



Effectiveness Of The Independent Curriculum In Creating Interactive Learning At SMP Islamiyah Serua

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Abstract

Abstract:

The Merdeka Curriculum is here as an answer to the challenges of today's world of education which requires students to have 21st century competencies and mastery of soft skills that are relevant to the world of work. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the independent curriculum teaching module applied at SMP Islamiyah Serua in improving the quality of learning and adapting education to the needs of students in the modern era. The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that the development of the curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua is carried out through the stages of context analysis, preparation of curriculum structure, implementation of active learning, holistic evaluation, and sustainable development that is integrated with the philosophy of Deep Learning and the Independent Curriculum. Teachers act as learning facilitators through the preparation of teaching modules, learning differentiation, project-based learning, cooperative learning, and inquiry learning. In addition, learning evaluation is carried out thoroughly through tests, observations, assignments, and constructive feedback to monitor student development on an ongoing basis. The obstacles faced include limited resources, facilities and infrastructure. However, SMP Islamiyah Serua continues to improve the curriculum on an ongoing basis through educator training and periodic evaluations. Thus, the practice of curriculum development at SMP Islamiyah Serua shows that there are systematic efforts in creating learning that is effective, innovative, adaptive, and oriented towards the development of students' character.

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INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization marked by the rapid development of information flows and technological advancements, character education faces increasingly complex



challenges. One of the main challenges is the occurrence of moral degradation among the younger generation, which is shown by the increase in deviant behavior, low sense of responsibility, and weakened ethical values and manners. In addition, the unfiltered influence of mass media and social media also shapes students' mindsets and behaviors, often contrary to the nation's cultural and moral values. As a result, the value crisis has become a serious issue that threatens the moral integrity of adolescents, especially junior high school students who are in the phase of self-identity development. This condition requires the education system to not only focus on the cognitive aspect, but also pay serious attention to character formation as the main foundation in producing a generation of nations with integrity (Filaidi et al., 2023) in (Sugito et al., 2025).

Junior High School (SMP) has a strategic role in the process of shaping students' character, because at this level students are in a transition phase from childhood to adolescence. This phase is a crucial period in psychological and social development, where individuals begin to form self-identity, understand social values, and show a tendency towards the formation of sedentary patterns of behavior (Sugito et al., 2025).

Junior high school not only functions as an institution that transfers knowledge, but also as a forum for basic character development that will become the moral and ethical foundation of students in daily life. In this context, schools have a responsibility to create a learning environment conducive to the strengthening of values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and tolerance, all of which are part of the positive character that is expected to be instilled in every student (Khusna et al., 2024) in (Sugito et al., 2025). Indonesian education is currently in an important phase towards a more inclusive and adaptive systemic renewal.

The Independent Curriculum is in the process of forming student character at the Junior High School (SMP) level. This study seeks to evaluate the extent to which the curriculum is able to realize the goals of character development in accordance with the values contained in the Pancasila Student Profile. In addition, this study also aims to identify various supporting factors that facilitate and inhibit factors that become obstacles in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum related to the effectiveness aspects of the independent curriculum. By understanding these two aspects, it is hoped that the results of the research can provide a comprehensive picture of the dynamics of curriculum implementation, as well as provide strategic recommendations for education stakeholders so that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum can be more optimal and have a positive impact on the development of students' character.

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum is one of the strategic steps in responding to the changing needs of the times, especially in the development of student competencies. This curriculum emphasizes the freedom of schools and teachers to determine learning strategies that are in accordance with the conditions of students and the school environment. The main goal of this curriculum is to create learning that is contextual, relevant, and oriented towards strengthening character and competence. In this context, the role of teachers as learning facilitators is very crucial. Teachers are not only the material presenters, but also learning designers who are able to adapt to the needs of students. This change requires careful readiness, one of the main focuses in the



Independent Curriculum is the development of competencies and Soft Skill which is considered important in facing the challenges of the 21st century. (Afriantoni et al., 2025) says Soft Skill such as communication skills, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity are aspects that are integrated in the learning process. This is based on the fact that today's world of work requires not only academic knowledge, but also strong interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Planting Soft Skill carried out through the Project-based learning and problem-solving. In this context, teachers have an important role to play in designing learning that not only focuses on knowledge transfer, but also the holistic development of students' character and potential. Teachers are expected to be able to guide students to communicate effectively, think solutions, and work together in a team through intracurricular activities and hidden curriculum. However, there are still challenges such as the limitation of teachers' professional competence in developing students' potential optimally within the framework of the Independent Curriculum.

