


## The Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum on Learning Achievements in Phase D of Mathematics Subjects

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### Abstract

This research aims to analyze the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in achieving learning outcomes in phase D in Mathematics subjects at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung. The Independent Learning Curriculum is a new policy that gives teachers the freedom to design relevant and contextual learning, according to students' needs and potential. The type of research used in this study is mixed methods (Mixed Method), namely combining quantitative and qualitative methods in one research. Data was collected through classroom observations, interviews with the principal, deputy principal for curriculum, and Mathematics teachers, as well as distributing questionnaires to class IX students at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung, and from student learning outcomes taken from report cards. To ensure the validity of the data, several efforts were made, namely technical triangulation and Percentages Correction. The research results show that the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in phase D has a positive impact on student learning outcomes. Teachers have the freedom to choose appropriate teaching materials and learning methods, so that they can increase student involvement and motivation during the learning process. However, several obstacles were also found, such as limited resources and differences in understanding between teachers regarding the principles of the Independent Learning Curriculum. The conclusion of this research is that although there are obstacles, the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum can improve learning outcomes in phase D in Mathematics, as long as it is supported by adequate training and resources.

**Keywords:** Independent Learning Curriculum, Learning Achievements, Mathematics

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## INTRODUCTION

Curriculum changes were born based on the learning outcomes of Indonesian students who were not yet able to compete at the international level (Setiyorini and Setiawan 2023). Low student learning outcomes are evident based on study results *Programme for Internasional Student Assessment (PISA)*, for example for mathematics subjects students in Indonesia are still at a very low level. For this reason, the government took the initiative to change the curriculum, which was originally the 2013 curriculum, into an independent curriculum (Kamila, AsbarI, and Darmayanti; 2024).

The Independent Curriculum is a curriculum that discusses students' freedom to learn (Purwandari, Rahayu, and Dasna 2022). This curriculum is designed to prepare students to face future challenges (Syarifah 2023). Apart from that, students are also required to have character in accordance with the values contained in Pancasila (Kusmayanti, Hartoyo, and Siregar 2023). Therefore, it is hoped that students can develop the Pancasila student profile to the maximum (Cahyani Nugraheny et al. 2023). The Pancasila student profile is a challenge in finding students' identity so that they have high moral values in order to realize student character (Julianto and Umami 2023). The term Pancasila student profile did not exist in the previous curriculum (Noviati and Belajar 2022). The discussion regarding the implementation of the independent curriculum is interesting to study and study in more depth. This curriculum is quite unique and different from other curricula, especially in terms of the implementation of learning (Suyitno, Yahiji, and Damopolii 2023). In its implementation, there are several obstacles that often occur, namely during learning there are several schools where the learning is not in accordance with the teaching module because there are several teachers who do not have experience with learning freedom (Windayanti et al. 2023). Apart from that, the obstacles that often occur are limited references regarding the independent curriculum, as well as unequal access to learning (Nasution 2023). One of the values contained in the Pancasila student profile is that students are required to be innovative in order to achieve learning outcomes (Nizar Nizar, Reo Tomi Pratama, and Mustafiyanti Mustafiyanti 2023).

Learning outcomes are learning competencies that students must go through to achieve development in each phase (Prabaningrum and Sayekti 2023). Learning outcomes are divided based on the age phase of students (Hasibuan, Dwiningsih, and Annisa 2023). The age phases start from phase A, Phase A for ages 6-8 years (Class I-II SD), phase B for ages 8-10 years (Class III-IV SD), phase C for ages 10-12 years (Class V-VI), phase D for ages 12-15 years (Class VII-IX SMP), and phase E for ages 16-18 years (Class X-XII SMA/SMK) (Mulyadi and Wikanengsih 2022). Students aged 12-15 years or class VII-IX SMP are included in the phase D learning achievement category. Phase D learning achievement is where students are required to have the ability to communicate and reason critically in accordance with the goals and context to be achieved (Safira, Rakhmawati, and Wisnu Wardana 2023). This can be achieved through the learning process so that students are able to master the knowledge of the subjects presented by the teacher (Agustina et al. 2022).

