

Curriculum Development: Enhancing Education Quality and Student Character in the Era of Globalization

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Abstract

This article explores the development, implementation, and adaptation of the 2013 curriculum in Indonesia, with a particular focus on the challenges and opportunities faced by teachers in its execution. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding curriculum changes in the context of educational reforms, particularly in terms of integrating active learning and interdisciplinary approaches. The research highlights the role of teachers in adapting the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students while maintaining the integrity and objectives of the national education system. Various perspectives on curriculum adaptation are examined, drawing from local and international studies, offering insights into the practical implementation challenges. The study concludes by providing recommendations for further research and improvements in the curriculum development process to enhance the effectiveness of education in Indonesia.

Keywords:

curriculum development; curriculum adaptation; teacher implementation; active learning; educational reform; interdisciplinary approaches; Indonesia education

INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia faces significant challenges in adapting to the rapid developments of the modern era. One of the most crucial elements in education is the curriculum, which serves as the foundation for the teaching and learning process. A well-developed curriculum is necessary to ensure that education aligns with technological, social, and cultural advancements. According to Nasution (2001), the curriculum is not only a tool for transferring knowledge but also a means of shaping the character of students to face the changes of the times. Therefore, any changes in the curriculum must be based on the needs of the era and societal development.

A good curriculum must be capable of accommodating societal changes. This aligns with Hamalik's (2012) view that the curriculum must continue to evolve alongside advancements in science and technology. In this context, curriculum development functions to organize education, encompassing goals, content, functions, and evaluations. As such, the curriculum must be constantly evaluated and updated to remain relevant to the needs of students and the ever-changing job market (Mulyasa, 2013). Through curriculum development, the educational process is expected to keep pace with societal developments and provide students with sufficient preparation.

Currently, the curriculum in Indonesia has undergone many changes, including the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum, which emphasizes a scientific approach and competency-based learning. The 2013 Curriculum aims to create a generation that not only has knowledge but also possesses skills, attitudes, and good character values (Yaumun, 2014). In its implementation, the curriculum must accommodate various needs, both in terms of subject matter and teaching methods. Therefore, teachers play a key role in the successful development of the curriculum (Mulyasa, 2014). Through teachers' abilities and skills in designing lessons, the curriculum can be maximally implemented.

Curriculum development is not solely the responsibility of educators but also involves other stakeholders such as school principals and supervisors. According to Hamalik (2013), the school principal plays a crucial role in managing curriculum implementation at the school level. On the other hand, teachers are responsible for implementing the curriculum in the classroom, which directly impacts students' learning experiences. As educational institutions, schools must create an environment that supports effective curriculum implementation. Good collaboration between school principals, teachers, and other stakeholders will expedite the achievement of desired educational goals.

Additionally, curriculum development must reflect global needs and societal changes. Chan et al. (2012) explain that curriculum development must consider international education trends, especially those related to technology and teaching methodologies. A successful curriculum is one that integrates various disciplines and actively engages students in the learning process. This view aligns with Sugiharto's (2008) assertion that education should take into account moral values and humanistic

principles so that students become not only skilled individuals but also people with good character.

One of the biggest challenges in curriculum development is how to align education with the demands of the job market and technological advancements. For example, in several developed countries, curricula have been adjusted to accommodate industry needs and rapid technological changes (Klaus, 2014). This is essential so that students gain not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills relevant to the workforce. Therefore, education in Indonesia must consider global trends when designing curricula based on 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

Research on curriculum development in Indonesia still reveals gaps that need further exploration. Many studies have focused more on the technical aspects of curriculum implementation without addressing how the existing curriculum can accommodate the social and cultural dynamics of society. The lack of emphasis on curriculum adaptation to the local context and the specific needs of each school is an issue that has not been extensively discussed (Ali, 2011). Furthermore, previous research has often overlooked how the involvement of all educational components—including school principals, teachers, students, and parents—in the design and development of appropriate curricula is essential. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by exploring how curriculum development can be adapted to Indonesia's social and cultural context and how its implementation can more effectively involve all educational components collaboratively.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a literature review approach to explore curriculum development in Indonesia. This approach was chosen because literature review allows researchers to analyze and summarize previous research findings related to curriculum development and implementation (Sukmadinata, 2004). Through the literature review, the researcher collects information from various sources, such as books, scientific articles, research reports, and relevant educational policy documents. The aim of this review is to provide an in-depth understanding of curriculum development concepts, the challenges faced, and best practices in curriculum implementation across different educational contexts.

