

TEACHER STRATEGIES AND EFFORTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM AT AL-IKLAS TAQWA ISLAMIC KINDERGARTEN

Martua Halomoan¹, Putri Windi Rahmadani², Indah Mutia Sari³, Siti Aisyah⁴

^{*1, 2, 3, 4}Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

^{*1}e-mail: Halomoan63@gmail.com

Abstract: Children's education age early is an important time, with parents and teachers playing a role big. At Al Ikhlas Taqwa Kindergarten, teachers implement Independent Curriculum through learning based on project, discussion groups, and utilization technology like application education and educational videos. Teachers also routinely follow training for increase ability. Although face challenges, they do assessment and evaluation for ensure learning walk effective, helpful child learn and grow with good. Research This aiming for identify strategies and efforts made by teachers in implementing independent programs in TK Al-Ikhlas Taqwa. This study uses a qualitative approach method with a descriptive-based method. Data were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation. The research findings show that teachers use various strategies, such as project-based learning, group discussion-based learning, training in implementing the independent curriculum, technology as a teaching resource. In addition, teachers also face challenges such as a lack of understanding of the independent curriculum. This study provides insight into the importance of the role of teachers in implementing effective independent learning programs. Strengthening a concept and implementing a curriculum which is one of the government's efforts to answer questions about how to teach or what competencies can be produced through the education system in Indonesia.

Keywords: AUD, implementation of independent curriculum, teacher strategy, teacher efforts.

Introduction

The development process of an individual is not only assessed from his intelligence, but can also be assessed based on his religious quality and skill quality so that it is useful for the country and nation (Suhelayanti, 2020). With education, humans can learn to follow the progress and changes that occur in all things, when viewed from past developments in the 4.0 era. to the readiness of society 5.0, basically humans have a period of change into a form of movement towards progress. Education becomes a progress referring to the steps that must be taken by educators to produce human resources and achievements that are in line with the achievements that have been set when carrying out educational activities. The impact of this era's development also affects the world of education which is a challenge and demand for technological literacy that requires educators to transform the learning process.

The concept and objectives of education cannot be separated from the curriculum which is the standard for organizing a learning process at all levels of education. The task of an educator is not only to transfer knowledge to students, but also to educate them to become human beings with noble character, so that in the future their students will become educated and noble human beings. (Assingkily & Rangkuti, 2020: 92-107). The curricular approach used in each educational institution certainly provides a different approach and burden between one educational institution and another, or there are improvements in two institutions that improve

each other from one another. This growth depends on the needs of an institution and is taken into account in all aspects of life that continue to develop, including the development of understanding among professionals about the concept and limitations of the program used (Ulani et al., 2024).

The curriculum is very important for the world of education, as a reference and goal to achieve the desired educational goals. Literally, the curriculum comes from the English "*curriculum*" which is taken from the Greek language, namely "*curir*" which means "runner" and "*curere*" which means "racing place". Based on this term, the curriculum is interpreted as "*the distance that must be traveled by a runner from start to finish to get a medal or award*" based on this understanding, the curriculum is then adjusted to the world of education and interpreted as "*a number of subjects that must be taken by a student from the beginning to the end of the program in order to obtain a diploma*".

The world of children is a world of play, and play can be realized through interesting and fun things. Children also find it easier to explore and actively find new knowledge. Of course, this is different from the concept of learning at other school levels which are certainly more serious academically. Early childhood learning is not about achieving educational goals, but about developing children's potential through stimulation and encouragement. important for their growth and development, all of which can be achieved in the concept of learning through play.

The curriculum in schools has an important role in achieving educational goals. The existence of the curriculum is an integral part of the educational process at every level of school education, the curriculum is interpreted as an educational program whose implementation and function are general guidelines for managing an educational institution system. At the PAUD level, the curriculum is designed and structured to develop the various potentials of children with several special activities wrapped in pleasant activities and atmospheres so that children can develop their potential, this aims to prepare children for higher levels of education (Saabighoot et al., 2024).

At the early childhood education level, it is important to cultivate good and positive character, emotional, artistic, social, cognitive, verbal, physical abilities, self-discipline, independence, spiritual, and maximum five senses. Thus, at the PAUD level, it becomes the most important role in the development of children in the future, this is the main foundation that underlies how children's behavior and personality continue to grow and develop. The experiences that children get at the PAUD level are very influential in determining how successful children will be in the future, and this will also affect how children respond to various problems that will arise in their lives.

