

Implementation of madrasa curriculum based on islamic boarding school at al i'tisham wonosari

Eko Ngabdul Shodikin ^{a,1,*}, Rudi Nur Ramadhan ^{b,2}, Nurul Hidayat ^{c,3}, Fais Maftuch ^{d,4}

^{a,b,c} STITMA Yogyakarta, Indonesia; ^d Universitas Islam Madinah, Saudi Arabia

¹ ekongabdulshodikin@gmail.com; ² rudynur2805@gmail.com; ³ dayat270689@gmail.com; ⁴ faizmaftuh@gmail.com

*Correspondent Author

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the effectiveness of curriculum implementation at Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham Wonosari, an Islamic boarding school-based institution. The study focuses on the transition from the 2013 Curriculum (K13) to the Independent Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka), emphasizing the importance of selecting an appropriate curriculum to enhance educational quality. The research method used is descriptive qualitative, involving 3 educators and 4 students as subjects. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and documentation. The results show that Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham has implemented K13 for almost ten years with satisfactory effectiveness. However, the transition to the Independent Curriculum faces several challenges, including the need for technical guidance for educators, improvement of facilities, limited access to technology, and the necessity of continuous evaluation and adjustment. Recommendations are provided to address these challenges through intensive training, enhancement of educational facilities, and the development of digital literacy programs. This research is expected to provide guidance for Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham in selecting and implementing a more effective curriculum, thereby producing graduates who are well-prepared to face future challenges.

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Introduction

Education is one of the most important factors in determining the quality of human resources and the progress of a nation (Mantiri, 2019). The educational process has the potential to generate creative and innovative ideas in the dynamic development of the times (Kamila et al., 2024). Curriculum development is an instrument for improving the quality of education (Ledea and Bustam, 2023). The effectiveness of educational policy is evident through the implementation of the curriculum, as "the curriculum is the heart of education" that determines the continuity of education (Restu Rahayu, Rita Rosita, Yayu Sri Rahayuningsih, Herry Hernawan, 2022). Curriculum and learning are two inseparable elements, though they hold different positions (Sukmawati, 2021).

The curriculum serves as a guide and direction for educational goals, while learning is the process that occurs through the interaction between teachers and students during the

learning sessions (Susilowati, 2022). Education is a fundamental basis for character formation and individual capabilities (Nafsaka et al., 2023). Amid the dynamics of education in Indonesia, Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham holds an interesting position as a pesantren-based madrasah, thus necessitating a review of the appropriateness and effectiveness of its curriculum in the learning activities.

Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham bears a significant responsibility in educating a generation that is both qualified and of integrity. In pursuing this mission, the selection of the curriculum is a crucial initial step. Based on initial observations at Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham Wonosari, the author found that the institution has not yet been able to transition from the K13 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum.

The purpose of this article is to examine the effectiveness of curriculum implementation at pesantren-based madrasahs, with a case study at Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham Wonosari. The results of this research are expected to serve as an evaluation tool for Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham Wonosari, providing a comparative basis for choosing the most effective curriculum to implement at the educational institution.

Method

The method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative method. The subjects of this study are three educators/teachers and four students. This qualitative descriptive method is a research approach that describes, explains, and analyzes an object within a specific situation, based on all the data collected during field activities (Suryani, Muspawi, and Aprillitavivayarti, 2023). Interviews, observations, and data collection from the administration and documentation departments are the techniques employed in this research. The study was conducted on April 10, 2024, at the educational institution Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham Wonosari.

Results and Discussion

According to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI), the term "implementation" refers to the act of applying something. According to several experts, implementation is the act of practicing a theory, method, or other aspects to achieve specific goals and fulfill the needs of a particular group. Generally, implementation refers to the process of applying theory, knowledge, or skills into real practice (Sintiawati et al., 2022). In the context of education, implementation focuses on how students apply the concepts taught in class to real-life situations (Halim, 2022). Implementation is the process of executing or applying a previously planned strategy, concept, or policy (Antoro, 2020). From the previous definitions, it can be concluded that implementation refers to a series of activities, actions, or mechanisms within a system (Budiwan, 2022). The term "mechanism" indicates that implementation is not just an activity but also a structured process carried out seriously according to specific norms to achieve the expected goals (Novi Ariyanti and Muhammad Anggung Manumanoso Prasetyo, 2021).