Abdurrahmansyah (2023) in (Afriantoni et al., 2025) stated that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum must be balanced with strengthening the capacity of teachers in the field of pedagogic and learning technology. Teachers are not only able to understand the teaching material, but also must be able to manage interactive and fun digital-based learning. In curriculum development, teachers play the role of agents of change who are able to identify students' learning needs and adjust learning methods accordingly. This is very important in creating a conducive and enjoyable learning atmosphere, especially in project-based learning. Therefore, the professional development of teachers through continuous training is a must. LPTK also needs to strengthen the education of prospective teachers in order to be able to answer the challenges of the Independent Curriculum.

In the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, it is important to pay attention to the involvement of students actively in the learning process. Students should be given the space to explore their interests and talents through a variety of real-life learning projects. With flexibility in choosing learning materials, students become more motivated to learn independently and be responsible for their learning process. Instilling character values, such as honesty, hard work, and responsibility, is also part of the core competencies that must be developed. Meaningful learning can only occur if students feel involved in the planning and implementation of learning activities. Therefore, the relationship between teachers and students needs to be built on trust and open communication.

The Merdeka curriculum also provides greater space for schools to develop operational curricula in accordance with local needs and student characteristics. This autonomy allows schools to design learning programs that are appropriate to the context of their respective regions. In its implementation, schools are given the freedom to choose the most effective learning models, teaching materials, and assessment strategies. However, this freedom also requires great responsibility from the school to ensure that the quality of learning is maintained. Collaboration between school principals, teachers, school committees, and the community is needed so that the curriculum can be implemented optimally. In addition, the government must also be present in providing continuous assistance and supervision. (Afriantoni et al., 2025) said



the implementation of the Independent Curriculum must be balanced with strengthening the capacity of teachers in the field of pedagogic and learning technology. Teachers are not only able to understand the teaching material, but also must be able to manage interactive and fun digital-based learning.

One of the advantages of the Independent Curriculum is that there is space for students to develop their passion and potential through differentiated learning. Teachers are expected to be able to identify the learning style and interests of each student to then develop appropriate learning strategies. This differentiated learning emphasizes the importance of fairness, not uniformity, in the teaching and learning process. This strategy can accommodate the diversity of students and create an inclusive learning atmosphere. Teachers need to be equipped with diagnostic assessment skills to be able to understand the needs of students in depth. Therefore, teacher training programs must be directed on strengthening this ability. In the context of globalization, a 21st century competency-oriented curriculum is an unavoidable need. The Merdeka Curriculum is a solution to prepare the young generation to face global challenges by equipping them with digital literacy, critical thinking skills, and cross-cultural cooperation. The integration of technology in the learning process is very important to build students' digital skills. Education is no longer only oriented to memorization, but rather to mastery of concepts and high-level thinking skills. This is in accordance with the direction of national education policies that emphasize the importance of innovation and global competitiveness.

The results of a study by Santika and Nurdiansyah (2023) in (Afriantoni et al., 2025) stating that students' involvement in determining project topics makes them feel more motivated and have a sense of ownership of learning. However, not all teachers provide this space because of concerns about achieving curriculum targets. This shows that the paradigm shift from teacher-centered to student-centered still facing resistance. Therefore, mentoring needs to include aspects of changing the teacher's mindset and participatory classroom management. Teachers also need to be facilitated in developing creativity in strengthening character and Soft Skill is an important agenda in the Independent Curriculum. In the context of multicultural and religious Indonesian education, value-based character education is a solid foundation to form a superior generation. The Merdeka Curriculum provides a great opportunity for the integration of religious, cultural, and local wisdom values in learning. However, challenges in its implementation include the lack of teaching materials that explicitly accommodate these values. Curriculum innovation at the education unit level is needed to adapt the material to the local context without losing its national essence. (Afriantoni et al., 2025).

This research is expected to provide benefits both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study aims to add to the treasure of academic studies on the relationship between curriculum and character education, especially in the context of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the junior high school level. By examining how this curriculum contributes to the formation of students' character, this research can be an important reference for the development of character education theory and curriculum design in the future. Meanwhile, practically, the results of this study are expected to provide constructive recommendations for educators and education



policymakers. The recommendation aims to improve the implementation of the Independent Curriculum to be more effective in shaping the character of junior high school students, so as to create a learning environment that supports the development of students as a whole. Thus, this research not only enriches the theoretical aspect, but also makes a real contribution to improving the quality of character education in Indonesia.

