

Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in Urban Schools in Cepu, Blora Regency

Triana Wijayanti¹, Arif Purnomo²

^{1,2}Social Science Education Department, Faculty of Social and Political Science Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Triana Wijayanti

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20240851>

ABSTRACT

The aims of this research are (1) to understand the implementation of Curriculum Independence and Sharing in Social Studies learning at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu; (2) to investigate the process of teacher adaptation in implementing Curriculum Independence and Sharing in Social Studies learning at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu.

The research method used is descriptive qualitative with the research setting at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu. The focus of the research includes the implementation of Curriculum Independence and Sharing in Social Studies learning, teacher adaptation in implementing Curriculum Independence and Sharing in Social Studies learning, and evaluation of Curriculum Independence and Sharing in Social Studies learning at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu. The result of this research showed that the implementation of Curriculum Independence and Sharing at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu is based on readiness and support from various parties such as the Blora Regency government, Blora Regency Education Office, as well as support from proactive teachers, prospective teacher leaders, school committees, and the community of SMP Negeri 3 Cepu. However, in Social Studies learning, the implementation of this curriculum faces challenges. Limited technological adaptation among teachers, especially those nearing retirement age, leads to monotonous teaching practices dominated by lectures. Consequently, the focus of learning remains teacher-centered rather than

student-centered. Despite these challenges, teachers did not reject the school's policy but instead supported and agreed to implement Curriculum Independence and Sharing in Social Studies learning at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu.

Keywords: Curriculum Independence, Curriculum Implementation, Teacher Adaptation

INTRODUCTION

Based on the observation conducted by researchers on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at SMP N 3 Cepu, it was found that the school had implemented the Independent Curriculum in its teaching and learning activities. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP N 3 Cepu is categorized under independent sharing. This implementation is a result of the Merdeka Belajar trial at schools that are willing to implement the Independent Curriculum in an independent sharing manner within the educational unit in the Cepu District. This is also consistent with the data on schools implementing the Independent Curriculum in the Cepu District in October 2023, where SMP N 3 Cepu is the only one among 18 junior high schools in Blora Regency that has implemented the Independent Curriculum in an independent sharing manner and is one of six schools in Blora Regency to do so.

According to the results of an interview with the vice principal of curriculum affairs, Mrs. Dra. Isna Purti Astuti, M.Pd, one of the reasons SMP N 3

Cepu was chosen as a pilot project for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is that it is the only school in Cepu District with the most complete facilities and infrastructure, making it ready to implement the Independent Curriculum. Moreover, SMP N 3 Cepu was the first school to implement the Independent Curriculum at the beginning of the program launch in the Cepu District. As of July 2024, SMP N 3 Cepu remains the only model school for implementing the Independent Curriculum, especially in the independent sharing category in Cepu District.

The emergence of the new curriculum poses challenges for teachers, especially those at the junior high level, who face various obstacles (Sanra, 2022). As stated by Mrs. Dra. Isna Purti Astuti, M.Pd, the vice principal of curriculum affairs, one of the challenges in implementing the Independent Curriculum at SMP N 3 Cepu is its application by the teachers. This is a particular concern as teachers are the ones who will implement the curriculum in the school environment. Teachers play a crucial role in ensuring the success of students' learning (Reinita, 2020). Consistent with Sulistyosari et al. (2022), teachers in the learning process act as mediators who guide students towards achieving learning objectives.

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum at SMP N 3 Cepu is not immediately accepted by teachers. There is an adaptation process experienced by teachers, involving adjusting from the old curriculum culture to the new Independent Curriculum. Changes in various aspects of the teaching and learning process require teachers to quickly adapt to align themselves with the policy of implementing the Independent Curriculum.

This is also true in social studies (IPS) education. Various aspects of IPS education are significantly influenced by the curriculum used, including the elements involved in the teaching and learning process at school. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum

in IPS education involves a series of learning processes involving teachers and students in the classroom, starting from the preparation of learning materials and devices to the implementation of learning evaluation activities in the classroom.