Teachers are the main component in education who have the freedom to independently explain the curriculum before it is taught to students (Savitri, Sholih, and Herlambang 2023). Teachers must be able to understand the curriculum that has been set. In this way, teachers will easily answer questions from students during the learning process (SYAPARUDDIN, MELDIANUS, and Elihami 2020). Teachers are an important factor in curriculum implementation whose role is to apply the existing curriculum (Abdullah et al. 2023).

Junior high schools that have implemented the independent curriculum include SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung. Based on the results of pre-research carried out at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung, the implementation of the independent curriculum has only just been implemented but is still in the learning stage and must still go through a training and re-acustoming process assisted by the principal, the head of the curriculum who is participating in the driving school teacher as well as through the PMM (Merdeka Mengajar Program) platform which continues to provide training and make improvements to every learning process.

Based on the results of interviews, it was found that in the independent curriculum, teaching and learning activities for students were still in the learning stage. Apart from that, educators still need a lot of adjustments, so other educators always try as much as possible to follow the instructions obtained from training and socialization of the

independent curriculum. Educators have the freedom to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be tailored to the learning needs and interests of students. In planning learning, educators develop a flow of learning objectives (ATP) based on examples provided by the government and also adapted to needs. In the Merdeka Mengajar Platform, the government provides examples of learning objective pathways (ATP), learning implementation plans including understanding learning outcomes (CP), formulating learning objectives (TP), compiling learning objective pathways (ATP) and designing learning or teaching modules.

The learning process in the classroom uses an independent curriculum, that is, teachers are more independent because they can teach according to the learning achievement and development stages of students (Purwandari, Rahayu, and Dasna 2022). In implementing the independent curriculum, the material presented and studied becomes simpler, deeper and focuses on essential material (July Iswanto 2022). There is project-based learning which aims to develop soft skills and character according to the Pancasila student profile (Ningrum, Maghfiroh, and Andriani 2023).

The latest in this research is that the independent curriculum was analyzed qualitatively (Kusmayanti, Hartoyo, and Siregar 2023). The method used is a mixed method (Resti Rosmiati, Novaliyosi, and Santosa 2023), for phase D learning achievements (Cahyani Nugraheny et al. 2023). This research was conducted at junior high school level (Abdul Fattah Nasution et al. 2023), on mathematics learning (Safira, Rakhmawati, and Wisnu Wardana 2023). Based on the description that has been presented, it is necessary to know in more detail to find out how the implementation of the independent learning curriculum affects learning outcomes in phase D of Mathematics Subjects.

## **METHOD**

The type of research applied in this research is *Mixed Method*, namely a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in one research. *Mixed Method* involves the use of both research procedures, where one method is more dominant than the other. Less dominant methods function as complements to add data. In this research, qualitative methods act as the main method, while quantitative methods function as supporting methods (Hendrayadi, Kustati, and Sepriyanti 2023).

In this research, the population used was all students at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung. The sampling technique applied is *purposive sampling*, namely sample selection based on research objectives, where the decision regarding who will be a member of the sample is based on the researcher's considerations in accordance with the aims and objectives of the research. The research subjects consisted of 16 class IX students of SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung.

Data collection techniques are methods or methods used by researchers to obtain information or data needed in research (Kognition et al. 2021). In this research, data collection techniques include observation, interviews and questionnaires. Research instruments are tools or devices used to collect data. The instrument for quantitative research in this study is student learning outcomes, while for qualitative research, the main instrument is the researcher himself, with supporting instruments in the form of observations, interviews and questionnaires. Using quantitative data analysis techniques *percentages correction*, while qualitative data analysis was carried out using triangulation techniques.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the results of classroom observations regarding learning activities, it was found that students were more active in the learning process when using the discussion method. This method is part of the Merdeka Curriculum, where the teacher provides problems to be discussed in groups. After the discussion, some groups are asked to

present their results, while other students can provide opinions regarding the topics discussed. In addition, teachers apply a more flexible approach, adapting teaching methods to student needs. Discussions in mathematics learning are apparently able to increase cooperation between students.