This research has a limited scope to junior high school (SMP) students who have implemented the Independent Curriculum as part of the learning process in their schools. The focus of the research is directed to examine how the curriculum plays a role in student learning outcomes.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to gain an in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of the Independent Curriculum in student learning in junior high schools (SMP). (Malik, 2024) in (Sugito et al., 2025) The qualitative approach was chosen because the focus of the research is to explore the processes, experiences, and perceptions of education actors in implementing this curriculum and its impact on student learning outcomes. The type of research used is qualitative research. Qualitative research was chosen because it is in accordance with the research objectives, namely exploring meaning, understanding the process, and tracing the factors that affect the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in the field. This research focuses on the study of complex social and educational realities, and provides a space for participants to express their views and experiences openly and in depth. As explained by Zakariah and Zakariah (2021) in (Fauzi, 2025), the qualitative approach relies on the processes, meanings, and subjective interpretations that arise from the interaction between researchers and informants.

In this study, the researcher explored the implementation of the Independent Curriculum directly through observation of learning activities, in-depth interviews with school principals, deputy heads of curriculum, teachers, and students, and analysis of supporting documents. This process allows researchers to gain a complete understanding of the dynamics of curriculum policy implementation, including challenges, successes, and perceptions of implementers of their effectiveness. Thus, the qualitative approach not only provides a visible picture of the phenomenon, but also opens up a reflective space for factors that affect the success or failure of education policies at the school level.

The data analysis technique used in this study, namely the interactive model from Miles and Huberman, includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation (Data Display), as well as withdrawals, and Verification Conclusion. Data reduction is carried out by sorting out relevant data and simplifying information based on the focus of the research. The presentation of data is carried out in narrative and thematic form to make it easier for researchers to identify patterns and relationships between data categories. Then, conclusions are drawn gradually and continue to be verified throughout the research process in order to produce credible and valid findings (Miles & Huberman in Gunawan, 2013) in (Fauzi, 2025).

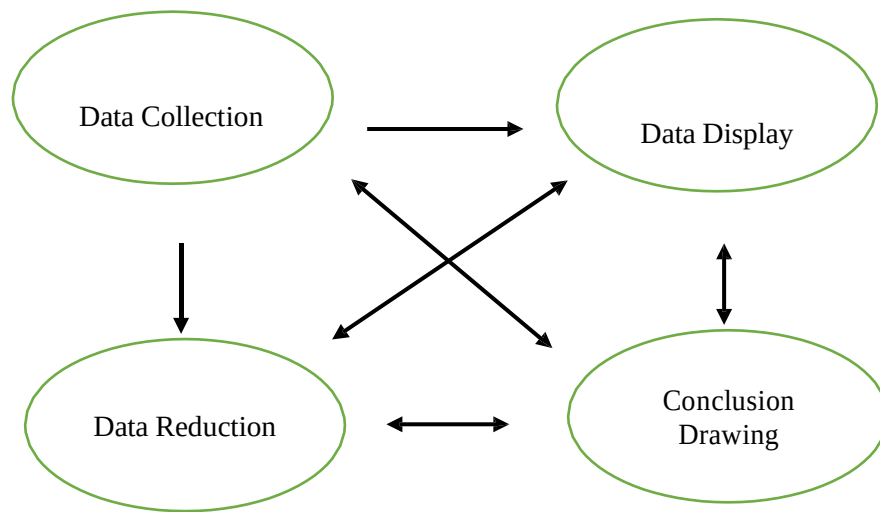


Figure 1. Miles and Huberman Data Analysis

Overall, this research method is aimed at providing a holistic and in-depth picture of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua. By combining direct observation, interaction with key informants, and analysis of documents, this research is expected to be able to produce theoretical and practical contributions in the field of curriculum implementation and improve the quality of learning in secondary schools (Fauzi, 2025).

The research sample was selected purposively, namely by determining junior high schools that have implemented the Independent Curriculum consistently and have a diversity of characteristics, such as geographical location, type of school (public/private), and socio-cultural background of students. It aims to obtain rich and representative data from various contexts.