IPS teachers are expected to adapt to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in classroom teaching. Moreover, the implementation of the Independent Sharing Curriculum is designed so that schools and their elements can serve as examples for other schools. Therefore, adjustments must be made to align the goals of the Independent Curriculum with the classroom teaching process.

As stated by Mrs. Dra. Isna Purti Astuti, M.Pd, one of the challenges in implementing the Independent Curriculum at SMP N 3 Cepu is its application by teachers. The variation in teachers' ages also affects their ability to adapt to the new curriculum, which is a concern for the school in implementing the Independent Curriculum.

The implementation of IPS education using the Independent Curriculum faces the issue of teachers' age, which affects their ability to adapt to the curriculum. SMP N 3 Cepu has four IPS teachers, two of whom will retire in 2024. This issue is compounded by the lack of IPS teachers filled by PPPK and the prohibition of using honorary teachers to fill these positions, according to the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform's circular, which aims to reduce the problem of honorary teachers in Indonesia.

This is in contrast because the implementation of the Independent Curriculum should consider the readiness of human resources, particularly teachers, who are crucial to the teaching and learning activities based on the Independent Curriculum at SMP N 3 Cepu.

Thus, besides the majority of IPS teachers being older, the number of IPS

teachers has been insufficient in recent years since the circular from the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform was issued, which prohibits the use of honorary teachers in public schools to reduce the problem of honorary teachers in Indonesia.

The dominance of older teachers significantly affects their adaptation process to the Independent Curriculum in IPS education. This can be seen from IPS teachers who are less proficient in using digital learning media for IPS education. As a result, IPS teachers tend to use conventional teaching methods, such as lectures, to deliver IPS learning materials. This differs from the teaching modules prepared by IPS teachers, which are already adapted to the guidelines for preparing teaching modules under the Independent Curriculum. However, based on the researchers' observations, classroom teaching is conducted using lecture methods without using supporting media as planned in the teaching modules, making the planning in the teaching modules inconsistent with classroom implementation.

Therefore, a gap exists between the ideal situation and the actual situation in the field, where IPS teachers should not only prepare teaching modules according to the Independent Curriculum guidelines but also implement them in IPS classroom teaching.

This study aims to understand how the Independent Curriculum is implemented at SMP N 3 Cepu as a model school or pilot project for the Independent Curriculum in junior high schools in Cepu District, titled "Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in IPS Education at SMP N 3 Cepu."

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Description

A. William John Bennett's Theory of Adaptation

The implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum at SMP N 3 Cepu necessitates an adaptation process by all school members, including teachers who play a primary role in the teaching and learning process. This adaptation process aligns with the adaptation theory proposed by Bennett.

Bennett explains that individuals will always strive to adjust to their environment, whether biologically, genetically, or culturally. He also states that adaptation strategies consist of patterns formed by various adjustments planned by humans to adapt to a dynamic environment (Andriani & Jatningsih, 2015). Humans continually strive to adapt to their surroundings through biological and genetic mechanisms as well as cultural aspects (Bennett in Salamah, 2012: 14). Bennett's adaptation strategy is also described as the steps taken by humans to face obstacles. This strategy is a process that meets certain requirements to help ease life and fulfill needs (Diana, 2017).

Adaptation is divided into three main parts: adaptive behavior, adaptive strategy, and adaptive processes. First, adaptive behavior is defined as behavior that changes over time. The emerging behavior is usually used by individuals or groups to defend themselves against changing environments and group situations by following the flow within that environment. Thus, adaptive behavior is defined as actions taken by organisms (individuals or groups) in an effort to undergo changes. Second, adaptive strategy refers to behavior undertaken by individuals to cope with environmental changes. This is done because changes in the environment and surrounding conditions require solutions to overcome obstacles, as the methods used by groups generally cannot escape underlying problems, even if these changes are significant. Third, adaptive processes consist of individual and group adaptation. Essentially, individuals will live together in their environment, so they must be able to sustain themselves by collectively solving problems. This is because problems cannot be solved by individuals alone, but always require others to resolve them (Bennett in Andriani & Jatningsih, 2015).