Early childhood education (PAUD) plays an important role in developing children's character and basic skills. With the implementation of an independent curriculum, PAUD teachers, including at TK Al-Ikhlas Taqwa, must be able to create flexible, child-centered learning based on their interests and potential. This Independent Curriculum is designed to offer teachers flexibility in designing learning so that the educational process can be adjusted to students' needs. However, the implementation of an independent learning program requires a deep understanding and creativity from teachers to implement it according to the local context (Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022)

Method

Qualitative research methods are used in this study, namely the method used is a descriptive method. This method is used because we want to test the status of several groups of people, towards an object or condition in a system of thought that arises from a series of events in the past compared to what is happening in the present. The goal is to describe a systematic,

factual, and accurate view of activities in terms of facts, behavior, and relationships. between the phenomena that occur. This study also uses two methods, namely observation and interviews. Curriculum implementation strategies are needed in education.

Results and discussion

Early childhood refers to the age of 0 to 6 years, where individuals experience very rapid growth and development, physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially. This period is often referred to as the "golden age" because it is a crucial period in the formation of children's basic skills and character. so that during this period parents, teachers and the community must provide the best education during this period.

this stage , the most important role in providing education is parents and teachers. Parents play a role in providing education at home and teachers provide education at school which in the implementation of learning activities is based on the established curriculum.

In implementing the Merdeka curriculum, teachers must have various strategies to be able to implement the Merdeka curriculum because by using strategies, teachers will find it easier to implement it. For example, at AL IKHLAS TAQWA Kindergarten, teachers use various strategies to implement the curriculum.

Teacher strategies in implementing the Merdeka curriculum

The learning strategy itself is an outline of an action that will be taken to achieve the goals that have been set. Learning strategy refers to the knowledge and strategies that a person has or that can be used to achieve these goals. Learning strategy itself has a very broad meaning, it includes planning, implementation, assessment, enrichment, and remedial which includes choosing and determining changes in behavior, procedures, approaches, techniques, methods, and limits and norms in success.

The elements of basic learning strategies and steps that must be taken in designing learning strategies consist of:

- a. Setting goals that are always used as the most basic reference in determining and designing activities and implementing activities.
- b. Choosing a learning approach, choosing a point of view in conveying what has been planned in order to achieve the learning objectives that have been set. Before carrying out learning activities, you must choose an approach and consider the main approach that is seen as the most powerful and most effective in order to achieve the desired objectives.
- c. Selecting and determining learning methods, techniques, and procedures, methods are ways that are determined to deliver materials according to the objectives of a learning. Techniques are ways of implementing methods as a means of supporting learning that has been determined by paying attention to the speed and accuracy of learning, designing styles, designing assessments and remedial. (Asrori, 2016)

The strategy that used by teachers at the Al Iklas Taqwa Kindergarten school implement curriculum independent is as following:

1. Project based learning

One of the strategies in implementing the independent curriculum at AlIklas Taqwa Kindergarten is project-based learning. Project-based learning (PBL) is a teaching method that places projects or activities at the center of the learning process. In the context of early childhood education (PAUD), PjBL is designed to encourage children to be actively involved in exploration, discovery, and problem solving through projects related to their real world.

In this strategy, teachers involve children in simple projects that are relevant to the learning topic, such as making collages from simple materials and watching useful films to help

children deepen and become familiar with the learning theme or topic. This process not only enriches children's learning experience, but also develops their ability to work together, solve problems and think creatively. (Susanti, 2020)

2. Teachers carry out group discussion-based learning

In addition, teachers at AL IKHLAS TAQWA Kindergarten also conduct learning through group discussions as a strategy that can make students active during the learning period. Group discussion-based learning provides an opportunity for students to learn together about tasks in a structured manner and children can learn to collaborate with each other.

3. Teachers take part in training activities to implement the independent curriculum

Teachers at TK Al Ikhlas Taqwa also often participate in training in order to strive to implement the independent curriculum and develop learning strategies that can be carried out. Based on the results of interviews conducted at TK Al Ikhlas Taqwa, it can be concluded that educators often receive training programs such as webinars that are often held, which aim to deepen their abilities and knowledge regarding independent curriculum-based learning (Kelas et al., 2024)

In the process of implementing the independent curriculum, teachers face a number of challenges. One of the main challenges is the lack of understanding of the concept of flexibility and differentiation which is the core of the independent study program. This makes it difficult for some teachers to design lessons that are truly child-centered. For example, in TK Al-Ikhlas Taqwa which has several challenges that are often faced, for example, limited time, limited resources. Teachers often face challenges in getting access and learning materials needed according to the curriculum and limited concepts of basic understanding of the curriculum. The implementation of curriculum learning through three stages, namely:

- a. Diagnostic assessment, in other words, teachers conduct initial assessments on students to identify their potential, characteristics, needs, developmental stages, and learning achievement stages. This is usually done at the beginning of the school year, so that the results can be used to plan better learning strategies.
- b. Planning, namely the teacher organizes the learning process based on the results of diagnostic tests and divides students according to their ability levels (Abdul Fattah Nasution et al., 2023).

