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Relevance of Curriculum Development to National Education Goals and 21st Century Competencies

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum development is based on the realisation that the development and changes that occur in the life of society, nation and state in Indonesia cannot be separated from the influence of global changes, developments in science and technology, as well as arts and culture. Curriculum development is carried out with reference to national standards in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system. The writing of this article aims to examine how the relevance of curriculum development with national education goals and 21st century competencies. The writing of this article uses a systematic review method based on several references in the form of books and articles as well as online scientific publications. The conclusion of this article is that the relevance of curriculum development to the goals of national education and 21st century competencies is very close, because they support each other to create a holistic, adaptive, and future-oriented education. Therefore, curriculum development needs to be designed to shape the character of students who are faithful, pious, noble, and have broad insight and master various skills needed in the 21st century.

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INTRODUCTION

Education basically plays a role in shaping the identity of a nation as stated in the spirit of the opening of the 1945 Constitution which emphasises the importance of education as a means to improve the quality of life of the nation. Basically, the quality of human resources is always directly proportional to the quality of education so that it becomes an indicator of the progress of a country. In Indonesia, improving and equalising the quality of education is a major challenge in national education development. One of the efforts made by the government to achieve national education goals and in order to improve the quality of education is curriculum development. The curriculum is one of the foundations of education, so it must have relevance in accordance with the times. Therefore, without curriculum development, education will not develop and national education goals cannot be achieved. Thus the direction of curriculum development in addition to being based on the objectives of national education must also pay attention to the development and needs of the times.

Curriculum development will be appropriate if it is able to increase the effectiveness of future needs to improve the skills and competencies of students to be able to answer the challenges of the times (Waton, 2023). Along with the times and curriculum rationalisation, Indonesia continues to experience curriculum changes from period to period. Education in Indonesia to date has experienced at least eleven curriculum changes. These changes are a consequence of changes in the order of the political, socio-cultural, economic and science and technology systems in the nation and state society (Alhamduddin, 2016). Curriculum development is a normal thing as a form of response to various problems and phenomena of the nation. The concept of curriculum develops in line with the development of educational theory and practice, so that the curriculum as a set of educational plans must be developed in accordance with the demands and changes that occur in society (Marzuqi & Ahid, 2023). However, the development of a good curriculum certainly requires in-depth study and thought, therefore a variety of strong foundations are needed in curriculum development.

The government confirmed the need to change and develop the 2013 curriculum into an independent curriculum to keep up with the demands of the times, the independent curriculum was designed as an answer to the intense competition for 21st century competencies. The replacement of the 2013 curriculum with an independent curriculum is an effort to strengthen educational autonomy at the school level designed to meet the needs of society 5.0 which focuses on knowledge and life skills as well as the sources to master this knowledge and skills (Gumilar et al., 2023). In summary, the independent curriculum has a learning structure that is divided into two main activities, namely intracurricular learning which refers to the learning outcomes that must be achieved by students in each subject, and the project of strengthening the Pancasila learner profile which refers to the graduate competency standards that must be possessed by students. The independent curriculum also in principle brings the spirit of independence in learning and provides free and innovative space in developing learning programmes tailored to the needs of students (Siswadi, 2023).

The independent curriculum was developed with various considerations, but is this curriculum relevant to the objectives of national education and 21st century competencies? Law number 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system explains that the objectives of national education are contained in article 3, which reads that national education aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and

become democratic and responsible citizens (Noor, 2018). Thus, the development of an independent curriculum must be able to develop the potential of students in accordance with the needs of the 21st century religiously and with character in accordance with the objectives of national education. Therefore, to answer this question, the author writes an article with the title "the relevance of developing an independent learning curriculum with national education goals and 21st century competencies".

METHODS

This research is a qualitative study using a *systematic review* method based on several references in the form of books and articles and online scientific publications. *Systematic review* is a research method for identifying, evaluating and interpreting all relevant research results related to certain research questions, certain topics or phenomena of concern (Siswanto, 2010). The *systematic review* method carried out includes synthesis, namely summarising various kinds of expert opinions through articles and other scientific publications with *meta-synthesis* techniques and data integration to obtain new theories and concepts or a deeper and more comprehensive level of understanding (Perry & Hammond, 2002).

