is taught, how to teach, and how to measure student success (Putri et al., 2024). The Merdeka Curriculum is designed to address the challenges of education in an ever changing era and provide space for innovation, creativity, and maximum development of student potential. Teaching materials in this new concept can be designed to be relevant to everyday life and religious principles, as well as to make education more meaningful. Rachmawati (2010) states that the Merdeka

Curriculum for the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Program (P5) has six aspects, namely faith, obedience to God Almighty, virtue, and national diversity. These learning activities develop critical thinking, and students are free to express their thoughts on issues around them (Melati & Rini, 2024). Therefore, this new curriculum is an effort to develop potential in accordance with the students.

The Merdeka Curriculum is designed to adapt to developments and educational needs. The principles of this curriculum adapt to situations and conditions according to student needs, and reflect changes in the educational environment (Iskandar et al., 2023). The continuity of material with learning experiences is designed to be continuous. Learning experiences in the curriculum take into account the appropriateness of grade levels, education levels, and various professions (Prasetyo & Hamami, 2020). The efficiency of this curriculum improves the quality of education. The learning program is implemented over a month and fulfills its objectives, enabling students to undertake other learning programs because it is necessary to ensure that curriculum development utilizes educational resources optimally, wisely, and appropriately (Habibi, 2023). The affective principle of the curriculum enables optimal achievement of objectives. Teacher efficiency is assessed when they achieve learning objectives and facilitate the student learning process optimally, while learning effectiveness is the success in managing the learning process (Prasetyo & Hamami, 2020). Therefore, with this principle, student learning can be effective and enjoyable by exploring students interests and talents.

The Merdeka Curriculum has been implemented in almost all schools in Indonesia. Susilawati et al. (2023) explain that the 2013 curriculum remains the main curriculum in most schools. However, several Pilot Schools guided by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology have begun to implement this curriculum. This aims to identify the differences between the 2013 Curriculum and the Merdeka Curriculum and analyze the challenges that arise in the implementation of both curricular (Siregar, 2024). Thus, this new curriculum is flexible and adapts to the educational needs in Indonesia.

Curriculum evaluation aims to measure student learning outcomes, determine the success of teaching methods, and provide feedback for improvement. Ngalimun (2018) states that evaluation comes from the English word meaning assessment. In terms of terminology, it is a systematic process used to assess the extent to which a program is successful (Nurhidayanti et al., 2024). Curriculum evaluation is conducted to assess how well the curriculum works, taking into account various factors such as effectiveness, relevance, and efficiency (Magdalena et al., 2020). Curriculum evaluation must be carried out continuously so that we can learn from mistakes and continue to improve the curriculum (Laksono & Izzulka, 2022). Therefore, evaluations must be carried out to the fullest extent possible as a means of improving education.

METHODS

This research is important to discuss because the Merdeka Curriculum is a step toward educational progress that faces various global challenges. However, character education is the most important goal in the implementation of this curriculum. In this case, it is not only about achieving teaching, but also about achieving the true philosophy of education (Mustoip, 2023). To date, this curriculum is still being implemented in various schools in Indonesia. The implementation of this new curriculum still faces various obstacles. These issues are being studied to determine improvements that can be made in the implementation of the curriculum so that education can be achieved across all levels of society.

This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach. This method was used to respond to current issues without any changes or in depth interpretations (Lael, 2024). This method is used to identify knowledge gaps, phenomena that require further research, and new discoveries resulting from methodological improvements (Sampe & Arifin, 2024). Researchers used primary data obtained directly from the objects studied, namely from digital news articles discussing the Merdeka Curriculum (Nurjanah, 2021). Meanwhile, secondary data, which is additional data that reinforces the primary data, is obtained from relevant scientific articles (Cahyono, 2021). Thus, based on this data, researchers can comprehensively address the issues discussed.

The primary data used was obtained from digital news reports showing that the Pancasila Student Strengthening Project Merdeka Curriculum has been implemented in almost all schools to date. In addition, evaluations show that there are still various obstacles to the implementation of the curriculum. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from books, journals, and other relevant sources related to the issues that are the focus of this study (Mizwar et al., 2024). This data provides additional information to deepen understanding of the topic being studied, while also helping to verify findings obtained from primary data. By using

secondary data, researchers can also compare the results of previous studies, thereby obtaining a completer and more comprehensive picture of the issue being examined. Thus, the data that has been collected is then processed and selected according to the researchers needs.