Data collection techniques are carried out through in-depth interviews with teachers, principals, and students, as well as participatory observations in the classroom during the learning process. Triangulation techniques are used to ensure the validity of data by combining various sources and methods of data collection. Data analysis is carried out qualitatively with the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. This process involves thematic coding that focuses on the character aspects that are formed as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. With this approach, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of how the Independent Curriculum is implemented and how the student learning process runs in the junior high school environment.

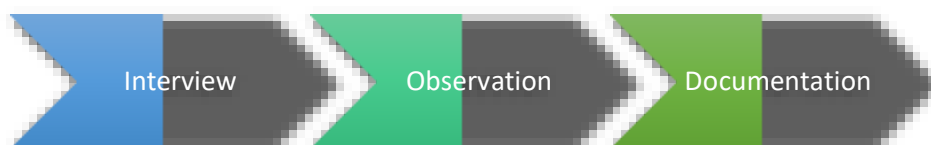


Figure 2. Research Flow

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In 2020, the government through the Ministry of Education and Culture launched the Independent Curriculum as part of their learning policy. This launch was motivated by the learning emergency conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic which caused significant learning loss among students. This curriculum was officially determined through the decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 56/M/2022.

(Agustina, 2018) said in research (Tuerah & Tuerah, 2023) The Merdeka Curriculum bases its approach on an educational paradigm that is more contextual, inclusive, and student-centered. This approach emphasizes learning that accommodates students' individual needs and potentials, and provides space for creativity and active participation of students in the learning process.

In the active learning approach, students are invited to be directly involved in the learning process, both individually and in groups, with various activities that encourage understanding of concepts and applications in real contexts. The project-based learning approach provides students with the opportunity to learn and apply concepts and skills in the context of projects that are relevant to daily life. Meanwhile, the student-centered approach prioritizes the active role of students in constructing knowledge and building understanding through direct experience, reflection, (Syah, 2019) in (Tuerah & Tuerah, 2023).



Figur 3. Interview with Mr. Dodo and Mr. Tatang

When students feel they have control over their learning, they are more likely to be active and actively participate in the learning process. They feel more engaged and accountable in achieving their learning goals. This not only improves academic achievement, but also forms more independent students. The independent curriculum also allows for the development of 21st-century skills that are essential in the modern world. Skills such as problem-solving, creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and digital literacy are becoming increasingly important in the work environment and daily life (Dian Fitra, 2023).

Based on data analysis obtained through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document studies at SMP Islamiyah Serua which implements the Independent Curriculum, it was found that this curriculum has a positive role in student learning. Teachers report that a more flexible, student-centered approach to learning



allows students to participate more actively and develop an independent attitude and sense of responsibility for assignments and learning processes. As one of the teachers put it:

"With the Independent Curriculum, students are given the opportunity to choose the learning topics they are interested in. This makes them more motivated and independent learners, so that their independence and creativity character is further developed".

Learning outcomes and learning processes have increased significantly since using the independent curriculum, one of the teachers stated:

"We see positive changes in students in learning outcomes and attitudes Collaborative activities initiated in the Independent Curriculum are very effective in increasing cooperation, creativity, and critical thinking in classroom learning."

Classroom observation shows that students are more active in discussing and interacting with peers during the learning process. This process not only hone critical and creative reasoning skills, but also strengthens social attitudes such as empathy and a sense of social responsibility. Some students also admitted that they felt more confident because they were given space to express themselves and develop their unique potential.

However, this study also found a number of obstacles that hinder the optimization of the Independent Curriculum in learning. Supporting factors such as proactive principal support, ongoing teacher training, facilities and infrastructure, and parental involvement in the learning process are key to the successful implementation of the curriculum. On the contrary, the obstacles encountered include the limitation of contextual and relevant learning resources, a fairly heavy administrative burden for teachers, and an uneven understanding of the philosophy of the Independent Curriculum among educators. One teacher revealed:

"Even though the curriculum is very good, we still struggle to provide relevant and interesting learning materials. Plus, the administrative burden makes our time to focus on character development limited."

Adapting to changes in more independent learning methods is also a challenge for some students who were previously accustomed to conventional learning patterns. This shows the need for more intensive mentoring so that all students can adapt and take advantage of the learning opportunities provided by the curriculum optimally.