In conclusion, John W. Bennett's adaptation theory explains that adaptation is a responsive action by humans, both individually and as groups, to changes occurring in their surrounding environment.

This theory is highly relevant to the author's research on the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in social studies at SMP N 3 Cepu, as it involves an adaptation process by teachers, analyzed in terms of behavior, strategy, and process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Educational Curriculum

An educational curriculum is a guide for the implementation of teaching and learning activities in schools. According to Sodikin (2021), a curriculum is a collection of subjects delivered by teachers to students in the classroom. Arifin (2022) adds that the curriculum is considered the heart of education as it contains a variety of instructional constraints derived from educational, cultural, social science, sports, and art experiences. These are compiled by educational institutions for students in educational units to develop all aspects and change students' behavior according to educational goals. Arifin (2022) also mentions that the curriculum is something that must be implemented within the educational unit system.

The term "curriculum" originates from the Greek word "curir," meaning a place to race (Idi, 2012). In English, the curriculum is often referred to as a course or a subject undertaken to obtain a specific degree (Nurmadiyah, 2018). The curriculum is a dynamic educational product that frequently changes over time. Initially defined as a collection of subjects, it is now understood as a set of activities and learning experiences provided to students to achieve educational goals (Nurmadiyah, 2018).

B. Independent Learning Curriculum

The Independent Learning Curriculum is a policy from the Ministry of Education and Culture Research Technology aimed at creating an engaging and enjoyable learning environment (Alimuddin, 2023). This concept also encourages teachers to become more

innovative in conducting enjoyable learning sessions. There is a strong aspiration for the education system to change, given that the curriculum has traditionally been monotonous. Therefore, shifting teachers' mindsets to be more innovative and creative is crucial for achieving better national education goals (Zulaiha, 2022).

The Independent Learning Curriculum (ILC) is an educational initiative in Indonesia that aims to provide students with greater flexibility in choosing subjects they wish to study. It is a step towards giving students more control over their education according to their interests and potentials. During the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum, schools are given the freedom to choose the curriculum they use. The Ministry of Education and Culture's FAQ booklet explains that the Independent Learning Curriculum uses a phased approach to allow teachers, schools, and education departments time to learn and understand the curriculum.

This curriculum system attempts to shift from a traditional education paradigm to a more student-oriented approach, allowing them to explore their interests and talents and prepare for future challenges. The curriculum change also requires adaptation from all educational system components, necessitating careful management to achieve the desired impact. Hence, the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum is carried out gradually according to each school's readiness. Educational units are free to choose the curriculum based on their preparedness. The Independent Learning Curriculum itself is divided into several options: Independent Learning, Independent Change, and Independent Sharing (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

One option in the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum is the ILC Sharing. In this option, educational units decide to use the Independent Learning Curriculum structure as a

foundation to develop their educational unit curriculum. They also apply the principles of the Independent Learning Curriculum in learning and assessment processes and commit to sharing best practices with other educational units.

ng. In this option, educational units decide to use the Independent Learning Curriculum structure as a foundation to develop their educational unit curriculum. They also apply the principles of the Independent Learning Curriculum in learning and assessment processes and commit to sharing best practices with other educational units.

C. Social Studies

Social Studies education was first used in the United States in 1913 and officially adopted in Indonesia to represent social studies, thus encompassing terms like social science, social studies, and social knowledge. Social Studies integrates social sciences and humanities to form good citizens. It also aims to develop the ability to make reasoned decisions responsibly as good citizens in a heterogeneous society (Utami, 2019). According to Sudrajat (2014), Social Studies education aims to equip students with the attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed as good citizens, encompassing knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values, as well as behavioral capabilities. Hence, Social Studies is related to society and citizenship. Social Studies education at the school level aims for students to become part of the desired society, nation, and community. Social Studies plays a crucial role in developing affective domains related to attitudes, values, and morals, preparing students to become good individuals in society. Social Studies education aims to develop students' abilities and competencies to fulfill their roles as good citizens. According to Supriatna (2009), the competencies developed in Social Studies include intellectual development and social skills required by students.