This researcher used data collection techniques through research on digital news articles that provided information on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the obstacles encountered in Indonesia. In addition, this study used a literature review method, through journal articles that discussed relevant issues. Nihayati (2021) explains that a literature review is conducted by examining, summarizing, and providing the authors analysis of various sources from relevant literature on the issues and topics discussed (Tuginem, 2023). Information was obtained from journal articles discussing topics related to the Merdeka Curriculum of the Pancasila Student Strengthening Program (P5) and then processed based on the information needed by researchers.

The data analysis used in this study is inductive, conducted from the beginning of the study until conclusions are drawn. The researcher begins by organizing the data, breaking it down into smaller units, synthesizing it, arranging it into specific patterns, and selecting relevant and important information for analysis, so that conclusions can be drawn (Muhamad Afifuddin Nur, 2024). The purpose of data analysis is to make informed decisions accompanied by concrete evidence and to identify patterns, trends, and relationships from several themes that enable a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum for the Pancasila Student Strengthening Project Program

The Merdeka Curriculum Pancasila Strengthening Program (P5) is a response to the challenges of globalization, where technology is rapidly advancing. In addition, this curriculum aims to enable educators to teach and instill good character in students (Mayasari, 2023). According to Sulistiawati et al. (2022), the credibility of education through the implementation of Pancasila student profile projects with a local wisdom theme is an effective strategy for developing character and cultural aspects in the social environment. This concept helps develop an understanding of global diversity among children, focusing on teaching the importance of solidarity and collaboration (Ilmaa et al., 2024). This new idea has been widely implemented by various schools in Indonesia and has received an enthusiastic response. However, there are still many obstacles faced by both students and teachers in its implementation.

The Merdeka Curriculum provides schools with the opportunity to adapt to local contexts, encourages innovation in teaching, and gives teachers the freedom to choose approaches that suit the character and needs of their students. This curriculum offers a variety of subject matter that allows students to study concepts in depth and improve their skills (Hariani et al., 2023). The implementation category of the Merdeka Curriculum is intracurricular learning that is conducted in a personalized manner, providing sufficient time for students to explore concepts and strengthen their competencies. This gives teachers the freedom to choose teaching materials that suit the needs and characteristics of their students. Co-curricular learning takes the form of projects that reinforce the Pancasila Student Profile, emphasizing the principles of interdisciplinary learning aimed at developing students' character and general competencies. In addition, extracurricular learning is carried out based on students interests and the availability of resources in the educational unit (Nasution et al., 2023). The categorization of learning is interconnected with the aim of developing students' academic abilities.

Table 1. Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum for the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Program

No	Data	Source	Coding
1	Students at MTsN 4 Hulu Sungai Utara (HSU) carried out P5 (Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project) activities by making curtain fabrics (8/2/2024).	https://kemenaghulusungaiutara.com/index.php/2024/08/05/pelaksanaan-p5-di-mtsn-4-hulu-sungai-utara-membuat-kain-gorden-melalui-lukisan-kreatif/	Work
2	Students of SMA N 1 Cicalengka held a Pancasila P5 Exhibition showcasing their innovative products (11/2/ 2023).	https://disdik.jabarprov.go.id/berita/gelar-p5-siswa-sman-1-cicalengka-pamerkan-karya-ramah-lingkungan	Work

No	Data	Sumber	Coding
3	Grade 10 students at MAN Sidoarjo held a Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) through reforestation (12/5/2023).	https://www.mansidoarjo.sch.id/?p=8272	Environment
4	Students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Muara Enim class VII carried out P5-PPRA by making handicrafts (03/19/2024)	https://www.slbnegeri1jakarta.sch.id/berita/detail/11/gelar-karya-projek-penguatan-profil-pelajar-pancasila-p5-slb-n-01-jakarta	Work
5	Students in grade 10 at MAN 11 Jakarta held a Rahmatan Lil Alamin Student Activity (P5 PPRA) featuring various customs and traditions from across Indonesia. (10/9/2024)	https://dki.kemenag.go.id/berita/gelar-karya-p5-ppra-dengan-tema-berkebinekaan-global-merayakan-kebudayaan-indonesia-mdaou	Traditional
6	Students at SLB N 01 Jakarta showcased their work in an exhibition of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening – t (P5) with the theme of Betawi Local Cultural Wisdom (1/16/2023).	https://www.slbnegeri1jakarta.sch.id/berita/detail/11/gelar-karya-projek-penguatan-profil-pelajar-pancasila-p5-slb-n-01-jakarta	Traditional
7	Students at MTsN 3 Bangka held a Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) activity by creating creative products with commercial value (10/15/24).	https://babel.kemenag.go.id/id/berita/510376	Entrepreneurship

Students at MTsN 4 Hulu Sungai Utara (HSU) carried out P5 (Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project) activities by making curtains. The students were asked to paint on the fabric provided according to their own ideas. This activity also used recycled materials such as used plastic and acrylic paint as media. This activity became a forum for students to explore their creativity by using unused items around them. The implementation of this learning became an innovation so that students did not only focus on learning in class but also outside of class so that students did not feel bored.

