

Analysis of Constraints on the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in PAUD Level Mobilizing Schools in Situbondo District

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Abstract

This study uses a qualitative research approach to discuss the obstacles to the implementation of the independent curriculum in PAUD-driving schools in Situbondo Regency. Qualitative research methods were used to collect data through in-depth interviews with PAUD teachers in kindergartens in Situbondo, including Nurul Anshor Islamic Kindergarten, DWP 1 Besuki Kindergarten, DWP 1 Asembagus Kindergarten, Kartika IV-71 Kindergarten, Nurul Huda Kindergarten, DWP 1 Jatibanteng Kindergarten, and Hasyim Asy'ari Kindergarten, direct observation in schools that were the object of research, and document analysis related to the implementation of the independent curriculum. The results of this study show obstacles. These obstacles include differences in students' learning styles and initial abilities, adaptation to the "All Day Without Mom" program, the use of less attractive worksheets, limited facilities and infrastructure, limited understanding of IT teachers, limited budget, and difficulties in preparing school documents. The recommendations proposed to overcome these obstacles are teacher training and support, cooperation with parents, development of interesting learning materials, improvement of facilities and infrastructure, IT training for teachers, efficient budget management, and support in the preparation of school documents. By implementing these recommendations, it is hoped that PAUD schools in Situbondo District can improve the effectiveness of the implementation of the independent curriculum and the quality of education for PAUD children holistically and sustainably.

Keywords: *Driving School, Implementation of the Independent Curriculum, PAUD Situbondo*

Introduction

Education is one of the important elements in the formation of the character and quality of a country's human resources. Curriculum development is a very crucial part of ensuring that the educational process runs effectively and is relevant to the times (Sukmadinata, 2009). In an era of dynamic change like today, adaptation to a curriculum that is in accordance with the demands of the times is a must (Istiqomah, 2016). Adaptation to a curriculum that is in accordance with the demands of the times because very rapid technological changes characterize today's times. Digital innovation and changes in the way of working, communicating, and learning happen quickly (Shadieff & Yang, 2020). Therefore, the curriculum must continue to adapt to technological advances and the development of society. A curriculum that is relevant to the demands of the times helps students to prepare for future challenges. This includes preparation for jobs that may not exist today, as well as an understanding of global issues such as climate change, AI technologies, and health that will affect future generations. A challenging and time-appropriate curriculum can help students develop critical, analytical, and creative thinking skills (Sabri, 2020). These changes are essential in solving complex problems and adapting to ever-changing environments.

In an increasingly connected world, students need to understand global issues and contribute to a diverse environment (Abdurrahmansyah, 2022). A curriculum that is inclusive and includes a global perspective helps students become more effective leaders at the international level. In the face of a sudden external crisis or change, individuals who have experienced education with an adaptive curriculum will be more resistant and flexible in adjusting to unexpected situations. Countries and individuals who have curricula that match the demands of the times will be more competitive in the global market. They will have more qualified human resources and are ready to compete in various fields. A curriculum that is relevant to the demands of the times can encourage innovation in education itself. Teachers and curriculum developers must constantly look for new ways to teach and learn to meet the ever-changing needs of students (Anwar, 2019). Adaptation to a curriculum that is in line with the demands of the times is not only important but also a necessity so that education can play an effective role in preparing future generations to face a rapidly changing world.

The above phenomenon can reflect that the educational curriculum must always be updated and adjusted to the times. In today's rapidly changing world, where technology and employment change significantly in a short period, the curriculum must remain relevant to produce graduates who are ready to face the challenges of tomorrow. If the curriculum is not updated regularly, then students may experience gaps in their skills and knowledge, which may no longer fit the needs of the world of work or society. Thus, it emphasizes that adaptation to the demands of the times in the educational curriculum is a critical step to ensure effective and relevant education for future generations. The Independent Curriculum, one of the emerging educational initiatives in Indonesia, is designed to produce a generation that is more creative, innovative, and able to be globally competitive. The program is designed to apply at all levels of education, including PAUD.