The sources used in this literature review include previous studies, curriculum development theories, and existing educational policies in Indonesia (Mulyasa, 2014). The analysis is done by identifying key themes that emerge from the literature and synthesizing them in a manner relevant to the research topic. The researcher also takes into account the social, cultural, and political context that influences curriculum development policies in Indonesia. Thus, this literature review focuses on critically analyzing existing concepts and theories to understand how curriculum development can be improved in the future.

To increase the validity and credibility of the findings, the researcher has carefully selected literature from trusted sources that have undergone peer review (Sugiyono, 2014). Only literature from credible sources is considered in this study. The researcher also utilizes studies from various perspectives to obtain a broader understanding of the topic of curriculum development (Furchan, 2004). Through this approach, the study aims to make a significant contribution to the understanding of curriculum development and educational practices in Indonesia.

RESULT

Based on the literature review conducted in this study, several findings related to curriculum development and implementation in Indonesia were identified. The results are divided into three main sub-findings: the impact of curriculum implementation on learning, the role of technology in education, and the challenges of implementing a character- and competency-based curriculum. Each of these sub-findings will be explained in detail to provide a clearer picture of the development of education in Indonesia (Nasution, 2001; Mulyasa, 2013; Mulyasa, 2014).

Curriculum Development

The curriculum has always been a topic of debate, as there are constant discussions on how the future of education should be shaped and who the curriculum is meant for. Every time a curriculum is developed, teachers and parents tend to complain because it keeps changing. Even educational leaders often clash over the changes and developments in the curriculum. Since the independence of Indonesia, the curriculum has undergone changes 11 times, 8 of which occurred before the era of regional autonomy and 3 times after regional autonomy (Widyastono, 2014), among them are:

1. 1947 Curriculum: Initially not referred to as a curriculum but as a detailed lesson plan in primary schools.
2. 1964 Curriculum: The government refined the 1947 curriculum and renamed it the Primary School Education Plan.
3. 1968 Curriculum: Aimed to form a Pancasila-based individual, focusing on moral values, physical health, and intellectual development.
4. 1973 Curriculum (PPSP): Developed as a laboratory school project but was not feasible for national dissemination due to high costs.
5. 1975 Curriculum: Focused on making education more efficient and effective.
6. 1984 Curriculum (CBSA): Focused on learning through experience, aiming to help students remember knowledge.
7. 1994 Curriculum: Introduced a three-period academic year system, encouraging parent involvement in early educational assessments.
8. 1999 Curriculum: Focused on developing cognitive, psychomotor, and affective skills.
9. 2004 Curriculum (KBK): Allowed schools to develop curricula based on their needs and student requirements.
10. 2006 Curriculum (KTSP): Focused on integrating students' potential, needs, and the context of national and regional requirements.
11. 2013 Curriculum: Focused on competency-based character development, integrating knowledge, values, and attitudes into the educational process.

In essence, the curriculum is not a static program but a dynamic one that requires constant development. It is essential for educators to understand the significance of curriculum development and its role in shaping the nation's educational goals.

Basically, the Curriculum is not raw material that is ready-to-serve at any time and anywhere. It is the responsibility of all elements concerned with education to explain the importance of developing the Curriculum. The Curriculum is a program provided by educational institutions (schools) for students that discusses methods, content, objectives, and evaluations in learning (Hamalik, 2012). Developing the Curriculum should not be separated from the Educational Objectives, the content of education, the teaching-learning process, media and teaching tools, and assessment activities (Sukmadinata, 1997). The development of the Curriculum is done to create individuals with broad knowledge and strong educational character. Therefore, it is

expected that teachers (educators) will skillfully instill the values of life, self-concept, and the principles for nation-building in students, with a life orientation and educational goals aimed at the future. Teachers are key to the implementation and success of the Curriculum.

