

IMPLEMENTATION OF INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM-BASED LEARNING MANAGEMENT

Chika Putri ¹

Departemen Administrasi Pendidikan Universitas

Muhammadiyah Bogor Raya, Bogor, Indonesia

e-mail: [*chikaaputri30032005@gmail.com](mailto:chikaaputri30032005@gmail.com)

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ABSTRACT

The Independent Curriculum Policy, which is considered a step towards achieving quality education, is still far from being understood by education stakeholders. (Zuhriyah, I. A., Padil, Moh., & Rabbani, I. 2023). The implementation of the Independent Curriculum requires adjustments in learning management in elementary schools, particularly in the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. This study aims to describe the implementation of the Independent Curriculum-based learning management at Elementary School and assess its level of implementation. The study used a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The results showed that the learning planning aligned with the principles of the Independent Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka) reached 87.5%, the implementation of student-centered learning reached 81.3%, and the implementation of formative and summative assessments reached 78.6%. The implementation of P5 was in the good category with an achievement of 75%. Overall, the management of the Independent Curriculum-based learning at Ciasihan Elementary School was considered good, although it still needs strengthening in the aspects of assessment and learning reflection.

Keywords: Learning Management, Independent Curriculum, Elementary School

I. Introduction

Elementary school occupies a strategic position in the education system because it serves as the primary foundation for developing students' academic abilities, basic skills, and character. At this stage, learning is not solely focused on mastering material, but also on developing attitudes, values, and learning habits that will influence student success at subsequent levels of education. Therefore, planned and effective management of the learning process is a determining factor in improving the quality of education in elementary schools. In elementary school context, the independent curriculum allows teachers to adapt learning strategies and materials to students' developmental levels, interests, and learning needs. Therefore, the successful implementation of the independent curriculum is highly dependent on the ability of schools and teachers to implement structured, adaptive, and sustainable learning management.

Although the independent curriculum concept offers numerous advantages, its implementation in elementary schools still faces several challenges. These challenges include teacher's limited understanding of differentiated learning, difficulties in developing teaching modules appropriate to characteristics of elementary school-aged students, and the suboptimal implementation of diagnostic and formative assessments. Furthermore, the readiness of school infrastructure and management support also play a role in determining the effectiveness of learning implementation. This situation indicates a gap between conceptually designed curriculum policies and actual learning practices.

The quality of education in Indonesia has not improved, despite various efforts to improve it. For example, the formulation and establishment of various regulations governing education, periodic revisions of elementary and secondary curricula, decentralization of education management, improving the quality and academic

professionalism of teachers and lecturers, improving teacher and lecturer welfare, improving and enhancing educational facilities and infrastructure in all educational units, improving learning management in all educational units, and developing learning based on mutual management standards, starting from elementary education to higher education. Therefore, how to implement learning management properly is explained in detail through this study. (Gemnafle, M., & Batlolona, J. R. 2021).

In light of these issues, this study aims to examine in-depth the implementation of independent Curriculum-based learning management at the elementary school level, specifically in terms of planning, implementation, and evaluation. The study also aims to identify various obstacles faced by teachers and schools, as well as strategies used to overcome these obstacles. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical benefits, where this research is expected to enrich scientific studies in the field of educational management, especially those related to the management of independent Curriculum-based learning in elementary Schools.

II. Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive orientation, aimed at examining in-depth the implementation of learning management based on the Independent Curriculum in elementary schools. A qualitative approach was chosen because this research emphasizes understanding the process, practice, and meaning of curriculum policy implementation in a real-world context, rather than hypothesis testing or numerical data processing (Creswell, 2014). Through this design, the researcher seeks to uncover how the planning, implementation, and evaluation of Independent Curriculum-based

learning are carried out in everyday school practice (Yin, 2018).

The study population included all school stakeholders directly involved in the implementation and management of the Independent Curriculum-based learning. Research informants were selected using purposive sampling, which involves deliberately selecting respondents based on their role, experience, and relevance to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2019). Data collection was conducted through a combination of several techniques commonly used in qualitative research, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation (Moleong, 2017). Observations were conducted by directly observing classroom learning activities, the lesson planning process, and the implementation of the P5 project. Observations were non-participatory, meaning the researcher was not involved in the learning activities but instead acted as an observer, systematically recording phenomena. The research instruments were compiled in the form of observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and a document review checklist, developed based on theoretical studies of learning management and the Independent Curriculum policy. The developed instruments were then consulted with a supervisor or education expert to ensure the appropriateness of the content and clarity of the indicators used. Subsequently, the instruments were tested on a limited basis through initial fieldwork to ensure they were well understood and suitable for use in research data collection. Data analysis was conducted in stages, continuing from the beginning of data collection until the end of the study. The analysis process adhered to the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman (2014), which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. In the data reduction stage, researchers selected and focused data from observations, interviews, and documentation to align with the research focus. The reduced data was then presented in descriptive narrative form and a simple matrix to facilitate the researcher's identification of

patterns and relationships among the data. The next stage was drawing conclusions, which were carefully conducted and repeatedly verified to ensure the consistency and credibility of the research findings. The assessment of the success of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum-based learning management in this study refers to a number of indicators compiled based on learning management principles and curriculum policies. These indicators include the alignment of learning planning with the characteristics of the Independent Curriculum, the implementation of student-centered learning, the appropriate use of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments, the planned implementation of the P5 project, the leadership role of the principal and teacher professionalism, and the level of student participation in learning activities. These indicators are used as a basis for assessing the effectiveness of the implemented learning management.