An academic consensus led to the formal use of Social Studies in the national education system in the 1975 curriculum (Sapriya, 2017: 7). The term "Social Studies," or "IPS," is a subject in primary and secondary schools or a

study program in higher education, identical to "social studies" in the schooling curriculum of other countries, especially in Western countries like Australia and the United States. The name "IPS," more commonly known as social studies abroad, resulted from an agreement among Indonesian experts at the National Seminar on Civic Education in 1972 in Tawangmangu, Solo. The meaning of Social Studies at the school level varies according to the characteristics and needs of students, particularly between Social Studies in primary schools (SD) and secondary schools (SMP and SMA) (Sapriya, 2017:20).

Ahmad Susanto (2016: 137) states that Social Studies, often referred to as IPS, examines various social science and humanities disciplines and basic human activities scientifically to provide in-depth insights to students, especially at the primary and secondary levels. The scope of Social Studies includes various aspects of life, such as social, economic, psychological, cultural, historical, and political relationships, all studied within this discipline. Social aspects, including processes, factors, developments, and issues, are studied in sociology. Economic aspects, including development, factors, and problems, are studied in economics. Cultural aspects and their developments and issues are studied in anthropology. Historical aspects, inseparable from human life, are studied in history. Similarly, geographical aspects, providing spatial characteristics to social life, are studied in geography.

According to Nasution (in Barr and Barth, 2020), Social Studies education draws from various social sciences, including geography, history, economics, anthropology, sociology, politics, and psychology. Social Studies is a complex subject as it integrates multiple branches of knowledge into a single curriculum taught to students, providing them with

holistic knowledge for future societal roles (Salam, 2020).

According to Utami (2019), Social Studies education is not only based on theories but also on factual social environments, forming students with positive social values (Utami, 2019). In the context of learning, as Hamalik (2013: 57) states, learning is a structured combination of human, material, facility, equipment, and procedural elements that influence achieving learning goals. Thus, learning in this study is a complex element in creating activities to achieve objectives.

Learning objectives are based on students' needs, subjects, and teachers. Students' needs determine the objectives to be achieved, developed, and appreciated. Based on curriculum guidelines, educational outcomes are determined. Teachers, as sources of goals for students, must write and select meaningful and measurable educational objectives (Hamalik, 2013:76).

Social Studies education involves interdisciplinary knowledge. Thus, social science is the discipline, while Social Studies education is interdisciplinary. Sapriya (2012) adds that Social Studies education for primary and secondary levels simplifies social sciences, humanities, and basic human activities, presented pedagogically to meet educational goals.

This definition contextualizes Social Studies in Indonesia, distinguishing it from other social sciences (Halim, 2017:166). Social Studies adapts social humanities into a single educational framework taught in classrooms, thus referred to as Social Studies education.

MATERIALS & METHODS

The research titled "Implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in Social Studies Education at SMP N 3 Cepu, Blora Regency" employs a descriptive qualitative research design. According to Mukhtar (2013), descriptive qualitative research is a method used by researchers to discover knowledge or theory about a study at a specific time. Meanwhile, according to Bogdan and Taylor in (Moloeng, 2016), descriptive qualitative research produces

descriptive data in the form of written words or oral statements from people whose behavior can be observed.

This study aims to describe the observed conditions in the field specifically and in-depth, concerning the implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum at SMP N 3 Cepu, the adaptation process of teachers, and the obstacles encountered in the process of implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum involves various parties, including teachers and students. In this context, teachers prepare the necessary teaching materials and the strategies for implementation. According to David, every learning implementation consists of two main phases: the planning phase and the execution phase. Before implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in social studies classes, teachers first plan the learning activities using teaching modules as a guide for teaching social studies in the classroom (Ausubel in Anwar, 2023).

Social studies teachers at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu have been introduced to teaching modules since the implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum. Therefore, the format and framework for developing teaching modules are already mastered by social studies teachers in grades 7 and 8, which are the classes that implement the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum.

