


# The Impact Of Implementing The Independent Curriculum On Students' Learning Interest In The Subjects Of Pancasila And Citizenship Education At SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<b>Keywords:</b> Citizenship education, implementing, independent curriculum	Pancasila and Citizenship education has an important role in shaping students' character and national insight. However, this subject is often considered less interesting by some students because the teaching methods tend to be monotonous and less relevant to everyday life. The aim of this research is to find out how the Merdeka curriculum is implemented on students' interest in learning in Civics subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda, then what impacts occur in implementing the Merdeka curriculum on students' interest in Civics subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda, and what efforts are made what can be done to deal with the impact of implementing the Independent Curriculum on students' interest in learning in Civics subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda. Type of descriptive qualitative research. The research was conducted at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda in July 2024-September 2024. The subjects of this research were curriculum cadets, PPKn teachers, and students in classes X, XI, XII using observation, interview and documentation techniques. Data analysis techniques are data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data conclusion. The results of the research show that the method of implementing the independent curriculum is able to increase students' interest in learning in civics subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda. The impact of this method of implementing the independent curriculum is very clear from the aspect of student participation in the teaching and learning process, the components in the independent curriculum are very helps in increasing student participation in civics subjects, and this method makes it easier for teachers when teaching and also makes it easier for students to receive and understand the lesson material.
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## INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental aspect in the development of a nation (Harun Rasyid, 2015; Sirait, 2017; Kamaludin, 2023). Good quality education will produce human resources who are competent and ready to compete on the global stage. One of the efforts made by the Indonesian government to improve the quality of education is by introducing and

implementing the Independent Curriculum. The Independent Curriculum is expected to provide more freedom to schools and teachers in managing learning, as well as emphasizing the development of student character and competence (Zakso, 2023). The curriculum plays an important role in education because it is an effective tool for improving the quality of education. A curriculum is a design that includes lesson materials, teaching materials and learning experiences that have been previously programmed. In various educational activities, the curriculum holds a central position to achieve educational goals. To improve its quality, the curriculum must be adapted to the situation of each school, taking into account the needs and development stages of students, as well as national development needs. In this case, the curriculum must maintain national cultural values and be based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Khalbi et al., 2024).

The Merdeka Curriculum is an evolution of the 2013 Curriculum which will begin to be implemented gradually in Indonesia from 2022. This curriculum was created to provide more choices for educational units and students in developing their potential according to their interests and talents. One of the main goals of the Merdeka Curriculum is to increase students' motivation and interest in learning with a more student-focused learning approach, allowing them to be more active and involved in the learning process. (Firmansyah, 2023). The Merdeka Curriculum, which has been trialled since 2020 and will be implemented starting in 2022, was first initiated by the Minister of Education and Culture, namely Nadiem Makarim in 2019. This initiative emerged as a response to the results of the 2019 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) research. shows that students in Indonesia are in sixth position from the bottom in the assessment. The Merdeka Curriculum carries the concept of independence and freedom for education in Indonesia to determine for themselves the best methods to use during the teaching and learning process.

The concept of the Independent Curriculum has similarities with Paulo Freire's idea of freedom education, especially in its aim to realize humanization through providing freedom of opinion and thought in the learning process. Education in this context is expected to be able to bring humans towards independence in physical and spiritual terms. The Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum that allows for diverse intracurricular learning, so that content can be presented optimally to allow students to have sufficient time to understand concepts and improve competence. Teachers have the freedom to choose various teaching tools, so that learning can be tailored to the learning needs and interests of students. In addition, projects developed to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students are not oriented towards specific learning outcomes, so they are not tied to specific subject content (Zakso, 2023).