This research was conducted through several systematic stages. The initial stage began with a preliminary study and literature review to strengthen the conceptual foundation of the research. Next, the researcher developed the research instruments and obtained permits from the school. The next stage was data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation, conducted in stages. Throughout the data collection process, the researcher simultaneously conducted data analysis. The final stage of the research was the preparation of a research report based on the results of the data analysis and linked to theory and previous research findings.

III. Result and Discussions

Education plays a crucial role in the development of various aspects of human life. Through education, individuals can optimally develop their potential and improve their personality and quality of life. The Independent Curriculum is a potential solution for developing education in Indonesia. The Independent Curriculum is designed to facilitate the creation of a student-centered learning environment that is responsive to the needs and characteristics of students in their respective regions.

This section presents the results of the research data processing and interpretation related to the implementation of Independent Curriculum-based learning management in elementary schools. Empirical data obtained from respondents are statistically analyzed to illustrate the general trends in each aspect studied and to validate the research hypotheses formulated. The presentation of the results begins with descriptive statistics to provide an initial overview of the level of implementation of learning management in the educational unit.

A summary of descriptive statistics is presented in Table 1, which includes the score range, mean, and standard deviation for each implementation aspect. The information in this table shows the distribution of data and the relative achievement levels of each component of learning management analyzed.

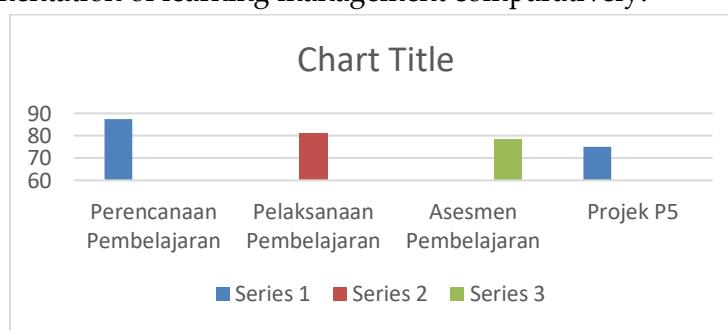
Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Implementation of Independent Curriculum-Based Learning Management

Rated Aspect	Minimum	Maksimum	Average	Standard Deviation
Learning Planning	70	95	87,5	6,12
Implementation	68	92	81,3	5,84

of Learning Learning Assessment Pancasila student profile strengthening project	65	90	78,6	6,45
	70	88	75,0	5,97

Based on the data in Table 1, the learning planning aspect showed the highest average score, indicating that teachers have demonstrated strong ability to develop learning plans in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. The learning implementation aspect also demonstrated strong performance and reflected the implementation of student-centered learning. Conversely, the learning assessment aspect and the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project showed relatively lower average scores, although still in the good category, indicating room for further improvement and strengthening.

To provide a visual illustration of the comparison of achievements between aspects, the average value of each aspect is presented in the form of a bar graph as shown in Figure 1. This visualization makes it easier to read the differences in the level of implementation of learning management comparatively.



Picture 1. Comparison of Average Implementation of Independent Curriculum-Based Learning Management

Figure 1 shows that lesson planning ranks highest compared to other aspects, while the implementation of the P5 Project ranks lowest. This pattern indicates that administrative readiness and lesson planning in schools are well underway, but consistency in implementation and reinforcement of assessment and project aspects still need to be improved to ensure a more optimal and comprehensive curriculum implementation.

Prior to inferential analysis, the data was tested to ensure its suitability for use in hypothesis testing. The analysis showed that the data met the necessary assumptions and could therefore be used to test the relationships and influences between the research variables.

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that the Independent Curriculum-based learning management has a positive and significant effect on learning quality, as indicated by a significance value below the 0.05 margin of error. This finding indicates that the better the learning management implemented by schools, the higher the quality of learning produced. Thus, this study confirms that the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum is not solely determined by the curriculum policy itself, but is highly dependent on the effectiveness of learning management at the educational unit level.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum-based learning management has been categorized as good. Learning management, which includes planning, implementation, assessment, and execution of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project, demonstrated a positive level of implementation and supported the learning process.

This conclusion indicates that the research objective, namely to obtain an empirical overview of the implementation of Independent Curriculum-based learning management, has been achieved. The results of the hypothesis testing show that the implementation of learning management aligned with the principles of the Independent Curriculum has a positive impact on the quality of learning. Adaptive planning and student-centered learning implementation are the most important components in supporting learning effectiveness, while aspects of assessment and learning reflection still require strengthening for optimal curriculum implementation. Conceptually, this study confirms that the success of the Independent Curriculum in elementary schools depends on the integration of flexible learning planning, participatory learning implementation, and ongoing assessment. Therefore, schools and educators are advised to increase their capacity in assessment development and strengthen collaboration in learning implementation. Further research can expand the scope of locations and subjects to obtain more comprehensive findings.

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