The curriculum can be understood in both a broad and narrow sense. In a broad sense, the curriculum refers to the entire educational structure in place (Arif, 2020). In a narrow sense, the curriculum refers to the combination of several subjects, a single subject, groups of study areas, learning programs, and similar elements (Yanti, 2020). This describes the overall plan of a series of learning activities that have been designed (Sujud, 2022). Curriculum implementation refers to the process of executing and applying the learning plan outlined in a curriculum within the educational context (Susilowati, 2022). This process involves a series of activities and steps necessary to implement the curriculum's content and objectives in the classroom and throughout the school (Fitrah, Yantoro, and Hayati, 2022). Aspects of implementation include planning, execution, monitoring,

supervision, and evaluation (Siahaan et al., 2023).

The 2013 Curriculum, often abbreviated as K13, is the curriculum applied in Indonesia's education system. This curriculum replaced the previous Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP). The 2013 Curriculum was introduced following the issuance of the Minister of Education and Culture's regulation (Permendikbud) regarding the 2013 curriculum structure, graduation competency standards (SKL), content standards (SI), process standards, assessment standards, and the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum (Sholekah, 2020). The 2013 Curriculum was designed to prepare a generation more equipped to face global challenges (Sofyan, 2019). It aims to develop a broader and deeper range of skills in students and foster a more positive and adaptive attitude towards change (Lucardo et al., 2024). The 2013 Curriculum (K13) was introduced in Indonesia in 2013 with an emphasis on competency-based learning and character development (Setiawan, 2021). The 2013 Curriculum underscores the importance of developing students' competencies and character as a step towards enhancing the quality of education in Indonesia (Altoviah Nuha Belvar & Hindun Hindun, 2023). Therefore, the 2013 Curriculum is considered a curriculum approach that focuses on developing students' competencies, character, and literacy (Pratiwi, 2019).

The Kurikulum Merdeka is one of the main tools in transforming education and realizing schools in line with the desired vision (Zakso, 2023). The Kurikulum Merdeka facilitates teachers and principals in improving the quality of learning and achieving the indicators measured in the National Assessment/Education Report, school/madrasah accreditation processes, and the Minimum Service Standards (SPM) of education. By emphasizing fundamental material and using flexible methods, the Kurikulum Merdeka simplifies the process for teachers to conduct differentiated learning according to students' talents and interests while also developing their character holistically (Hidayat et al., 2023). The Kurikulum Merdeka began to be developed in 2020 and has been gradually implemented and evaluated since 2021 (Ledia and Bustam, 2023). High appreciation is given to over 300,000 schools, including more than 6,000 schools in underdeveloped areas, which have begun implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka. Schools that have not yet implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka can still use K-13 until the 2025/2026 academic year (for non-3T areas) or 2026/2027 (for 3T areas) while learning and gradually applying the principles of the Kurikulum Merdeka. Schools that have implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka, either through the Sekolah Penggerak and SMK PK programs or independently (mandiri belajar, mandiri berubah, and mandiri berbagi), are encouraged and supported to improve the quality of implementation.

The Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar program, introduced by the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Anwar Makarim, B.A., M.B.A., is not mandatory. This program is not entirely new but is an enhancement of the previous curriculum. This concept is applied comprehensively, covering not only students but also all educational elements involved. Merdeka Belajar is an important step towards ideal education in line with the current situation (Yamin and Syahrir, 2020). This program aims to develop a strong, intelligent, creative, and character-driven generation in line with Indonesian values. The Merdeka Belajar concept aligns with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's educational philosophy, emphasizing the balance between *cipta*, *rasa*, and *karsa* (Ainia, 2020). It provides freedom to students and teachers to develop their talents and skills, differing from the previous approach, which focused more on knowledge aspects alone. Every policy has its advantages and disadvantages, including the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka at various educational levels (Angga et al., 2022). One of its advantages is encouraging students to be more active through specific projects that help them in self-exploration. Additionally, this curriculum is more interactive and relevant to current needs. However, its implementation

still faces challenges, such as unpreparedness, as reflected in the lack of human resource competencies in executing this curriculum.

Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham is an upper secondary Islamic educational institution located in Gunungkidul Regency, precisely at Gg. Wijayakusuma 140, Kepek I, Kepek, Wonosari, Gunungkidul, D.I. Yogyakarta. This educational institution was established in 1999. Based on our interview with the curriculum department at Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham, the institution has implemented various curricula according to prevailing policies and combined them with the internal curriculum of the pesantren. The madrasah first implemented a competency-based curriculum until 2006, then switched to the KTSP Curriculum from 2006 to 2013, and since 2014, Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham has implemented the 2013 Curriculum (K13). During almost ten years of implementing the 2013 Curriculum, many adjustments have been made. The madrasah feels that the effectiveness of learning with K13 has been achieved. However, with the new curriculum policy introduced by the government, specifically the encouragement to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka, this presents a new challenge for Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham, particularly because it is a pesantren-based madrasah.

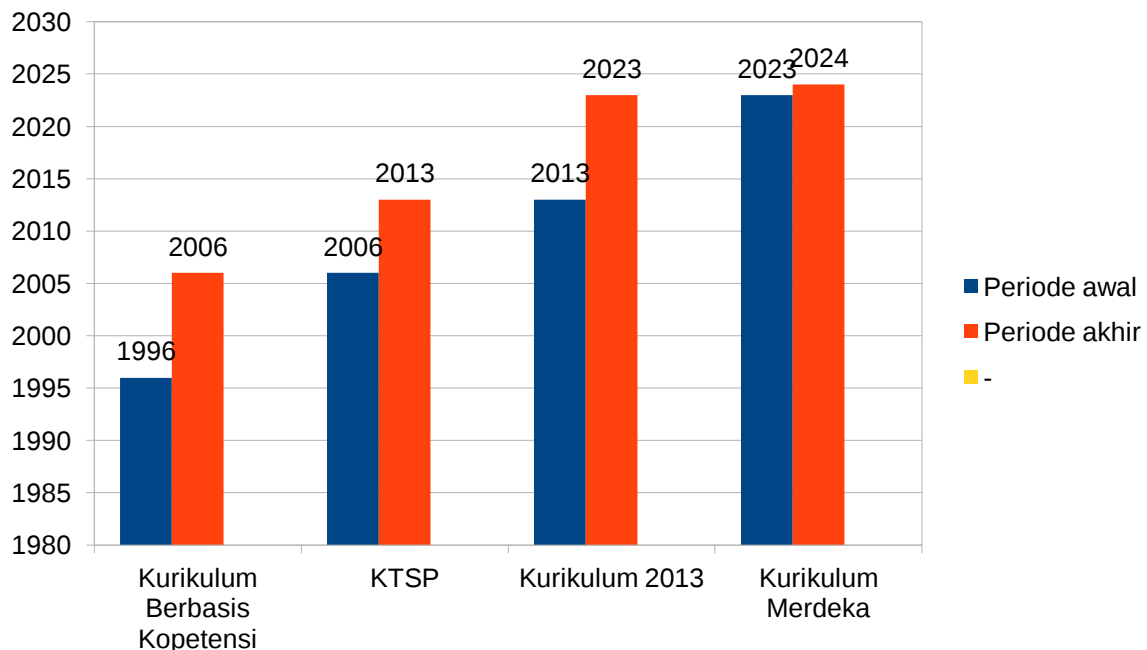


Figure 1. Table of Curriculum Implementation at Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham

Based on field findings, the author discovered that during the transition to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, this educational institution faced several challenges. The first challenge is the technical implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum: additional technical guidance is required for educators and educational staff. The second challenge is the enhancement of madrasah facilities: there is a need for improved facilities to support the implementation of this curriculum. The third challenge is the limited access to communication and technology tools: as a pesantren-based madrasah, access to communication tools such as mobile phones, laptops, or computers for students remains limited. The fourth challenge is continuous evaluation and adjustment: ongoing evaluation and adjustments are necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the Merdeka Curriculum's implementation.