Schools from various regions showed their enthusiasm for the Merdeka P5 Curriculum. Various activities with themes in line with the Pancasila student profile were carried out with full innovation. P does not only focus on mastering material but also emphasizes the development of creativity and innovation among students, which is very important to prepare them for future challenges. The theme of the P5 implementation is local wisdom and current issues, which encourage students to apply their knowledge in real life situations. Students can develop creative skills and broader thinking abilities. In addition, this project encourages students to express themselves and create unique products or solutions, increasing their confidence and motivation to learn.

2. Evaluation of the Independent Curriculum for Strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile Project in Schools

Evaluation of the Merdeka education curriculum as a reflection on improving the quality of learning. A distinctive feature of this curriculum is that it provides a relaxed learning experience for students in order to motivate them to develop their talents and interests (Kefi, 2024). Mustofa (2022) said that a structured evaluation of the Merdeka Curriculum can identify obstacles and steps for improvement to enhance the quality of curriculum implementation. It aims to measure student learning achievement, determine the success of teaching methods, and provide feedback for improvement. Through the implementation of P5, it is hoped that project-based skills can be improved. The implementation of P5 aims to improve character in terms of faith, piety, morals, mutual cooperation, global diversity, independence, critical thinking, and creativity (Kause et al., 2025). Therefore, evaluation can help ensure that P5 is implemented effectively and in line with educational objectives.

Table 2. Evaluation of the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum for the Pancasila Student Strengthening Project program

No	Data	Sumber	Coding
1	Madrasah Tsanawiyah 3 Bangka reviews the implementation of Teaching and Learning Activities during the 2024/2025 Academic Year (9/11/24)	https://babel.kemenag.go.id/id/berita/510121/MTs-Negeri-3-Bangka-Evaluasi-KBM-Implementasi-Projek-P5	Review
2	MAN 3 Bantul conducts evaluation of the Merdeka P5-RA Curriculum (11/21/2023)	https://www.man3bantul.sch.id/berita/man-3-bantul-evaluasi-pelaksanaan-p5-p2ra	Monitoring

No	Data	Source	Coding
3	MAN 1 North Bengkulu conducted monitoring and evaluation of P5-RA in the context of supervisory duties (9/202023).	https://www.man1bu.sch.id/read/31/monitoring-dan-evaluasi-p5-ra-di-man-1-bengkulu-utara	Monitoring
4	Sub.Coordinator of RA Directorate of Madrasah KSKK Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr. Hj. Kartini, M.Pd, monitored and evaluated the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Madrasah Aliyah in MAN 2 Ciamis (11/17/2023).	https://www.man2-cms.sch.id/read/32/monitoring-dan-evaluasi-pelaksanaan-implementasi-kurikulum-merdeka-di-man-2-ciamis	Monitoring
5	The Bangka Regency Education, Youth, and Sports Agency (Dindikpora) conducted an evaluation of the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) in elementary and junior high schools (9/3/2024).	https://www.rri.co.id/daerah/950245/dindikpora-bangka-evaluasi-kegiatan-p5-di-sekolah	Monitoring
6	MTsN 1 Guru Kukar Conducts Evaluation and Strengthening of P5 in 2023 (9/19/2023)	https://kaltim.kemenag.go.id/berita/read/521380	Improvement
7	The Banten Province Education Quality Assurance Agency (BPMP) visited SDN Cikerut to monitor and evaluate the Merdeka Curriculum and Data Based Planning at the school. (10/2/2024)	https://sdncikerut.sch.id/bpmp-provinsi-banten-evaluasi-kurikulum-merdeka-dan-pbd-di-sdn-cikerut/	Monitoring

The administrators of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 3 Bangka madrasah conducted an evaluation to assess the implementation of teaching and learning activities during the 2024/2025 academic year, focusing on the implementation of the independent curriculum. The evaluation found that with the new curriculum, students were more active in completing projects assigned by teachers in accordance with their skills. However, there were obstacles in implementing this curriculum, namely a lack of resources, time constraints, varying student abilities, and factors related to learning effectiveness.