The data sources used in this research are books, journals and articles relevant to the topic of this research. Data sources were obtained online using digital libraries such as Google Scholar, Garuda and Elsevier. Searching and selecting journals using keywords that match the topic by determining the exclusion and inclusion criteria. The data collection technique uses cumulative research results that have relevance to previous research and the included studies allow generalisation of the focus on the research topic area. Data analysis used the content analysis method, which is an analysis of the content that focuses on the relevance of the independent curriculum to national education goals and 21st century needs (Schreier, 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Basis for Curriculum Development

The curriculum is a set of educational programmes that have been prepared and used to achieve educational goals and provide guidance in the implementation of learning at all levels of education. Therefore, the curriculum must be dynamic so that its development is adjusted to the needs of the times, on the other hand it must also be in line with the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Isnaeni, 2023). Thus, curriculum development must be carried out systematically and purposefully, have a clear vision and mission, as well as the direction of national education goals in the future. Curriculum development is carried out with reference to national education standards as mandated in Law No. 20/ 2003 concerning the national education system. The curriculum at all levels and types of education is developed with the principle of diversification in accordance with the education unit, regional potential and students as. So that in its development, the Education Curriculum in Indonesia is compiled and designed based on the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI) which is a standard for education units in designing a curriculum that is relevant to the needs of society, and produces graduates who have the skills and knowledge needed by the world of work (Cholilah et al., 2023).

The applicable curriculum must be adjusted to the national education standards which are a reference in curriculum development which includes graduate competency standards, content standards, process standards and educational assessment standards. as stated in article 3

paragraph 3 of Government Regulation No. 57/2021 which explains that national education standards are improved in a planned, directed and sustainable manner to improve the quality of education in accordance with the changing demands of local, national and global life. In addition, the curriculum is prepared according to the level of education within the framework of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia by taking into account the increase in faith and piety, the values of Pancasila, the improvement of noble character, the increase in the potential, intelligence and interests of students, the diversity of regional and environmental potential, the demands of regional and national development, the demands of the world of work, the development of science, technology and religious arts, the dynamics of global development and national unity and national values (Anggraena et al., 2021). Therefore, curriculum development cannot be separated from the development of science and technology, so that the resulting curriculum, apart from having strength, because it comes from science and technology, is also able to develop and produce new science and technology to advance human civilization.

2. Merdeka Curriculum

The policy of developing the 2013 Revised Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum is based on the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 56/M/2022 dated 10 February 2022 concerning Guidelines for Curriculum Implementation in the Context of Learning Recovery. The decision from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology above is the basis and legal umbrella and reference in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum which is applied in schools, madrasas, educational institutions and institutions in Indonesia. This decision is also a form of full support for curriculum improvement in Indonesia to realise an advanced Indonesia that is sovereign, independent and has a personality through the creation of Pancasila Students who reason critically, creatively, independently, believe in, fear God Almighty, and have noble character, mutual cooperation and global diversity through the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo, 2022).

Government policy in developing an independent learning curriculum is an answer to the problems faced by educators so that the learning process in each school becomes more effective and efficient so that the implications of independent learning are addressed to teachers and students. Thus, the purpose of developing the Independent Curriculum is to answer previous educational problems which are expected to be able to develop the potential and competence of students through a learning process that is designed in a relevant and interactive manner. So that the application of an independent curriculum aims to train students' independence in thinking. Therefore, learning in the independent learning curriculum prioritises interests and talents that can form a creative and fun attitude for students.

The implementation of an independent curriculum must require preparation and adaptation processes in advance based on the basic framework of the curriculum, namely (1) national education goals, (2) the profile of Pancasila students, (3) curriculum structure, (4) learning and assessment principles, and (5) learning outcomes. The operational curriculum of the education unit is adjusted to the plan and organisation of learning in accordance with the context of the education unit, so that learning is more meaningful (Cholilah et al., 2023). Therefore, before schools implement an independent curriculum, it is necessary to analyse it in taking structured steps. By taking these steps, it is hoped that schools will be able to better understand the independent curriculum, starting from preparation, implementation to evaluation

of learning. This will be very helpful in accelerating the development of the Merdeka curriculum according to KKNi at the school.

3. National Education Objectives

All education providers at the level of policy, management, to implementers with various levels both at the macro and micro levels refer to the objectives of national education contained in Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20/2003 concerning the National Education System Chapter II Article 3 which states that "National education aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens". Therefore, the objectives of national education are normative and bind all elements of the Indonesian nation to implement them, especially for education providers.