Social studies teachers at SMP N 3 Cepu have their own ways of implementing the teaching modules they have prepared for social studies classes. The implementation of the teaching modules in the classroom is adjusted according to the situations, conditions, and needs present during the learning process.

Each teacher use different methods in developing the social studies teaching

modules for the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum for grades 7 and 8. The steps taken include adopting various references such as teacher's books, student's books, and handbooks prepared by the social studies teachers themselves, as well as using references from various online sources to align and further develop the themes.

By using references from teacher's books, student's books, and the internet, teachers develop the components of the social studies teaching modules to be implemented in the classroom. However, if the guides used are deemed incomplete, as mentioned by Mr. Bambang regarding the content of the teacher's and student's books in the chapter on the Proclamation, teachers independently develop the materials to ensure they are not superficial or lacking. They do this by utilizing available reference sources to create summaries of events and compiling them into a module or supplementary book for students to use in addition to their standard textbooks.

Based on the data obtained from the sources, teachers use teacher's books, student's books, and independently prepared books for exam or daily test purposes when creating evaluation materials. Textbooks themselves are a crucial aspect in supporting the learning activities as they contain facts, events, or depictions of the material that will be delivered by the teacher to the students (Reswari et al., 2023). Therefore, teachers use books as a source for creating evaluation tools by referring to the materials in the classroom textbooks. There are books provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia as reference books for teachers and students, which are adjusted to the current curriculum in each educational unit. This encourages teachers to use both student and teacher reference books as sources for creating evaluation tools used to compile summative assessments for students.

Social studies teachers at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu do not conduct diagnostic assessments to determine the actions or treatments that will be carried out by students. Diagnostic assessment is a form of assessment used to understand the background and factors that influence students' learning processes, such as home environment

conditions, family conditions, and others (Anwar, 2023). Similar to medical practice, where a person needs to be diagnosed first to provide further actions, either medical treatment or prescription medication, the same applies to education. Students are diagnosed first to provide appropriate actions as a learning strategy by the teacher, ensuring that learning objectives are achieved through the right steps (Anwar, 2023). However, in social studies at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu, teachers do not conduct diagnostic assessments to diagnose students in determining social studies learning strategies in the classroom.

The lack of diagnostic assessment is due to the limited time and resources available to the teachers. This assessment can be conducted in two ways, cognitive and non-cognitive, with different objectives for each. The goal of non-cognitive diagnostic assessment is to understand the psychological and socio-emotional well-being of students, their activities at home, family conditions, lifestyle, background, character, and talents and interests. Cognitive diagnostic assessment aims to recognize students' competency achievements before starting lessons with the teacher, or it can be considered a pre-test to determine students' initial knowledge related to the upcoming lesson (Setiawan, 2021).

Teachers only use summative assessments in the social studies teaching and learning process in the classroom by utilizing various existing reference sources and self-prepared materials. Midterm and final exams or assessments are usually conducted using summative assessments prepared by the Blora Regency Education and Culture Office. These questions are compiled in a Subject Teacher Conference, specifically for social studies teachers. The questions are then distributed to schools in preparation for the Summative Assessment for grades 7, 8, and 9.

This aligns with John Bennett's process adaptation theory, which suggests that individuals undergo a process when adapting to something. This adaptation process is experienced by teachers through a series of steps, starting with the school's dissemination of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum Implementation by inviting practitioners from the Blora Regency Education and Culture Office. The school then conducts in-house training for the technical preparation of the curriculum implementation and evaluation process, which is also conducted during the in-house training held once a year. This process has been ongoing for two years since the implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in social studies classes.

One of the efforts made to prepare social studies teachers is through training known as in-house training, conducted together with other subject teachers in the use of various supporting facilities for implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum. The purpose of this in-house training is to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to understand and subsequently apply the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum Implementation at SMP N 3 Cepu. This in-house training (IHT) is conducted once a year at the beginning of the academic year. It is accompanied by other activities, including dissemination and technical guidance by curriculum development units from the Blora Regency Education and Culture Office.