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum in PAUD has undeniable significance. The Independent curriculum gives children the freedom to develop their potential personally, encouraging their unique interests and talents in a supportive educational environment. In addition to focusing on academic aspects, the curriculum also emphasizes character development and social skills, creating a holistic educational approach that prepares children for success in various aspects of life (Jannati et al., 2023). By respecting individual and cultural diversity, the Independent Curriculum helps shape children into individuals who are tolerant, open, and full of respect for differences (Suwono, 2022). More than that, this approach encourages independence, a sense of responsibility, and the ability to think critically. By always maintaining its relevance to the times, the Independent Curriculum ensures that children gain knowledge and skills that are in accordance with future demands, including an understanding of technology, environmental sustainability, and skills needed in the global economy (Kristianto et al., 2023).

Through the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, PAUD can improve the quality of education, create a strong foundation for the development of children who will enter the higher education system, and prepare them to compete at the global level. This is a key step in ensuring that children grow up to be individuals who contribute positively in a diverse and rapidly changing society. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the PAUD level is very important, considering that this stage is the beginning of building children's character and mindset. The Independent Curriculum is an educational innovation designed to produce students who are creative, independent, and able to adapt to changing times. The program focuses not only on academic aspects but also on character development and critical thinking skills. However, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the Early Childhood Education

(PAUD) level does not always run smoothly. Situbondo Regency is one of the regions that has PAUD driving schools (Retnaningsih & Khairiyah, 2022).

Situbondo Regency, as one of the regions in Indonesia, has also tried to implement the Independent Curriculum in PAUD-level driving schools. However, as with the implementation of education policies in many regions, there are a number of obstacles that can affect the effectiveness of the Independent Curriculum at the PAUD level. As is often the case in the implementation of education policies in various regions, special challenges also arise, and this can affect the effectiveness of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the PAUD level (Rochanah, 2021). Awareness of the complexity of implementing educational change at various levels and understanding that each stage of education has its own needs and characteristics is important. In the context of PAUD, the Independent Curriculum must be carefully designed to ensure that the education provided reflects the principles of the Independent Curriculum while understanding, in particular, the importance of play, social interaction, and character development at each stage of education. Constraints in implementation, such as poor teacher understanding, differences in student learning styles, and infrastructure and budget issues, should be carefully analyzed, and appropriate solutions should be formulated.

Through a deep understanding of these constraints and appropriate recommendations, PAUD in Situbondo District can ensure that the Independent Curriculum at the PAUD level runs effectively, provides a strong educational foundation, and prepares children for a bright future. This study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the obstacles that arise during the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in PAUD-driving schools in Situbondo Regency. Through a better understanding of the obstacles that arise, it is hoped that solutions can be found that can improve the effectiveness of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the PAUD level. In addition, the urgency of this research will also be discussed in the context of education in Indonesia. Thus, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of education in Situbondo District and, more broadly, in Indonesia.

Method

The approach used in this study is the qualitative research method. This approach was chosen because it prioritizes a deep and interpretive understanding of the constraints in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in PAUD schools in Situbondo Regency (National & Pillars, 2018). One of the main techniques used was in-depth interviews, which allowed researchers to interact directly with PAUD teachers from Nurul Anshor Islamic Kindergarten, DWP 1 Besuki Kindergarten, DWP 1 Asembagus Kindergarten, Kartika IV-71 Kindergarten, Nurul Huda Kindergarten, DWP 1 Jatibanteng Kindergarten, and Hasyim Asy'ari Kindergarten who were the subjects of the study. Through interviews, teachers can convey their views, experiences, and obstacles in implementing the Independent Curriculum in detail. In addition, this study also involved direct observation in schools that were the subject of research, allowing researchers to observe the implementation of the curriculum in the field (Sugiyono, 2020). Document analysis related to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum was also carried out, including a review of official documents, curriculum guidelines, and relevant school records. The combination of various data collection techniques is expected to provide a comprehensive and contextual understanding of the obstacles that may be faced in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at the PAUD level. This approach is the basis for analyzing findings and formulating relevant recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the implementation of the independent curriculum in PAUD in Situbondo District.