Teachers will conduct formative evaluations periodically to evaluate student progress and, if necessary, adjust learning methods. At the end of the learning process, teachers can also use summative assessments to evaluate whether learning objectives have been achieved or not.

4. Utilizing technology as a teaching resource

The following strategy used by teachers at TK Al Iklas Taqwa is to utilize technology as a teaching resource. Teachers utilize technology by using educational applications to introduce basic learning concepts such as the concept of color, numbers, and shapes. Technology is also utilized by presenting short videos that are relevant and in accordance with the learning theme.

The use of technology in early childhood education (PAUD) can increase children's engagement and learning outcomes. Teachers can use interactive educational applications to introduce basic concepts such as colors, numbers, and shapes. In addition, short videos related to learning topics, such as animal or plant life, can trigger children's curiosity. Documentation of children's daily activities through photos or videos can also be compiled as a digital portfolio for parents to see the child's development. (Susanti, 2020)

so that the use of technology can support exploration and creativity-based learning in early childhood education (Hendrawati, 2017).

Teachers of Al Ikhlas Taqwa Kindergarten utilize technology by using educational applications to introduce basic learning concepts such as the concept of color, numbers, and shapes. Technology is also utilized by presenting short videos that are relevant and in accordance with the learning theme.

Conclusion

The study aims to determine the strategies and efforts of Al-Ikhlas Taqwa Kindergarten teachers in implementing independent programs. Teachers use many teaching strategies, such as project-based approaches, group discussions, and the use of technology to support the learning process. In addition, teachers also routinely attend independent learning curriculum training to improve their understanding and skills. However, in the implementation process, teachers face challenges, such as a lack of understanding of flexibility and differentiation which are the core of independent learning, limited time, resources, and limited access to relevant learning materials. Teachers have a very important role in creating child-centered learning, according to the principles of the independent curriculum, so that children can develop their skills, character, and potential optimally. In addition, technology is used as a source of education through applications. Short and educational videos to introduce basic concepts to children. This study highlights the importance of innovative strategies and ongoing training for teachers to ensure the effectiveness of implementation Merdeka program, especially at the early childhood education (PAUD) level.

Bibliography

- Abdul Fattah Nasution, Setia Ningsih, Mona Febrica Silva, Leli Suharti, & Jekson Parulian Harahap. (2023). Konsep Dan Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka. *COMPETITIVE: Journal of Education*, 2(3), 201–211. <https://doi.org/10.58355/competitive.v2i3.37>
- Asrori, M. (2016). Pengertian, Tujuan Dan Ruang Lingkup Strategi Pembelajaran. *Madrasah*, 6(2), 26. <https://doi.org/10.18860/jt.v6i2.3301>
- Hendrawati. (2017). *Jurnal Akuntansi*, 11, 134–156.
- Kelas, D. I., Jatibarat, V. S. D. N., & Jepara, K. (2024). 1,2,3,4. 6(1), 91–100.
- Menteri Pendidikan Kebudayaan Riset dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia. (2022). *Salinan Keputusan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 56/M/2022 tentang Pedoman Penerapan Kurikulum dalam Rangka Pemulihan Pembelajaran*. 112.
- Saabighoot, Y. A., Supriatna, E., Arzaqi, R. N., & Rusdiyani, I. (2024). Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka berbasis Sibernetik pada Lembaga Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini di Provinsi Banten. 7(3), 894–900. <https://doi.org/10.31004/aulad.v7i3.804>
- Susanti, S. S. (2020). Pemanfaatan Teknologi dalam Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini STAI Darussalam Lampung. *Azzahra*, 2(1), 65–75. <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2016/08/08/pengguna->
- Ulani, R. L., Novita, N., & Alimni. (2024). Strategi Pembelajaran Anak Usia Dini Di Tk Tunas Bangsa Kota Bengkulu. *QALAM: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 5(1), 1–7. <https://ejournal.stais.ac.id/index.php/qlm/index>
- Yuris, E., & Raniyah, Q. (2022). Strategi Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar melalui Kegiatan Outbound pada Anak Usia Dini di Yayasan H. Abdurrahim Harahap Kecamatan Medan Amplas. *Journal on Teacher Education*, 4(2), 1238-1245.
- Nasution, M., Ainun, N., & Jf, N. Z. (2022). Pengabdian dan pengajaran sebagai hakikat pendidik dalam pendidikan Islam. *Abdi Cendekia: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 1(1), 27-33.
- Azzahro, A. A., & Mavianti, M. (2024). Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter dalam

Meningkatkan Sikap Peduli terhadap Kebersihan pada Siswa. *Journal on Teacher Education*, 5(3), 111-119.