Based on the data provided by the sources, it is known that the efforts made by the school and the community to equip teachers for implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in social studies classes are still considered insufficient. Therefore, there is a hope among teachers for increased training intensity, as the current in-house training is only conducted once a year. Furthermore, it is hoped that the training sessions will not only be general and administrative but also practical, focusing on the subject matter of social studies and the practical implementation of the Independent

Shared Learning Curriculum in the classroom, rather than just administrative aspects.

The various sources can be linked to the research theory of adaptation as presented by John Bennet, specifically behavior adaptation. In implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum, there are instances of behavior adaptation by social studies teachers.

William John Bennett's adaptation theory provides an appropriate framework for understanding how teachers strive to adjust to curriculum changes. According to Bennett, adaptation is a process that includes adapting strategies, processes, and behaviors, all of which are relevant in describing teachers' responses to these changes (Bennet, 1996).

Behavior adaptation in this context is demonstrated by teachers through their actions in accepting the policies chosen by the school for implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in the school, including social studies classes. Teachers do not reject the changes because they believe in the positive goals and direction of implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum for social studies at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu in the future and in improving the quality of education at the school.

Teachers develop strategies to overcome the obstacles that arise from the curriculum changes. For instance, Mrs. Indriyanti uses the steps outlined in the teacher's guide as a reference for social studies lessons, and the school facilitates training such as in-house training (IHT) and technical guidance. These strategies help them address gaps in knowledge and skills that may exist in implementing the new curriculum.

Teachers' responses to curriculum changes can vary, from initial rejection to full acceptance. Some studies indicate that initial reactions to new curricula are often resistant. Research by Rachman

(2017) at SMP Negeri 1 Makassar found that this resistance is usually due to uncertainty and a lack of understanding about the changes. Teachers often feel unsure and worried about how the new curriculum will affect their teaching methods and the increased workload. Insufficient training also significantly contributes to this initial resistance. However, over time, with adequate training and support, many teachers begin to adjust to the new curriculum. Wuryaningrum's research (2015) at SMA Negeri 1 Kudus shows that ongoing training greatly aids teachers in understanding and implementing the new curriculum better. Teachers start to develop new strategies and adjust their teaching methods to meet the curriculum's demands. They often collaborate with colleagues, discuss, and share experiences to find effective solutions to new challenges. This adjustment process is crucial as it allows teachers to find innovative ways of teaching that meet students' needs.

In the implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu, there is no rejection from teachers; rather, they adjust to the existing curriculum because teachers have experienced curriculum changes before. This is also due to the fact that the curriculum implementation is a school decision, and teachers sometimes act as the implementers. Therefore, immediate adjustments are needed by teachers regarding new aspects of the curriculum (Wirabumi, 2020).

Ongoing support from the school and government, such as advanced training and the provision of additional resources, also plays a crucial role in helping teachers feel more confident in implementing the new curriculum. Teachers who feel supported are more likely to adapt and develop creative and effective teaching approaches. However, not all teachers experience a smooth adaptation process. Some teachers remain in a state of instability or ongoing uncertainty, especially if the necessary support and resources are not consistently available. Suratman (2018) in his research at SMK Negeri 1 Bandung highlights that factors such as frequent policy changes or unclear curriculum guidelines can lead to ongoing

uncertainty. Teachers in such conditions often feel confused and uncertain about the best way to implement the new curriculum. This uncertainty can negatively impact teaching quality and teacher motivation.

Research at SMP 3 Cepu shows that teachers' experiences in dealing with curriculum changes are highly variable. Initially, teachers cannot immediately implement the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in the classroom, especially in social studies. However, with the training and support provided by the school, teachers begin to adjust to the new curriculum.

This analysis indicates that teachers' responses to curriculum changes depend greatly on factors such as training support, direct experience with the benefits of the new curriculum, and consistency in educational policies. Therefore, continuous support and adequate training are essential in helping teachers adapt to curriculum changes. Additionally, it is important to consider teachers' needs and experiences in the curriculum implementation process to prepare them to implement the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum effectively. Being prepared in this context relates to teachers' understanding, mentality, or capabilities, which come from the teachers themselves and are then applied in the teaching and learning process in the classroom (Nisa, 2016).