Evaluation is an important aspect that must be carried out in the education process. This activity is a process to identify the components of the curriculum that need to be improved for future learning planning. Various schools also implement evaluations to improve the learning process. The challenges encountered vary. Therefore, evaluation needs to be implemented in each school because its implementation varies according to the conditions of the school.

Evaluation can involve input from students, parents, and the community, which provides diverse perspectives and helps create a curriculum that is more responsive to the needs of all stakeholders. Thus, evaluation is not only a tool for assessment, but a continuous process to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant, effective, and of high quality.

3. Challenges in Implementing the Independent Curriculum

The Merdeka Curriculum provides students with the opportunity to develop skills in line with their potential. In addition, this curriculum aims to enable educators to teach while instilling good character in students (Mayasari, 2023). Although it has been implemented for a long time, the implementation of this curriculum still faces various obstacles. These are the factors that hinder the education process (Ipas et al., 2025). According to Sintiawati in Yansah et al. (2023), the lack of training for teachers and educational personnel is an obstacle to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Nabila et al., 2023). This causes teachers to have a poor understanding of the curriculum concept. The diversity of student learning styles is also a consideration in determining teaching methods. Kurniawan (2017) states that the analysis of student learning styles can be divided into three categories, namely visual learning, auditory learning, and kinesthetic learning through touch and practice (Wijayanti & Tirtoni, 2023). n addition, infrastructure and access to technology are limited, especially in remote areas. Saifuddin (2019) states that the government needs to improve the development of educational infrastructure, particularly in disadvantaged areas, such as the construction of school buildings, comfortable classrooms, and supporting facilities (Ady & Putra, 2024). Therefore, these obstacles require evaluation for further improvement.

Table 3. Challenges of the Merdeka Curriculum in the Pancasila Student Strengthening Project program

No	Data	Source	Coding
1	Remote areas such as NTT face obstacles in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, which relies on technology and adequate access to information. (04/21/2024)	https://floresa.co/koliteraksi/ide/63832/2024/04/21/menyiasati-tantangan-penerapan-kurikulum-merdeka-di-ntt	Obstacles

2	Data from the Ministry of Education and Cultures Curriculum and Learning Center (Puskurjar) shows that 70% of educational institutions in Indonesia have implemented the Merdeka Curriculum through the Driving School Program, Vocational School Center of Excellence, and Merdeka Curriculum Implementation through the Merdeka Pathway. (08/28/2023)	https://www.kemdikbud.go.id/main/blog/2023/08/hampir-70-persen-satuan-pendidikan-sudah-menerapkan-kurikulum-merdeka	Ratio
3	The principal of SMPN 4 Tenggulun, Aceh Tamiang Regency, Aceh Province, provided solutions to the obstacles encountered during the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. (03/27/2023)	https://gtk.kemdikbud.go.id/read-news/tantangan-penerapan-kurikulum-merdeka	Solutions
4	IPB Cirebon students found that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum faced obstacles from both teachers and students (05/01/2024)	https://radarcirebon.bacakoran.co/read/1750/kendala-dan-solusi-penerapan-kurikulum-merdeka	Obstacles
5	Remote, frontier, and outermost regions (3T) face obstacles in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum due to a lack of information about the Merdeka Curriculum (04/06/2024)	https://validnews.id/nasional/beribu-kendala-terapkan-kurikulum-merdeka	Obstacles
6	Islamic Education Teachers in Nunukan Regency face obstacles, namely technology and the age of teachers in implementing the Merdeka curriculum. (09/28/2024)	https://smpn2mandau.sch.id/read/224/sosialisasi-kurikulum-merdeka-belajar	Solutions
7	Data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology shows that 60% of teachers lack technological skills, posing a challenge to the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum (06/08/2022).	https://nasional.sindonews.com/read/848451/18/problematika-penerapan-kurikulum-merdeka-1659791321	Obstacles

The Merdeka Curriculum program for the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) poses problems for regions classified as disadvantaged. NTT is a region with cultural diversity and unique geographical conditions. This situation has the potential for education to produce various new innovations. However, from another perspective, NTT still has remote areas with difficult access to technology. Therefore, the implementation of the new curriculum poses several problems.