This challenge is also experienced for some educators who are old enough to adapt to using this independent curriculum who must use technology. This is what the principal said:

"One of the challenges is that older teachers must learn to use technology and adjust the independent curriculum by participating in the exercises held by the school before starting the school year".

The Merdeka Curriculum has proven to be effective in the learning of junior high school students, especially in the aspects of independence, creativity, and the ability to collaborate. However, to achieve more optimal effectiveness, continuous efforts are needed in increasing teacher capacity, providing adequate learning resources, and a more inclusive approach to support all students to adapt to the new learning model



Discussion

1. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua shows a commitment to creating student-oriented learning. This school prioritizes differentiated and project-based learning principles that focus on developing students' interests, talents, and character through strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile. This strategy is not only geared towards improving academic outcomes, but also aims to foster 21st-century creativity, independence, and competencies that are relevant to the challenges of the future.

One of the steps in optimizing the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is the implementation of intensive training for educators. This training focuses on an in-depth understanding of the principles of the Independent Curriculum, especially in terms of differentiated learning. With this approach, teachers are encouraged to adapt teaching methods to the individual needs of students, as well as to develop teaching modules that are more flexible, contextual, and innovative. The results of an interview with one of the teachers, Mr. Sahrul, revealed that this training had a positive impact on the way teachers design and implement learning, as well as increase the collaborative spirit between teachers in responding to classroom dynamics.

Improving facilities and infrastructure is also an important aspect in supporting the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum. SMP Islamiyah Serua has procured technology devices that can be used in learning, such as projectors, computer labs, Smart TVs, and internet connections that support access to digital learning resources. These facilities allow for the integration of technology in learning and expand the scope of teaching materials accessible to students. In addition, the use of this technology also strengthens project-based learning, so that students can develop critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills. However, facilities are also a challenge in sports subjects, the school only has one field. The same thing was also expressed by the Principal, Mr. Murtado or who is usually called Mr. Dodo. He said that facilities are still a challenge to carry out an effective sports learning process because schools only have one field and it has to be used by grades 7, 8, and 9 alternately which causes sports learning to be less effective.



Figur 4. Learning Atmosphere

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua shows a significant influence on improving student learning achievement. This is



reflected in increased student involvement in learning, increased critical and creative thinking skills, and better academic results. This observation is in line with the opinion of Mulyasa (2022) in (Fauzi, 2025) which states that the Independent Curriculum is designed to encourage students to be active, creative, and independent in learning through project-based approaches and differentiatory learning.

Overall, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua takes place gradually and adaptively. With policy support as a Driving School, teacher readiness, facility development, and parental participation, this school is optimistic that it can realize the main goal of the Independent Curriculum, which is to form graduates with strong character, competence, and ready to face global dynamics.

2. The Effectiveness of the Independent Curriculum in Encouraging Student Independence and Creativity

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum on student learning achievement at SMP Islamiyah Serua. The research was carried out through interviews, observations, and analysis of academic grades and student behavior before and after the implementation of the curriculum.

The Independent Curriculum is significantly effective in encouraging students' independence and creativity because it provides greater freedom for students to manage their own learning process. With a student-centered approach, this curriculum allows students to choose a topic or learning project according to their interests and needs. This not only increases motivation to learn, but also trains students to take initiative, manage time, and take responsibility for the achievement of their own learning outcomes (Nuriah et al., 2023) in (Sugito et al., 2025).

The Merdeka curriculum prioritizes learning methods that stimulate creativity, such as project-based learning, exploration, and active discussion. Students are encouraged to think critically, find new solutions, and experiment with innovative ideas without the pressures of rigid standards. Thus, the learning process is not only about receiving information, but also honing students' ability to be creative and innovate (Rina Inayah, 2024) in (Sugito et al., 2025).

In the context of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, the use of digital modules also plays an important role in creating interactive learning and student creativity. However, to ensure the successful implementation of interactive digital modules and support students' creativity, full support from various parties is required. In addition, the government must also ensure that all schools have infrastructure and facilities and infrastructure, including stable internet access and adequate devices to support the running of interactive learning using digital modules. Some teachers also rarely use learning media that increase student creativity and interactive, such as digital teaching modules. This is due to the lack of socialization about improving teachers' skills and creativity in developing interactive learning media. Meanwhile, teachers are required to be creative and innovative in delivering learning materials. Therefore, teachers must have sufficient knowledge and understanding of learning media.