Based on the data obtained from the sources, it is understood that the implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in social studies classes does not run smoothly but faces several challenges. One significant issue is the adaptation to digital technology, which leads teachers to predominantly use lecture and discussion methods, thus making the learning process still centered on the teacher rather than the students. The adaptation to technology also poses a challenge for teachers due to the administrative

requirements that need to be uploaded or reported through the Merdeka Mengajar Digital Platform, such as class agreements, restitution triangles, and class dynamics reflections. However, the school remains optimistic about the teachers' adaptation process to all aspects of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in social studies through various efforts such as in-house training, workshops, and peer tutoring. Likewise, teachers continuously motivate themselves to align with the Independent Learning Curriculum in their teaching practices.

Further steps in the evaluation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in social studies will continue to be pursued by teachers and the school to be implemented effectively. These steps include increasing teacher participation in subject teacher forums at both the rayon and sub-rayon levels. Additionally, there is a push for teachers to be proactive in equipping themselves independently with the competencies needed for classroom teaching, particularly addressing complaints about technology proficiency among senior teachers nearing retirement. This will also be supported by monitoring from the school principal and vice-principal for curriculum affairs to oversee the participation of social studies teachers in teacher forums through documentation submissions to the principal. With the assistance of the vice-principal for curriculum, guidance will be provided if teachers are found to be inactive in MGMP activities at both the district and county levels.

These actions are taken as a firm stance by the school principal to realize the implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum at the school. The principal plays a crucial role in maintaining discipline and teaching quality at the school. One of the measures taken is to provide guidance to teachers who are not disciplined in their duties. This guidance aims not only to improve teacher performance but also to enhance their professionalism in facing current educational challenges (Sutikno, 2023). The principal must be proactive in offering guidance and support to teachers struggling with compliance, thereby

improving classroom effectiveness (Putri, 2023). Thus, teachers will be more orderly and disciplined in participating in MGMP activities to equip themselves for implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in social studies at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu.

From the data collected, teachers' adaptation to the implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum at SMP N 3 Cepu involves a combination of behavioral, strategic, and process adaptations as proposed by Bennett. Behavioral adaptation can be analyzed through the teachers' actions of accepting and not rejecting the school's policy in implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum, particularly in social studies. Teachers see positive goals and direction in the implementation of this curriculum for improving education quality at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu, leading to their acceptance and implementation of the curriculum in social studies.

Additionally, regarding behavioral adaptation, social studies teachers at SMP N 3 Cepu show changes in behavior as they work to implement the new curriculum. Initially, teachers start adopting and adjusting teaching methods to align with the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum. For example, Mr. Bambang Wiratmoko and Mrs. Susmartatik still use materials and methods from the previous curriculum to fill gaps they perceive in the new curriculum. This indicates that they are taking adaptive actions by retaining effective aspects of the old curriculum while trying to integrate new elements.

Process adaptation is evident from the series of steps teachers go through in implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in social studies classes. This includes curriculum dissemination by the Blora Regency Education Office, in-house training for curriculum planning and preparation, development of teaching modules based

on written sources such as student and teacher guides, classroom implementation using lecture methods, and final evaluations conducted during in-house training sessions.

Strategic adaptation is observed in teachers' efforts to integrate old teaching methods with new ones, develop teaching strategies, and collaborate with peers. Additionally, strategic adaptation is reflected in the strategies developed during curriculum evaluation activities in in-house training forums to encourage effective implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in social studies at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu.

The application of Bennett's adaptation theory in the implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum at SMP N 3 Cepu shows that adaptation is a dynamic process involving strategies, processes, and teacher behaviors in social studies education. Although teachers do not immediately adjust, they are gradually aligning themselves with the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum for social studies classes.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu is based on the readiness of the school as a pilot project for the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in the Cepu District. It is also supported by the school supervisor, the education office, and the local government of Blora Regency, the school committee, and the parent-teacher association of SMP Negeri 3 Cepu. However, in its application to social studies learning, the advanced age of the teachers has resulted in less-than-optimal implementation. This is due to their limited ability to adapt to the use of technology, causing learning activities to lack variety and rely on lecture methods. Consequently, the learning activities are teacher-centered rather than student-centered.