Results

Driving Schools and Independent Curriculum at the PAUD Level

The concept of Driving Schools is based on the idea that certain schools can serve as agents of change and innovation within the education system. They are expected to create better educational practices that other schools can then adopt. They are expected to be able to create better educational practices, which can then be adopted by other schools because there is a belief that the Driving School has the potential and capacity to be the best example in the world of education—the reasons why they are expected to create better educational practices that other schools can adopt. Driving schools are often chosen because they have shown high achievement or have implemented successful innovations in education. Therefore, they can be a good example for other schools in an effort to improve the quality of education. Driving Schools are expected to develop learning methods, teaching strategies, school management, or educational programs that are more effective and efficient. These best practices can then be shared and adopted by other schools to improve the quality of their education. Driving schools are considered to have an important role in bringing positive changes to the education system. They have greater flexibility and freedom to try innovations without too many bureaucratic constraints. By creating better educational practices, Driving Schools contribute directly to improving the quality of education at the national level. This is a way to raise the standard of education as a whole. The success of the Mover School can motivate other schools to try harder to improve their education. This can create a healthy competitive spirit in the world of education. Thus, the hope that the Driving School can create better educational practices that other schools can adopt is a strategic step in an effort to improve the overall quality of education in a country. Through this research, it was discussed about driving schools at the PAUD level.

Obstacles to Implementing the Independent Curriculum in Early Childhood Education Schools

Several obstacles can be identified in implementing the independent curriculum at the PAUD level driving schools in Situbondo Regency—differences in learning styles and students' initial abilities. Teachers at PAUD schools identify differences in learning styles and initial abilities for each child. This is a challenge in adopting an independent curriculum because it requires adapting learning for each student. The need for adaptation of the "All Day Without Mom" program. Some schools, such as Kindergarten DWP 1 Asembagus, face obstacles in adapting students to the "All Day Without Mom" program. This process reflects the challenges in developing students' independent character and requires collaboration with parents. Using unattractive worksheets is also an obstacle. As found, data from the Kartika IV-71 Kindergarten School uses worksheets as a learning method, which some teachers consider uninteresting for students. This can hinder the effectiveness of learning. Limited facilities and infrastructure in the educational process are important parts that must be overcome immediately. In some cases, such as TK Kartika IV-71, there are limited facilities and infrastructure, such as classrooms, which are not proportional to the number of students. This can hinder the effective development of an independent curriculum. Some teachers, as seen at Kindergarten DWP 1 Jatibanteng, have not mastered information technology (IT), which can affect the quality of learning and interactions with students. In some cases, such as at Hasyim Asy'ari Kindergarten, there are budget limitations in implementing the independent curriculum. This can limit curriculum development and improvement. It doesn't stop at just the budget; other obstacles, such as schools experiencing difficulty in preparing documents such as KOSP and P5 properly, can affect school planning and development.

Based on the constraints above, several recommendations can be put forward to improve the implementation of the independent curriculum at PAUD level driving schools in Situbondo Regency. Efforts to improve the quality of education involve a number of important steps. First, teachers will be given training to understand the independent curriculum and develop learning strategies that suit various student learning styles. In addition, collaboration with parents will be the key to success in adapting children to the 'All Day Without Mom' program, emphasizing the importance of open communication and providing motivation to parents. We are also committed to developing more interesting and interactive learning materials so that we can overcome the problem of using less attractive worksheets. Apart from efforts in the classroom, improving school facilities and infrastructure is also our priority. A comfortable and functional classroom will create a more conducive learning environment. We will also provide information technology training to teachers who have not mastered this aspect, recognizing the important role of technology in modern education. During the carrying out of all these activities, efficient budget management will be an effective basis. Then, optimize the use of the available budget and seek additional resources if needed. Finally, provide support in preparing school documents. By overcoming these obstacles and implementing appropriate recommendations, PAUD-driving schools in Situbondo Regency can be more effective in implementing the independent curriculum and improving the quality of education for PAUD children.

Discussion

PAUD-level driving schools are part of the driving schools program, which is directed at the pre-primary level of education, including PAUD in Indonesia. This initiative is one of the efforts of the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) to improve the quality of education at the preschool level. The following are several important points about PAUD-level driving schools. The main aim of PAUD Level Driving Schools is to improve the quality of early childhood education in Indonesia. This includes increasing teacher capabilities, improving infrastructure, and developing better curricula. Early Childhood Education Schools are often considered laboratories for innovation in preschool education. They have greater flexibility to test and adopt the latest educational innovations, including learning methods that are more interactive and developmentally appropriate for early childhood. One of the main focuses of the PAUD Level Driving School is developing teacher capabilities. They receive the necessary training and support to improve their competence in teaching young children. The PAUD-level driving school program also encourages a holistic approach to PAUD education. This includes developing children's social, cognitive, physical, and emotional skills from an early age (Maftutah et al., 2021). Early Childhood Education Schools receive support in providing relevant learning resources and teaching materials that are appropriate to early childhood development. Then partnerships and collaboration also need to be considered. The initiative often collaborates with external parties, including universities, non-governmental organizations, and private institutions, to support efforts to improve the quality of preschool education. It is hoped that the PAUD Level Driving School can become the best model in preschool education that other PAUD schools throughout Indonesia can adopt. Through the PAUD Level Driving School, the Indonesian government seeks to create a strong educational foundation from an early age, help children develop their potential optimally, and help create a young generation that is better prepared to face the challenges of the future. Driving schools need to pay attention to the dynamics of the current curriculum, such as currently using an independent curriculum.