Students' learning interests greatly influence the success of the teaching and learning process (Shafira Puspa Faradila & Siti Aimah, 2018; Widyastuti & Widodo, 2018; Aprijal et al., 2020; Yuniarsih & Kamaludin, 2021). The factors that influence this interest in learning come not only from the teacher, but also from the students themselves. Students' behavior when participating in learning can show whether they are interested or not in the material being taught. Interest in learning occurs when someone sees the characteristics or meaning of a situation that is related to their desires or needs. In other words, what someone sees can

arouse their interest if it is related to their own interests. This shows that interest is a person's mental inclination towards something that is accompanied by feelings of pleasure, because there are personal interests involved. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum in schools in Indonesia has brought changes to the learning process, including in the subjects of Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn) (Hafidz Faridzki, 2020). PPKn has an important role in shaping students' character and national insight. However, this subject is often considered less interesting by some students because the teaching methods tend to be monotonous and less relevant to everyday life (Cholilah et al., 2023)(Putri & Rachmad, 2024). With the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, it is hoped that there will be a paradigm shift in PPKn learning which can increase students' interest in learning. However, the extent of the impact of implementing this new curriculum on students' interest in learning in Civics subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda still needs further research.

The researcher's aim for conducting this research is 1) To find out the application of the Merdeka curriculum to students' interest in learning in Civics subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda. 2) To determine the impact that occurs in implementing the Merdeka curriculum on student interest in Civics subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda. 3) To find out the efforts that can be made to deal with the impact of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum on students' interest in learning in PPKn subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda. This research is important to carry out to evaluate the effectiveness of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in increasing students' interest in learning, especially in PPKn subjects. It is hoped that the results of this research will provide a real picture of the impact of the new curriculum on students' interest in learning, as well as become material for evaluation and improvement in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in the future.

## METHOD

The type of research used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The research was conducted at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda in July 2024-September 2024. The research informants included two Pancasila and Citizenship education teachers, six students, and one deputy principal for the curriculum department using observation, interview and documentation techniques. Data analysis techniques are data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data conclusion.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data in this research includes the impact of implementing the Merdeka curriculum on students' interest in learning in Civics subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda. The data obtained in this research is in the form of data from interviews and observations. The data collected to support this research consists of data from observations, interviews and documentation which are presented with the following research findings:

## **Application of the Independent Curriculum to Student Interest in Learning in Civics Subjects Project Based Learning**

The Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intracurricular learning where the content will be more optimal so that students have enough time to deepen concepts and strengthen competencies. Teachers have the freedom to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be tailored to the learning needs and interests of students. Project-based learning is a learning method that uses projects/activities as media. Students carry out exploration, assessment, interpretation, synthesis and information to produce various forms of learning outcomes.

The implementation of Project Based Learning in Civics subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda has had a positive impact on the teaching and learning process. This method succeeded in increasing students' interest, motivation and involvement in learning. Students find it easier to understand the material because they can directly apply theory in real life through the projects given. Teachers, such as Mrs. DP and Mrs. M, use this method by linking Pancasila material to actual problems and providing relevant projects, such as making videos, posters and trial simulations. Students are more active, creative, and show improved critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills. Student responses were also very positive, where they felt more involved and motivated because learning felt more exciting, challenging and applicable. Students are also more confident in conveying their ideas and opinions, and understand the material more deeply. However, some students still need guidance in time management and group work.

### **Discussion and Interactive**

Discussion and interaction are important components in implementing the Independent Curriculum. This concept encourages students not only to be passive recipients of information, but also to be actively involved in the learning process. In the context of the Independent Curriculum, discussion and interaction refer to learning activities that involve students in the active exchange of ideas, opinions and information. application of discussion and interaction in Independent Curriculum learning, it can be concluded that the discussion method is very effective in increasing students' active involvement in the learning process. PPKn teachers at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda, such as Mrs. DP and Mrs. M, implement various discussion techniques, such as dividing into heterogeneous groups and small group discussions, to encourage students to be more participative, think critically and collaborate. Based on interviews with students, the majority responded positively to the discussion method, feeling more involved and understanding the material better through exchanging ideas with friends. Discussion allows students to not only receive information passively, but also play an active role in the learning process. However, the challenge faced is that some students tend to be passive, and dominance by some students in discussions can reduce equitable participation.