The formulation of educational objectives is based on government regulations and policies, surveys on parents' or communities' perceptions regarding their needs, which are sent in written or oral form, surveys on expert views in various fields, manpower surveys, experiences of other countries facing similar issues, and in-depth studies through research. The government also needs to pay attention to school facilities and infrastructure. For example, the school districts in the United States show that by the fall of 2002, 99% of American schools had various types of internet access. They also allocated \$7.87 billion for technological equipment in the 2003-2004 school year and \$7.06 billion in 2004-2005 (Steven & Heidi, 2005).

Regarding the content of education, it must align with the educational needs determined by curriculum planners. Regarding the teaching-learning process (PBM), the process should consider appropriate teaching methods and techniques. In Riau, for example, to improve student performance and change learning styles, reasoning, and critical and creative thinking, inquiry-based learning methods can be used in science lessons (Suwondo and Wulandari, 2013). Therefore, the teaching process should also be supported by media, teaching tools, and assessment evaluations as integral parts of teaching. Curriculum development is a very important issue. It is a complex process involving various interrelated components: education or curriculum experts, subject-matter specialists, educators, and education officials, to help navigate the changing times and welcome the ASEAN Community (MEA).

The Impact of Curriculum Implementation

The impact of curriculum implementation on the learning process is significant in improving the quality of education. According to Nasution (2001), an appropriate curriculum can provide clear direction for teachers and students to achieve educational goals. A well-implemented curriculum can facilitate students in optimally developing their skills and knowledge, as explained by Mulyasa (2013), that a relevant curriculum can enhance the quality of learning. In this context, the curriculum not only serves as a guide for material but also as a tool to measure success in achieving educational

objectives (Sagala, 2013). However, despite many curricula being designed, the role of the teacher is crucial in implementing them effectively (Mulyasa, 2014; Sagala, 2013).

The most noticeable effect of curriculum implementation on learning is the enhancement of students' cognitive abilities. Furchan (2004) states that well-structured learning will encourage students to think critically and analytically. In this regard, the use of active learning methods, as applied in the 2013 Curriculum, encourages students to engage more in the learning process (Sanjaya, 2014). As found in a study by Goldstein et al. (2011), integrating quantitative skills and active learning in the curriculum can improve students' understanding of the material. Therefore, a well-implemented curriculum can improve the overall learning process (Nasution, 2001).

In addition, the curriculum must be continually updated to keep up with the changing times. Klaus (2014) reveals that curriculum changes in many countries are driven by the need to prepare students to face global challenges. In Indonesia, the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum, which emphasizes character and competency development, is crucial in shaping students who are not only intelligent but also have good character (Mulyasa, 2014; Maranatha & Mahlon, 2020). Through this curriculum development, students are expected to be more prepared to face challenges in the workforce and social life (Sagala, 2013). Therefore, periodic evaluation of the curriculum implementation is necessary to ensure its effectiveness (Widyastono & Hasan, 2014).

The Role of Technology in Education

The role of technology in education is also an important aspect in the development of an effective curriculum. Hamalik (2013) states that the development of information technology should be utilized to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. The use of technology in learning not only increases the accessibility of information but also makes learning more interesting and interactive for students. As explained by Sugiyono (2014), technology allows teachers to access various learning resources that can enrich the students' learning experiences. Additionally, technology can improve communication quality between students and teachers (Stevenson, 2005).

In the context of the curriculum, technology can be used to improve learning quality through digital media, such as educational videos, educational apps, and e-learning platforms (Stevenson, 2005). By using technology, teachers can provide more

varied learning materials that meet students' needs. For example, Chan et al. (2012) suggested that using computer models for simulations in learning can enrich students' understanding of scientific concepts. Furthermore, technology allows learning to take place flexibly, both inside and outside the classroom, which helps students manage their time and learning (Goldstein et al., 2011).