The Driving School and Independent Curriculum at PAUD Level are two interrelated educational initiatives in the Indonesian government's efforts to improve the quality of education

in the country. Both have similar goals, namely improving the quality of learning and developing students' abilities. By focusing on improving the quality of learning, the independent curriculum seeks to create a better learning experience with a contextual and relevant approach. Apart from that, this curriculum also emphasizes the holistic development of student's abilities, including social aspects, life skills, character, and emotional intelligence. With the existence of driving schools and an independent curriculum, it is hoped that learning will become more creative and innovative, as well as empowering teachers to design learning according to students' needs. Apart from that, it also encourages students to become more independent in learning and ready to face complex global challenges. The main aim of this initiative is to create a relevant learning environment and enable students to grow according to their potential, with the hope of improving the quality of education in Indonesia. The Pengmobil School, with its flexibility, can be a place where the Independent Curriculum for PAUD Level is implemented and tested as an innovation in curriculum and learning approaches. In addition, the Driving School functions as an agent of change that encourages the implementation of educational innovations, including the Independent Curriculum for PAUD Level, which is more open to local variation and adaptation.

The Independent Curriculum at the PAUD level is designed with a framework that schools can adapt to reflect local needs and context. This allows for variations and adjustments to make learning more appropriate to the realities of each region or community. Each region or community has unique characteristics and special challenges in education. Mobilizing Schools, with their mandate to be agents of change, can identify and respond more precisely to local needs. They can adapt curricula and teaching methods to address specific issues relevant to local communities. Through a more open approach to local variations and adaptations, the Pengbangun School pays respect to local wisdom and local culture. This helps maintain and enrich existing educational traditions while enabling the implementation of innovations that meet global needs. The Driving School is a driver of innovation in education by creating space for experimentation and the development of new learning models. They can try new approaches, educational technologies, or teaching strategies that can be examples for other schools. These innovations can result in significant improvements in the quality of education. Mobilizing Schools often collaborate more closely with local communities. This creates opportunities to involve parents, community members, and other stakeholders in the learning process. This collaboration can strengthen relationships between schools and communities and support children's holistic development (Eka & Wati, 2022). Thus, Driving Schools that encourage the implementation of educational innovations, including the Independent Curriculum for PAUD Level, which is more open to local variation and adaptation, play an important role in improving and enriching education in Indonesia by recognizing the uniqueness of each region and community. It also creates opportunities for continuous improvement in children's learning across the country.

Theoretically, Independent Curriculum and Driving Schools at the PAUD level have an important role in improving the quality of preschool education in Indonesia by focusing on the exploration, creativity, and holistic development of children. To understand this in more depth, let's discuss it from the perspective of educational theory and child development. The constructivist approach to education suggests that children are active in constructing their knowledge through interaction with the environment and learning experiences. The Independent Drive and Curriculum School supports this approach by giving children space for their exploration and discovery. Through activities designed to stimulate children's curiosity, they can build their understanding of the world around them. Active learning theory emphasizes the active role of students in learning (Fawzi & Dodi, 2022). Independent Drive and Curriculum Schools

enable children to participate actively in their learning process. This can involve activities such as play, experiments, and discussions that activate their thinking processes and strengthen their skills. The development of creativity is an important aspect of preschool education. The Independent Curriculum pays special attention to developing children's creativity through a more open approach to various ways of thinking and expression. It allows children to develop their critical, imaginative, and creative thinking abilities, which are important skills in everyday life and in preparing them for the future. Child development theory emphasizes the importance of holistic development, including physical, social, emotional, and intellectual aspects (Budiono & Hatip, 2023).