### **Case Based Learning**

Case-based learning is a learning approach where students are invited to learn by solving real problems that are relevant to everyday life. In the context of the Independent

Curriculum, PBL is a very relevant method because it is in line with the principles of active learning, student-centered, and relevant to real life. Implementing PBL in the Independent Curriculum means that the teacher creates a learning situation where students are faced with a complex problem or case. Students then actively search for information, analyze data, and work together in groups to find solutions to the problem.

The application of the case-based learning method in Civics subjects at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda has a positive impact on students' interest and understanding. In the context of the Independent Curriculum, PBL supports active, relevant and student-centered learning. Teachers choose cases that are actual, relevant, and related to the material being taught, such as cases of democracy, human rights violations, or corruption. This makes learning more concrete and interesting for students. Students find it easier to understand theory by seeing its application in real situations, which increases their learning motivation as well as their critical thinking, communication and collaboration skills. Even so, there are several challenges in implementing PBL, such as difficulty finding suitable cases and limited time to study each case. In addition, differences in students' abilities in analyzing cases require more intensive guidance from the teacher. Overall, the PBL method is considered effective in increasing student relevance and involvement in learning.

### **The impact that occurs in implementing the Merdeka curriculum on students' interest in learning**

#### **Positive Impact**

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum has a significant positive impact on students' interest in learning. These impacts include increasing student activity and interest in learning, increasing independence and creativity in learning, as well as increasing the relevance of lesson material to real life. Flexibility in learning and project-based assessment systems also make it easier to manage education, both for students and teachers.

The Merdeka Curriculum has succeeded in creating a learning environment that is more relevant, flexible and centered on student needs, which ultimately increases student motivation and interest in learning. This positive impact shows that the Merdeka Curriculum has made a significant contribution in advancing education at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda, especially in encouraging students to be more active, creative and independent in the learning process. Student Engagement is updating the concept of student involvement in education. They state that students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement are major factors in successful learning. The Independent Curriculum, with its flexibility and project approach, strongly supports active student involvement, which is in line with this theory.

#### **Negative Impact**

The negative impact of implementing the Independent Curriculum cannot be ignored. Obstacles such as difficulties in student adaptation, differences in teacher readiness, limited resources and time are the main challenges faced in implementing this curriculum. Although the Merdeka Curriculum is designed to increase student independence and competence, its negative impacts show that the transition process to this curriculum requires careful planning, sufficient support, and intensive guidance. Without attention to these obstacles, the aim of



the Merdeka Curriculum to create more relevant and competent learning for students could be hampered. Therefore, collective efforts from all relevant parties are needed to overcome these challenges, including training for teachers, providing adequate resources, adequate, as well as more flexible time management. Only in this way can the negative impact of the Independent Curriculum be minimized, so that its positive potential can be maximally realized in improving the quality of education in Indonesia. An effective learning process requires students' ability to construct new knowledge and understand the material well. This is very relevant to the situation at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda, where students face difficulties in understanding the material due to freedom in choosing subjects which is not balanced with adequate support.

### **Efforts that can be made to deal with the impact of implementing the Independent Curriculum on students' interest in learning in Civics subjects**

#### **Application of Active Learning Methods**

Efforts made to deal with the impact of implementing the Independent Curriculum mainly focus on developing active learning methods, using technology, and increasing the relevance of material to real life. Apart from that, support from schools in the form of providing resources, curriculum development and administration also plays an important role in the successful implementation of active learning methods. With a structured and innovative approach, active learning methods not only increase student interest and engagement, but also help them develop the critical thinking skills and independence needed to face real-world challenges. Implementing an Active, Innovative, Creative, Effective and Fun Learning approach can improve student learning outcomes in Civics subjects. In this study, students showed a significant increase in interest in learning after implementing this method.