However, the use of technology in education also faces its own challenges. Wibowo (2007) explains that not all schools in Indonesia have adequate technology facilities, especially in remote areas. This poses a barrier to the equal implementation of technology in the curriculum. Therefore, government policies are needed to ensure that every school has equal access to technology that can support the learning process (Sugiyono, 2014). As Zubaedi (2013) points out, the curriculum integrating technology must be adapted to the conditions and needs of the school to prevent increasing disparities between schools (Sagala, 2013).

Challenges in Implementing Character and Competency-Based Curriculum

The biggest challenge in implementing a character and competency-based curriculum is the difference in understanding and implementation at the school level. Nasution (1994) emphasizes the importance of alignment between the curriculum objectives and classroom learning practices. Many schools face difficulties in instilling character values in students due to a lack of understanding of how to integrate these values into every subject. Therefore, more intensive training for teachers is needed to implement the character and competency-based curriculum effectively (Mulyasa, 2014; Ribka & Manik, 2022).

Additionally, implementing a character-based curriculum requires support from various parties, including parents and the community. Sagala (2013) reveals that collaboration between schools, parents, and communities is crucial in creating an environment that supports students' character development. In some areas, other challenges include differences in local cultural values, which can affect the perspective on education. Thus, a more flexible approach needs to be applied in developing a curriculum that suits the social and cultural contexts of each region (Sukmadinata, 1997; Sugiharto, 2008).

The shift in educational paradigms, focusing on character and competency development, also requires continuous evaluation and updates. Widyastono and Hasan

(2014) state that ongoing evaluation of the curriculum will help assess the development of students' character and competencies. Additionally, this evaluation can provide valuable feedback for future curriculum development. With proper evaluation, the curriculum can be adjusted to meet the evolving needs of students and society, ensuring that educational goals are achieved effectively (Sagala, 2013; Mulyasa, 2014; Ndolu, Malau, Manik, & Iswahyudi, 2022).

DISCUSSION

Before delving into a deeper discussion, it is important to outline several aspects that are the main focus of this study. The discussion will be divided into three interconnected sub-topics: the implementation of the curriculum in learning, the shortcomings of curriculum development, the advantages of curriculum development, and the alternative steps that schools should take. Each of these sub-topics will be analyzed by referring to previous research findings, existing theories, and the current state of education. Therefore, this discussion is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the various dynamics affecting the development and implementation of the curriculum in Indonesia.

Curriculum Implementation

Each curriculum has a different implementation method, but the goal is the same: to produce Indonesians who can recognize themselves through the creativity they produce, by strengthening integrated attitudes, skills, and knowledge. It is highly encouraged that teachers work extra hard and professionally in educating students while maintaining good relationships with students' parents. Teachers must design meaningful and enjoyable (affective) learning, organize lessons, choose appropriate learning approaches, determine learning procedures, and form competencies effectively while setting the criteria for student success (Mulyasa, 2013).

In this regard, teachers must be aware that the teaching-learning process is very complex as it involves pedagogical, psychological, and didactic aspects simultaneously. Teachers must also be able to make appropriate assessment decisions when students have not yet discovered their character and competencies. As seen in Korea, using QR-Code-Recording on smartphones was more effective in motivating students to learn and produce a digital generation (Jun-Ki, et al., 2011).

In implementing the curriculum, it must be viewed based on the situation and conditions of the school where all elements are encouraged to actively participate in educating and forming accountable students with Pancasila values, without exception. This includes supervisors, school principals, teachers, students, and parents, and even the surrounding community must be involved and responsible for supporting the formation of students' character. The Pancasila spirit is a spirit of devotion to God, respecting different religions, not acting arbitrarily towards others, upholding human values, and feeling that Indonesia is part of oneself. It includes a willingness to sacrifice for the nation and state, a love for the homeland, prioritizing national interests, and solving national issues through deliberation and consensus, while working together for the nation's progress and social justice.