There are six main elements that mark the Pancasila Student Profile (Zamjani et al., 2020) in (Qurniawati & Madura, n.d.), namely (1) faith, fear of God Almighty, and noble character, (2) global diversity, (3) independence, (4) mutual cooperation, (5) critical reasoning, and (6) creativity. These six elements must be seen as a unit that supports and is sustainable with each other. From these six dimensions, it can be said that Indonesian students are always aware of the existence of God by obeying commands and staying away from prohibitions in accordance with their respective religious teachings, have a clear national identity by representing the nation's noble cultural insights, are able to develop themselves independently and responsibly, reflect on experience and are able to collaborate with any party voluntarily in achieving goals.

This independent and creative learning experience helps to shape the character of students who are proactive and confident in facing challenges. They have become better prepared to face the dynamics of life and the development of the times that continue to change, especially in the era of globalization which demands critical thinking skills and high creativity. Therefore, the Independent Curriculum not only contributes to the improvement of academic competence, but also the formation of independent and innovative character as the main provision for students in their life journey and future careers (Parwati et al., 2023) in (Sugito et al., 2025). The independent curriculum was born as a response to the PISA results which showed that the majority of Indonesian students were still below the minimum literacy and numeracy standards. The results of the observation resulted in the finding that the independent curriculum in principle emphasizes learning flexibility that can be adjusted to the needs and interests of each student as well as the characteristics of the school.

In the independent curriculum, teachers are also given space as flexibility to design innovative learning according to the diverse needs of students, so that the learning process is more student-centered. (Jannati et al., 2023) say in (Erma Wati et al., 2025) Teachers have roles such as driving the learning community for other teachers, as agents of change, creating a place for discussion and collaboration between teachers, creating a fun and meaningful learning atmosphere, providing motivators, and teachers always do self-development. The implementation of the independent curriculum in junior high schools is able to improve student learning outcomes and the competence of teachers and students, teachers become more creative in managing learning that encourages more flexibility learning and students are encouraged to be active, creative, and independent in the learning process in the classroom. The independent curriculum is considered more adaptive to the challenges of the times as well as the needs of current and future education. There has been an increase in innovation in learning, competency-based assessments (without KKM), and student character development through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). According to (Nuryani et al., 2023) in (Maulana & Prasetyo, 2025) Updates and developments in the independent curriculum for teachers can make adjustments to learning that uses and utilizes information technology in the learning process that is carried out.

Teachers can also utilize technology in the learning process to help improve learning outcomes using youtube-based learning media. (Maulana & Prasetyo, 2025) said that the Independent Curriculum can significantly improve the quality of education



through a more flexible and adaptive approach, which is in accordance with the unique needs and characteristics of each student and school. This flexibility allows learning to

be tailored to diverse student profiles and interests, while strengthening teacher competence through increased creativity and the use of technology in learning, such as YouTube-based media.

Through the implementation that is adaptive to the challenges of the times and future needs, this curriculum encourages innovation in competency-based learning and assessment without using KKM, so that the quality of education becomes more meaningful. However, the effectiveness of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is highly dependent on teacher readiness, infrastructure support, and continuous training and mentoring. (Maulana & Prasetyo, 2025).

One of the important aspects in the effectiveness of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is the improvement of the quality of student-centered learning. Based on the results of interviews with the Principal and teachers, students now have more space to explore the material according to their interests and talents. This is in line with the goals of the Pancasila Student Profile launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2021) in (Fauzi, 2025), which emphasizes the importance of forming students who are critically reasoning, creative, independent, and able to work together in diversity. In addition to improving the quality of learning, there is also a positive influence on students' academic achievement. Some subjects have shown an increase in average scores since the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. According to the view of Zubaidah (2021) in (Fauzi, 2025) that project-based learning in the Independent Curriculum is able to improve students' conceptual understanding and high-level thinking skills.

However, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum also faces a number of challenges. One of them is the adaptation of teachers to the new role as a facilitator. Not all teachers are able to immediately transform in designing flexible and innovative learning and must take time to be able to adjust to it. From the student side, some students still have difficulty learning independently and take longer to adjust. According to Sugiyono (2019) in (Fauzi, 2025), the change in learning paradigm requires an adaptation process, both from students and teachers, so it is important to have emotional and academic support during the transition period.