Curriculum Implementation at Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham

Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham has been implementing the 2013 Curriculum (K13) for

nearly a decade and believes that the effectiveness of learning with K13 has been adequately achieved. However, with the new policy to transition to the Merdeka Curriculum, the madrasah faces various challenges that need to be addressed to ensure the successful implementation of the new curriculum. Below is a detailed discussion of the research findings related to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham.

Technical Challenges in Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum: One of the main challenges is the need for technical guidance for educators and educational staff. Educators need to have an in-depth understanding of the principles and teaching methods promoted by the Merdeka Curriculum. This includes developing competencies to implement differentiated learning, facilitate the development of students' talents and interests, and foster holistic character growth. To overcome this challenge, the madrasah can organize intensive and continuous training for educators. This training can be conducted in collaboration with higher education institutions or educational experts specializing in the Merdeka Curriculum. Additionally, the madrasah can establish a curriculum support team tasked with providing regular guidance and supervision.

Facility Improvement Challenges: The next challenge is the need to improve facilities to support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This new curriculum requires a supportive learning environment, both in terms of infrastructure and resources. The madrasah needs to evaluate existing facilities and identify unmet needs. Investment in educational technology, such as computers and multimedia tools, is crucial to support interactive and innovative learning. Additionally, enhancing physical facilities like comfortable classrooms and well-equipped laboratories will aid in effectively implementing the curriculum.

Limited Access to Communication and Technology Tools: Another challenge is the limited access to communication and technology tools. As a pesantren-based madrasah, students' access to communication devices like mobile phones, laptops, or computers is still restricted. This limitation can hinder the implementation of technology-based learning, which is a key aspect of the Merdeka Curriculum. To address this limitation, the madrasah can provide technological facilities accessible to students at school, such as computer rooms or digital libraries. Furthermore, digital literacy training programs for students are essential so they can effectively utilize technology in the learning process.

Continuous Evaluation and Adjustment: The final challenge is continuous evaluation and adjustment. The process of ongoing evaluation and adjustment is crucial to ensure the effective implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This includes regular monitoring and evaluation of the learning process and students' learning outcomes. The madrasah needs to establish a curriculum evaluation team responsible for routine monitoring and evaluation. This team must ensure that any issues arising during curriculum implementation are promptly identified and resolved. Additionally, evaluation results should be used to make continuous adjustments and improvements to the curriculum's implementation.

Conclusion

Based on research findings regarding the effectiveness of curriculum implementation at Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham Wonosari, it has been observed that the madrasah has successfully implemented the 2013 Curriculum (K13) with adequate effectiveness for nearly ten years. However, during the transition to the Merdeka Curriculum, the madrasah faces various challenges that need to be addressed to ensure the successful implementation of this new curriculum. These challenges include the need for technical guidance, facility improvements, limited access to technology, and continuous evaluation and adjustment.

To overcome these challenges, several recommendations are provided: Organize

intensive and continuous training for educators, in collaboration with higher education institutions or experts. Invest in educational technology and improve physical facilities such as classrooms and laboratories. Develop digital literacy training programs for students to effectively utilize technology in the learning process. Establish a curriculum evaluation team responsible for regular monitoring and evaluation, as well as continuous adjustments and improvements to the curriculum implementation. By implementing these strategic measures, it is hoped that Madrasah Aliyah Al I'tisham can effectively implement the Merdeka Curriculum, thus producing quality graduates who are well-prepared to face future challenges.

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