The Independent Drive and Curriculum School designs learning that covers all aspects. They not only focus on academic aspects but also pay attention to the development of children's character, social skills, and emotional intelligence. In early childhood education, there are special theories that highlight the importance of learning that is appropriate to the child's development. The Independent Curriculum at the PAUD level is designed by taking into account the stages of early childhood development, such as physical, cognitive, language, and social development so that the learning approach can be appropriate to the needs of children at that stage. By integrating the principles of the above theories, the Independent Curriculum and Driving School at the PAUD level is expected to be able to create an educational environment that supports the holistic development of Indonesian children. They provide children with opportunities to develop their potential optimally, stimulate their exploration, creativity, and thinking abilities, and ultimately, prepare them well to face future challenges. Both also emphasize an active learning approach and developing teacher abilities. In their collaboration, the Independent Curriculum and Driving School at the PAUD level plays an important role in improving the quality of preschool education in Indonesia, with a focus on exploration, creativity, and holistic development of children (Retnaningsih & Khairiyah, 2022). The relationship between the two makes two things mandatory in the realization of an independent curriculum for PAUD. Still, after conducting research and analysis, several obstacles were found, especially the implementation of the independent curriculum for PAUD in Situbondo.

Implementation of the independent curriculum at PAUD-level driving schools can involve a number of obstacles, which can be analyzed with scientific theoretical support in the educational context. One relevant aspect is the concept of "Adaptation" in Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. As proposed by the theory of evolution, organisms that are best able to adapt to environmental changes will survive and thrive. Something similar can be applied to the educational context. Implementation of the Independent Curriculum, which prioritizes flexibility and local adaptation, requires the ability of schools and teachers to adapt to changes in learning approaches and methods. Teachers must have adaptation skills in order to create learning experiences that suit children's needs and their local context. In other words, the concept of adaptation in evolutionary theory can provide an understanding of the importance of adapting in the educational context to overcome the obstacles that arise during the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Apart from that, constructivism theory, as expressed by Jean Piaget, also supports the Independent Curriculum approach. This theory emphasizes that children are builders of their knowledge through active interaction with the environment (Utama, 2018).

In the context of the Independent Curriculum, exploration, creativity, and holistic development of children are the main focus. Through direct experience, children can build their understanding of the world around them, which is consistent with these principles of constructivism. Thus, scientific theoretical understanding, such as adaptation in evolutionary theory and constructivism, can help explain the importance and challenges associated with implementing the Independent Curriculum in preschool education in Indonesia. Based on the research

conducted, the obstacles to implementing the independent curriculum at PAUD level driving schools in Situbondo are as follows.

Conclusion

This research investigates the various obstacles faced in implementing the independent curriculum in PAUD-level driving schools in Situbondo Regency. A qualitative approach was used to gain an in-depth understanding of this issue through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The research results show a number of obstacles that need to be overcome to increase the effectiveness of implementing the independent curriculum in the PAUD environment. One of the main obstacles identified was differences in students' learning styles and initial abilities. This shows the need for an individualized approach to the learning process. Apart from that, the process of adapting students to the "All Day Without Mom" program is also a challenge and open communication with parents will be very necessary. Furthermore, the use of worksheets that are less attractive and limited facilities and infrastructure are factors that influence the quality of learning. Efforts are needed to develop more interesting and interactive learning materials and improve school infrastructure. Teachers' limited understanding of information technology (IT) is also a significant obstacle in the current digital era. Therefore, IT training is an important step to prepare teachers to deal with technology.

Regarding resources, budget constraints are a factor that limits effective implementation. Efficient budget management needs to be emphasized so that available resources are used optimally. Lastly, difficulties in preparing school documents can affect good school management. Support in this regard can help improve overall school administration. In overcoming these obstacles, several recommendations were put forward, including training and support for teachers, strong collaboration with parents, development of interesting learning materials, improvements to school infrastructure, IT training for teachers, efficient budget management, and support in preparing school documents. By implementing the existing recommendations, it is hoped that PAUD-driving schools in Situbondo Regency can increase the effectiveness of implementing the independent curriculum and holistically improve the quality of PAUD children's education, helping them become a generation ready to face future challenges. This success will have a positive impact on the development of education in Situbondo Regency as a whole.

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