In realizing this, teachers play a vital role in continually educating, guiding, and directing students so that they can achieve the educational goal of producing productive, innovative, and creative individuals who can address national issues that remain unresolved today, especially regarding the direction of Indonesian education, with its changes, developments, and curriculum implementation. The 2013 Curriculum is a follow-up to the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), which was implemented in 2004 (Mulyasa, 2014).

The competencies students need to possess include knowledge, skills, and basic values reflected in their thinking and actions (Nurhadi, 2004). Educators must continuously reflect on students' thoughts and actions to make them competent in possessing knowledge, skills, and basic values in answering the challenges of the nation. The goal of the 2013 Curriculum is to produce individuals who are able to create (productive), innovate, care (affective), and generate creativity through attitudes, skills, and knowledge, integrated into a cohesive whole (Mulyasa, 2014).

Shortcomings of Curriculum Development

Curriculum development tends to prioritize group tendencies. New curriculum policies often reflect the ideas and beliefs of individuals rather than the needs of students or society as a whole (Abraham Andero, 2000). Fundamentally, the curriculum exists for the benefit of students due to the demands of the times. The curriculum is the law/guideline for schools, serving the interests of the state, nation, educational institutions, school heads, and teachers. As occurred in Monroe, significant changes to

the pharmacy curriculum had a large impact on pharmacotherapy decisions, resulting in a paradigm shift in the way drug-target interaction studies are taught, shifting dynamics in dictating pharmacotherapy choices (Satyanarayajois & Rama, 2010).

Shifts in the school's core tasks also affect the meaning of the curriculum. The curriculum is no longer viewed merely as a subject but as the learning experience of students. In society's view, the curriculum encompasses all activities performed by students both inside and outside school, under the supervision of their teachers. The burden on schools has become increasingly complex. Society demands that schools be able to produce Indonesians with good moral values, personalities, and skills suitable for the workforce.

In this regard, the Ministry of Education and Culture should not only assign teachers the responsibility of reading and studying curriculum documents and delivering lessons within the school, but also require an understanding of the current environment. Achieving the objectives of a curriculum should not only be measured by students mastering all content but also by how students engage in learning experiences (student behavior beyond teacher control) (Sanjaya, 2014).

Sometimes, due to the broad nature of teaching and learning concepts, the curriculum becomes unclear and its uses and functions unsystematic. The National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 states that the curriculum is "a set of plans and arrangements regarding the content and materials of lessons, and the methods used as guidelines for organizing teaching and learning activities" (Sanjaya, 2014).

Advantages of Curriculum Development

Changes and developments in curriculum implementation are inevitable. Without development, curriculum application would become monotonous and outdated. Education in Indonesia must keep up with the times, and curriculum development must provide a solid foundation for shaping character, values, and noble ethics in the nation's next generation (students). Without a structured and systematic curriculum, education will not be successful because the curriculum is the pinnacle and determinant of the entire educational process. The curriculum is the soul that educators instill in students to help achieve the nation's goals and instill values in students, enabling them to face current dynamics (Nasution, 2001; Wallangara, et al., 2023).

Curriculum implementation is divided into two levels: School-Level Curriculum, which is the responsibility of the school principal, and Class-Level Curriculum, where

the teacher plays a key role in the teaching-learning process (Hamalik, 2012). Teachers are expected to have the ability to shape students with attitudes, skills, and knowledge to become strong foundations for productive, innovative, creative, and independent individuals (Mulyasa, 2014). Through curriculum development, various subjects are grouped, and learning is organized. Curriculum development is essential for managing education, as the curriculum is closely linked to the goals, content, function, and evaluation of education. Seen from the perspective of society and culture, with the school as an educational institution, the curriculum plays an important role, including in its conservative, critical (evaluation), and active roles (Hamalik, 2013).