Schools in various regions of Indonesia are implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The obstacles encountered are not only faced by teachers but also by students. The conditions of regions classified as 3T (frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged), where access to technology is minimal, the age of teachers, and even the varying abilities of students make the implementation of learning even more complicated. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology has data showing that 60% of teachers still have limited mastery of technology, which poses a challenge for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This phenomenon must be addressed because it will have an impact on the effectiveness of learning.

The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture is changing and improving the education system through the implementation of a more flexible curriculum. Various policies are being implemented to minimize obstacles. Dikti Decree No. 371/M/2021 on the School Activator Program motivates educational institutions to transform and improve themselves by adapting to schools to enhance the quality of learning (Veronica & Hayat, 2024). This program gives teachers the freedom to adapt teaching materials and methods to the needs of students and the local context. The Merdeka Platform was launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology as a learning resource for teachers to assist in the learning process. Priantini, et al (2022) explain that the Merdeka Platform provides opportunities to learn new things and to create, which encourages students and educators to produce works or innovations (Anggraini & Winarti, 2023). Based on research by Hidayati et al. (2022), an effective solution to overcome the lack of infrastructure in SMEs is to maximize the use of BOS or BOSDA funds. Private schools can impose an initial registration fee as an additional source of funding (Suryani et al., 2023). So that government facilities can be used to their fullest potential.

The evaluation was conducted with the involvement of all parties related to educational institutions. Stakeholders, including teachers, parents, school committees, and the local community, play an important role in effective school management (Jaenudin, 2024). Support from all parties will make it easier for educational institutions to achieve their goals. The evaluation of the Merdeka Curriculum must involve all relevant parties and be open to improvement (Zakaria et al., 2024). The obstacles that arise can certainly be minimized with careful planning. The best effort that can be made at this time is to continue working together to develop the

strengths of the Merdeka Curriculum, while striving to improve on any existing shortcomings (Warsihna et al., 2023). The current challenge lies in the 3T (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost) regions, where internet access is still not optimal, so improvements must continue to be made so that education can be equally accessible. Evaluation plays a role in curriculum improvement. By assessing the implementation of P5, education managers can identify aspects that need to be adjusted to improve the effectiveness of the program.

The evaluation aims to measure the extent to which the curriculum is implemented and identify areas that need improvement to enhance learning effectiveness (Rengga Aprilia et al., 2024). In addition, effective evaluation can improve student learning achievement (Madani, 2021). Through evaluation, the diverse needs of students can be identified, allowing learning strategies to be tailored accordingly. In addition, evaluation provides transparency in the educational process and demonstrates accountabilities for all parties involved, including educators, students, and parents. Napitupulu (2023) explains that the Merdeka curriculum consists of planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating, which are carried out in a structured and interrelated manner (Mulawarman, 2024). Therefore, evaluation is the final stage in improving systems that are ineffective and inefficient.

CONCLUSION

The Merdeka Curriculum has been implemented to date. However, there are still various obstacles encountered in its implementation. Schools in Indonesia face various challenges in implementing this curriculum, especially in adapting to the diverse conditions in each region. There are differences in the level of understanding and readiness among teachers in various regions regarding the characteristics of the Merdeka Curriculum. The lack of training and mentoring is also often an obstacle, making it difficult for teachers to implement the curriculum effectively. Differences in the readiness of educational infrastructure, such as lack of internet access or digital based learning tools, are also factors that slow down the implementation process.

These obstacles can be overcome with government policies such as the school movement, which helps schools develop student potential. This program focuses on classroom management skills. Teachers are trained to apply differentiated learning, which focuses on developing the skills that students need. In addition, the Merdeka platform helps teachers find inspiration as a source of learning. Then, involving stakeholders such as parents is necessary in developing school quality to obtain maximum support for achieving goals. Maximizing government funding to develop institutional quality is also an effort to realize the objectives of implementing the Merdeka curriculum.

Regular evaluations can provide useful feedback to improve the quality of the curriculum and address obstacles that arise during the implementation process. This process is also important to assess how well the Merdeka Curriculum can adapt to the needs and potential of each region. Given Indonesia's diverse conditions, evaluation is key to ensuring that this curriculum can provide maximum benefits in various regions, in terms of developing students skills, character, and knowledge. Obstacles in curriculum implementation are normal because every process encounter obstacle on the road to success. This study only explains in general terms the obstacles that occur during implementation. Of course, there are still many specific obstacles that occur, such as in 3T (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost) areas. Areas with such diverse geographical conditions certainly face many obstacles due to limited access to technology. It is hoped that further research can clearly describe the obstacles and solutions that can be implemented to overcome the challenges that arise.

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