The educational objectives contained in Law No. 20/2003 are holistic and seek to develop human nature which is multidimensional. The aspects of human nature are seen as a potential that needs to be developed in order for humans to achieve personal qualities as noble human beings, both when dealing with the Creator in the terminology of faith and piety, as well as when dealing with fellow creatures in world life. The goals of national education are hierarchical, prioritising faith and piety and noble character as the foundation for other goals. (Rukiyati, 2020). The function of educational goals is an ideal picture that is full of noble values for the life of the nation so that educational goals are seen as a component that is the main basis for educational achievement. Thus, all educators and education personnel must understand it because the incomprehension of educators and education personnel towards educational goals will result in errors in the process of organising education.

4. 21st Century Competencies

The development of the 21st century is also known as the age of knowledge, in this era, all efforts to fulfil the needs of life are knowledge-based, so that the world of education is required to produce students who are able to face global challenges. Therefore, 21st Century competence requires the world of education to integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes, as well as mastery of information and communication technology. The hallmark of the 21st century is characterised by the development of digital information, society is massively connected to one another. This is what is said to be the industrial revolution, especially the information industry. Thus, education in the 21st century is expected to shape human beings into humans who are critical in intellect, creative in thinking, ethical in association, and have character in life.

There are three major competencies in the 21st century, namely the competencies of thinking, acting and living in the world. Thinking competencies include critical thinking, creative thinking and problem solving. Acting competencies include communication, collaboration, digital literacy and technological literacy. While the competence to live in the world includes initiative, self-direction, global understanding and social responsibility. These competencies should be applied in 21st century learning because this era will require innovative and creative people to adapt quickly. This is an important concern for the Indonesian government to be able to immediately provide adequate facilities and infrastructure in facing global developments, especially the era of society 5.0. Curriculum development is one of the right steps to be able to shape the character of students in the future to face this era (Indarta et al., 2022).

5. Relevance and Direction of Curriculum Development

The demands of the 21st century human mindset change demand a very big change in national education. But changing the Indonesian education system is not an easy task. Indonesia's education system is one of the largest in the world, encompassing around 30 million learners, 200,000 educational institutions, and 4 million educators, spread over an area almost as large as the European continent. But change is a necessity if we don't want to be crushed by globalisation. Thus, to cope with learning in the 21st century, everyone must have critical thinking skills, knowledge and abilities of digital literacy, information literacy, media literacy and master information and communication technology.

The Partnership for 21st Century Learning has developed a 21st century learning framework that requires learners to have skills, knowledge and abilities in technology, media and information, learning and innovation skills as well as life and career skills. In line with this, Kemdikbud formulated that the 21st century learning paradigm emphasises the ability of learners to find out from various sources, formulate problems, think analytically and collaborate and collaborate in solving problems (Wijaya et al., 2016). Based on changes in the 21st century learning paradigm, it is necessary to identify the competency needs required by business and industry. Efforts to develop individual learner competencies in the field of technology in accordance with the demands of the globalisation era through dynamic, responsive and inclusive curriculum development.

Curriculum development is based on the realisation that developments and changes that occur in the life of society, nation and state in Indonesia are inseparable from the influence of global changes, developments in science and technology, as well as arts and culture. These continuous changes demand the need for improvement of the national education system, including curriculum improvement to create a society that is able to compete and adapt to changes. (Niyarci, 2022). In addition, these changes are also influenced by human needs that are always changing due to changes in the economic, political and cultural climate. So that with the change of curriculum it will have an impact on the progress of the nation and state. Therefore, the Education curriculum must change but accompanied by changes from all levels of society that must follow these changes.

With the various previous explanations, it can be concluded that the relevance of curriculum development to national education goals and 21st century competencies is very close, because both support each other to create a holistic, adaptive, and future-oriented education. Therefore, curriculum development is designed to shape the character of students who are faithful, pious, noble, and knowledgeable and skilled. In addition, the curriculum also needs to integrate moral values and local cultural wisdom that can characterise National Education. Thus, relevant curriculum development is the key to achieving the goals of national education while preparing a competent and resilient generation in the 21st century.

CONCLUSIONS

Curriculum development is based on the awareness that the development and changes that occur in the life of society, nation and state in Indonesia are inseparable from the influence of global changes, the development of science and technology, as well as arts and culture. Curriculum development must be carried out systematically and purposefully, have a clear vision and mission, as well as the direction of the future national education goals that refer to the national standards of education in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education

system. Therefore, the relevance of curriculum development to national education goals and 21st century competencies is very close, because both support each other to create a holistic, adaptive and future-oriented education. Thus, curriculum development is designed to shape the character of students who are faithful, pious, noble, and have broad insight and master various skills.

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