In the face of competition and the chaos of the global free market, education must provide solutions to address these issues amid globalization and Westernization. This requires a paradigm shift (a new paradigm) to offer smart solutions to the world of education. The development of education directly affects planning, implementation, and evaluation, and the hope is to organize education according to the surrounding environment, with teachers and school principals as the primary implementers. Teachers and principals must interact and address school needs related to available resources and materials for the teaching process, while principals maintain teachers' skills in designing lessons (Sagala, 2013).

Alternative Steps Schools Should Take

The alternative steps schools must take include organizing seminars or special education for all educators that align with their tasks and expertise. The involvement of principals and teachers in fostering a sense of accountability to stakeholders (both internal and external) will increase their sense of ownership of the school, motivating them to empower resources as efficiently as possible. Meanwhile, schools must understand the needs and demands of their stakeholders, forming good relationships with companies both locally and abroad to develop and improve school facilities. This is a concrete step to address environmental demands and needs, thereby making schools professional, accountable, and directing students accordingly.

Curriculum development is a key strategy for achieving educational goals. Curriculum formulation must reflect a focus on the changing times and students' growth, as the curriculum represents the student's experience both inside and outside school. Curriculum planning has its own significance through practices like enriching

knowledge and expanding experience. A proof of curriculum adaptation can be seen in high schools in Gilgit-Baltistan, where a teacher (Mazer Khan and Irfan Baig, pseudonym) emphasized the importance of students engaging deeply in learning. The teacher used a question-and-answer method to deliver lessons, ensuring that knowledge was not stagnant and instead provided students with knowledge and insight (Ali, 2011). Through this, teachers play a central role in the learning process and in shaping students' learning culture. Teachers are the key players in implementing the curriculum and shaping character through the power of knowledge.

For instance, Allison, an art teacher at Longwood High School in the United States, empowered her students by making lessons engaging. Instead of giving up, she made efforts to get to know her students better, greeting them from desk to desk and building relationships, challenging them to think about composition, sketches, and various media as part of her teaching method. As a result, "students' art became the teacher's art" (Kimberly & Lajevic, 2011). Curriculum changes must be seen from a bio-socio-cultural perspective because they affect students' knowledge (knowledge) and behavior. Rapid advancements in science and technology have both positive and negative impacts on various aspects of life. One example is Estuari, where more than 70% of students have never used computers for investigation, believing that visual models (using their naked eye) are more effective, basing their assumptions on scientific literature (books). They believe that scientists use computers because they do not make mistakes and provide quick answers (Chan et al., 2012).

Evidence shows that investigation strategies, such as forming groups using Knowledge Landscapes (Knowscapes), are implemented in various countries (international collaboration) such as Western Europe, Asian countries, and North America. These countries collaborate in disciplines like Physics, Biology, and Chemistry in Western Europe and Economics and Psychology in Asia, with international collaboration (IC) in these fields being the highest (Klaus, 2014).

Curriculum development must not only focus on technological knowledge but also emphasize effective implementation, requiring healthy cooperation among supervisors, school principals, teachers, students, parents, and a conducive school environment. This is because even small changes to the curriculum can influence students' learning styles and attitudes. In the United States, for example, the main goal of revising the curriculum is to provide authentic activities that teach students through

an active learning approach to understand the nature of science. For instance, applying statistical analysis methods to analyze biological data by using scientific literature (books) to help them formulate hypotheses (Jessica & Flynn, 2011).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this article is that continuous and adaptive curriculum development is crucial to ensure that education remains relevant to the times and meets societal needs. The curriculum must equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to face global challenges, while also strengthening their character and moral values. The roles of teachers and school principals are essential in implementing the curriculum, as they must be able to adjust teaching methods to meet the needs and potentials of students.

The use of technology in education also plays a critical role in enhancing the effectiveness of learning and helping students acquire knowledge in a more interactive and comprehensive manner. The main challenge is how to address differences in understanding and implementing the curriculum across various regions, and how to ensure that the curriculum applied meets both local and global needs. Thus, a curriculum that focuses on competency and character can improve student achievement and produce a generation that is prepared to face an increasingly complex world.

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