(Syaharani et al., 2024) He said that in the independent curriculum, teachers can facilitate the development of students' questioning skills in various ways:

1) Introducing interesting phenomena:

Students may feel bored if learning is limited to the content of the book only. Teachers can revive students' enthusiasm by presenting interesting phenomena related to learning topics that they have never known before. This strategy will increase their interest and naturally trigger a lot of questions.

2) Words in A Question Game:

To improve students' ability to ask questions, teachers need to teach questioning techniques during the learning process. In this game, the teacher gives a number of words or a series of words to the students, then asks them to make a question sentence that uses those words.

3) Providing fishing questions:



To arouse students' interest, teachers can provide fishing questions that relate to interesting phenomena related to the material being taught. Questions such as "why does this happen?" or "how could this phenomenon happen?" can be used to encourage students to question and understand more deeply about the topic.

4) Forming a study group:

Teachers can facilitate students to discuss in groups to make observations or discussions related to learning materials. After that, each member of the group is asked to make at least one question. To improve the quality of the questions, students were then asked to choose the three best questions according to their group. This helps train students in making substantial and meaningful questions.

5) Completing questions:

Teacher support in supplementing student questions with additional information or guidance can enrich the question and answer process in the classroom.

6) Start class with a spark question:

Starting class with interesting or reflective questions can stimulate students' interest to actively ask questions throughout the lesson.

7) Giving rewards:

Teachers can encourage students to ask more and more qualified questions by offering significant rewards for good investigative questions. This not only encourages students to ask questions, but also to ask more in-depth. The award is not limited to goods, but can be in the form of an opportunity to become a group leader or get the role of a teacher's assistant.

The Role of Teachers in Creating Interactive Learning

Teachers have an important role in creating interactive learning in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua. In its implementation, teachers no longer play the role of a learning center (teacher centered), but rather as a facilitator who guides students to be more active, creative, and independent in the learning process. Teachers are required to be able to design innovative learning through group discussions, project-based learning, the use of digital media, and differentiated learning according to student needs. This is in line with the results of research that show that students become more active in discussing, dare to express opinions, and are more enthusiastic about participating in learning after the implementation of the Independent Curriculum.

In addition, teachers also play a role in building a fun and communicative learning atmosphere so that interactions between teachers and students can take place effectively. According to Jannati et al. in Erma Wati et al. (2025), teachers in the Independent Curriculum play a role as a driver of learning, agents of change, facilitators of discussion, and creators of a meaningful and fun learning atmosphere. Thus, the success of interactive learning is greatly influenced by the creativity and readiness of teachers in managing the learning process in the classroom.

4. Obstacles in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua



The obstacles to the implementation of the independent curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua are found to be that there are still teachers who are not fully prepared and understand the concepts and technicalities of the independent curriculum administratively and in the field, including in the creation of teaching modules and the development of appropriate learning models. Teachers still need time to overcome difficulties in using and developing creative learning media that support curriculum implementation. It takes time in the process of the mindset of teachers and students in implementing more independent and collaborative learning is still a significant challenge.

Priyadi et al (2024) said in a study (Maulana & Prasetyo, 2025) There are several challenges in the implementation of the Independent curriculum, namely teachers have difficulty adapting learning designs in the process of preparing lesson plans, developing learning models, teachers have difficulty in determining the achievement of student success rates.

Efforts to face the challenges that occur The Principal holds training for teachers, carries out intensive training and assistance for teachers, Workshop periodically, and assistance by the driving school to improve understanding and skills. The training activities are in the form of collaboration forums between schools to share best practices and innovations. Improving the infrastructure for equitable distribution of supporting facilities such as internet access and technological devices, periodic evaluation of the curriculum to identify obstacles and adjust solutions, as well as collaboration between teachers, schools and the government needs to be carried out (Anjeliani et al., 2024) in research (Maulana & Prasetyo, 2025).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua is effective in creating interactive learning that encourages students to be more active, creative, independent, and dare to express their opinions in the learning process. Project-based learning, the use of digital media, and the role of teachers as facilitators also support increased student motivation and involvement in the classroom. However, its implementation still faces several obstacles, such as limited infrastructure, teachers' readiness in the use of technology, and students' adaptation to more independent learning. However, through teacher training and the development of school facilities, the Independent Curriculum at SMP Islamiyah Serua is considered to be able to improve the quality of learning in a more innovative and student-centered manner.

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