#### **Development of Learning Materials**

The efforts made in developing PPKn learning materials at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda aim to adapt to the spirit of the Merdeka Curriculum. Teachers strive to develop material that is more flexible, student-centered and contextual by referring to the Pancasila student profile and Learning Achievements (CP). The use of project-based and collaborative learning is also a key strategy in increasing student engagement and building 21st century skills. Apart from that, school support in the form of training, providing learning resources, and collaborative discussions between teachers is very helpful in developing more innovative and relevant material. However, there are still challenges in ensuring all material can be presented in an interesting and applicable way. Therefore, continuous evaluation and improvement in the presentation of material is needed, so that more and more students feel interested and motivated to learn PPKn, in line with the theory of Project-Based Learning Material Development put forward by Mergendoller & Thomas underlining that project-based material development is one way that effective for increasing student engagement and interest. They explain that the curriculum should be designed flexibly and allow students to apply the concepts learned through real projects. In this context, the development of PPKn material at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda is in line with this approach because it focuses on contextual and relevant learning.

## Learning Media

The use of appropriate and innovative learning media is an important strategy in dealing with the impact of implementing the Independent Curriculum on students' interest in learning in Civics subjects. Teachers at SMK Negeri 17 Samarinda have tried to utilize technology and interactive media to make the learning process more interesting and relevant. The use of media such as educational games, learning videos, interactive presentations, and digital applications allows students to learn creatively, actively, and collaboratively. Apart from that, school support in providing varied learning resources as well as continuous monitoring and evaluation are also important factors in increasing the effectiveness of the use of learning media. However, there is still room for further innovation in the use of learning media, especially in terms of increasing interactivity and maximum student involvement. Thus, it is hoped that the use of more varied and innovative learning media can increase students' interest in learning in Civics subjects, in line with the theory of Learning Media and Technology in Education put forward by Major to develop a theory that emphasizes the importance of using interactive and technology-based learning media. Mayer stated that the use of videos, digital applications, and educational games can increase student interest and understanding because they utilize multimedia learning principles. Well-designed media can increase students' cognitive engagement and make the learning process more interesting.

## Learning Model

The application of a student-centered and contextual learning model is an effective strategy in dealing with the impact of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum on students' interest in learning in Civics subjects. Learning models such as Project-Based Learning, Problem-Based Learning, and group discussions have been proven to increase student involvement and interest in learning. This learning model allows students to be actively involved in the learning process, either through projects, simulations or problem solving. School support in the form of teacher training, provision of learning media, and regular monitoring and evaluation are also very important in ensuring the successful implementation of this learning model. In addition, the positive views of students show that learning models that are interactive and relevant to their lives can increase their learning motivation and involvement in Civics subjects, in line with the Cooperative Learning theory put forward by Johnson, explaining that cooperative learning is an effective learning model. in increasing student involvement and participation. In Civics learning, the use of group discussions, project collaboration, and simulations helps students to play a more active role in learning and increases their motivation to learn. Thus, implementing a learning model that is appropriate and relevant to students' lives can be the key to increasing students' interest in learning in accordance with the spirit of the Independent Curriculum which focuses on developing character and skills for the 21st century.

## CONCLUSIONS

Project Based Learning in Application This method has succeeded in increasing students' understanding of Pancasila material through application in real life. Projects such as making

videos and posters help students become more active, creative, and able to think critically. Students are more motivated because material that was initially difficult to understand becomes easier to understand and apply. The discussions and interactions implemented in the Independent Curriculum encourage students to think critically, share ideas and collaborate. In addition, this method increases students' understanding of the material and engagement, as well as helping them develop their social skills. Case-Based Learning (PBL) in the Merdeka curriculum. This method is effective in developing students' critical thinking and collaboration skills. PBL provides real understanding for students to apply the theory learned, thus making learning more relevant and meaningful. Even though there are challenges in implementation, the benefits obtained are very significant in increasing students' learning motivation and understanding. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum has had a major positive impact on students' interest in learning, but also faces challenges that must be overcome to maximize its potential in improving the quality of education. Negative impacts were also found in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, which was mainly caused by challenges in adaptation and implementation. To overcome the impacts faced, active learning methods that involve students directly in the learning process have been proven to increase student interest, involvement and independence. This method helps students develop critical and creative thinking skills, and is also able to make learning more enjoyable. This research was only conducted in one school. Therefore, further research can be carried out on a wider population to obtain a general picture.

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