The results of interviews with mathematics teachers show that the Independent Curriculum opens up opportunities for innovation in teaching. Teachers can apply various interesting methods, such as interactive learning, problem solving, and problem based learning, so that students feel comfortable and learning becomes more interesting. Even though there are sometimes obstacles, such as teachers' lack of understanding of the Independent Curriculum, schools still try to provide the best support, such as holding training or workshops such as IHT (In House Training) which is held at the beginning of every semester to improve teachers' abilities in differentiation and self-development. Apart from that, schools also form learning communities for teachers and activate Subject Teacher Conferences (MGMP). A significant change that occurs in the learning process is that teachers are now more focused on the learning process rather than just pursuing the final result, so that learning becomes more active and creative. This was also emphasized by the principal and deputy principal for the curriculum department, who emphasized the importance of focusing on processes in the Independent Curriculum. Support from the school includes providing projects, facilities, as well as time and place for implementing intracurricular, extracurricular and co-curricular activities. Based on the results of the questionnaire given to students, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has had a positive impact, such as increasing student creativity in problem solving, good time management in P5 activities, and student activeness. Apart from that, parental involvement has also been proven to have a big influence on student learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are defined as the highest achievement achieved by students after following the teaching and learning process on certain material (Halimah and Adiyono 2022). Several factors that influence learning outcomes include the quality of learning (Murtado et al. 2023). Based on observations, it appears that teachers consistently provide adequate guidance and support during the learning process. Teaching methods also have a significant impact on learning outcomes. Teacher attention and involvement also plays a role in influencing student learning outcomes. Apart from that, support and motivation, such as the role of parents who always provide encouragement and motivation, can increase students' enthusiasm for learning.

Based on research conducted on all class IX students of SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung, totaling 252 people, researchers collected data through student report cards from class VIII. The average score for student report cards at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung can be seen in the following table:

**Table**  
**Average Score on Student Report Cards at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung**

No	Class	Rate-Rata
1	VIII A	85
2	VIII B	82
3	VIII C	83
4	VIII D	84
5	VIII E	83
6	VIII F	81
7	VIII G	82
8	VIII H	81
<b>Amount</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>661</b>

The average report card score of students at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung =  $\frac{661}{8} = 82,625 \approx 83$ .

The observed learning results show that the implementation of the independent curriculum has a positive impact on student learning outcomes. Based on the data, students at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung obtained an average score of 83, while the school's Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) was 74. This shows that the students' learning outcomes have exceeded the KKM and meet the good criteria. Apart from that, the implementation of the independent curriculum in phase D mathematics learning has proven to have a positive impact on student learning outcomes at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung.

The conclusion from the results of technical triangulation and analysis of student learning outcomes shows that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung, especially in phase D mathematics learning, has had a significant positive impact on students' learning outcomes. Students are more active and involved in the learning process, especially through discussion methods which increase cooperation between students. Teachers have the flexibility to apply various innovative methods, such as interactive learning and problem-based learning, which make learning more interesting and effective. In addition, school support through training, facilities and learning communities, as well as parental involvement, also contributes to improving student learning outcomes. Learning outcomes data shows that the average student report card score exceeds the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM), with an average score of 83, which reflects good achievement and meets the set learning standards.

## **CONCLUSION**

The results of the analysis obtained regarding the Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum on Learning Achievements in Phase D of Mathematics Subjects concluded that: Implementation in mathematics learning after the implementation of the independent curriculum was carried out with research used by researchers, namely in the form of interviews, questionnaires and observations. Based on this research, the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung, which started in 2021, shows positive progress. Schools prepare teachers through workshops and special training such as In House Training (IHT) and Subject Teacher Conferences (MGMP). Overall, the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung showed good results, with learning that was more adaptive, creative, and focused on students' needs and potential. The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung faces major obstacles related to teacher understanding and readiness as well as limited facilities. In order for the implementation of this curriculum to be successful, concrete steps need to be taken to overcome these obstacles, including through intensive training, improving the quality of teaching materials, and developing school facilities. The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum at SMP Negeri 21 Bandar Lampung has been proven to have a positive impact on student learning outcomes in phase D mathematics learning. With an average score that exceeds the KKM, this shows that the Merdeka curriculum plays a role in improving the achievement of learning outcomes at the school. This research emphasizes that factors such as the quality of teaching, external support, and the availability of adequate facilities are very influential in the successful implementation of the Merdeka curriculum and the achievement of student learning outcomes.

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