Teacher adaptation in implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu involves several stages of adaptation, namely strategy, process, and behavior. Additionally, in the adaptation process, the teachers do not reject the school's

policy of implementing the Independent Shared Learning Curriculum in social studies learning at SMP Negeri 3 Cepu. Instead, they accept and adjust to the implementation of the curriculum.

Declaration by Authors

Acknowledgement: None

Source of Funding: None

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

1. Agustina, R., & Purnomo, A. (2021). Analisis Buku Teks Pelajaran IPS Kelas VII Kurikulum 2013 di SMP Se-Kecamatan Ngargoyoso Kabupaten Karanganyar Jawa Tengah. *Sosiolum: Jurnal Pembelajaran IPS*, 3(2), 94-99.
2. Aini, F. N., & Anwar, K. (2023). Implementasi Asesmen Diagnostik Dalam Pembelajaran IPS Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Pada Aspek Penilaian Berpikir Kritis Siswa SMP N 1 Kejajar Wonosobo. *Journal of Indonesian Social Studies Education*, 1(2), 180-187.
3. Andriani, S., & Jatiningsih, O. (2015). Manajemen Perubahan dalam Organisasi Pendidikan. Yogyakarta: Deepublish.
4. Anggila, W. (2022). *Persepsi Guru Bidang Studi IPS dalam Pelaksanaan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar di SMP Negeri Sekecamatan Tanjung Kemuning Kabupaten Kaur* (Doctoral dissertation, UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu).
5. Arifin, I., & Wiyono, D. F. (2022). Implementasi supervisi klinis dalam penerapan kurikulum merdeka di sekolah dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(5), 8812-8818.
6. Arikunto, S. (2010). Metode penelitian. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
7. Azmi, F. S. U., Purnomo, A., & Mulianingsih, F. (2019). Kreativitas Guru dalam Mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar Siswa pada Mata Pelajaran IPS di Smp Negeri 34 Semarang Tahun Pelajaran 2017/2018. *Sosiolum: Jurnal Pembelajaran IPS*, 1(2), 146-152.
8. Baniarti, I., & Hermanto, F. (2022). Strategi Guru Dalam Mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar Peserta Didik Pada Mata Pelajaran IPS Di SMP N 2 Kemusu Boyolali. *Sosiolum: Jurnal Pembelajaran IPS*, 4(2), 90-101.

9. Barlian, U. C., & Solekah, S. (2022). Implementasi kurikulum merdeka dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan. *JOEL: Journal of Educational and Language Research*, 1(12), 2105-2118.
10. Basri, W., & Rahmi, T. S. (2023). Kendala Guru Dalam Mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Pembelajaran Ips Tingkat Sekolah Menengah Pertama (Smp). *Journal Of Moral And Civic Education*, 7(1), 1-16.
11. Creswell, John W. (2012). *Research Design Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan Mixed*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
12. ----- (2015). *Penelitian Kualitatif dan Desain Riset : Memilih di Antara Lima Riset*. Yogyakarta. Pustaka Pelajar.
13. Dani, A. R., & Nurlizawati, N. (2023). Adaptasi Guru Sosiologi Sekolah Penggerak di Kota Padang Terhadap Kurikulum Merdeka. *Naradidik: Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, 2(2), 140-147
14. Hamalik, Oemar. (2006). *Proses Belajar Mengajar*. Bandung: Bumi Aksara.
15. Haryanto, B. (2022). *Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka: Meningkatkan Kreativitas dan Kemandirian Siswa*. Yogyakarta: Andi Offset.
16. Hermawan, Y. C., Juliani, W. I., & Widodo, H. (2020). Konsep Kurikulum Dan Kurikulum Pendidikan Islam. *Jurnal Mudarrisuna: Media Kajian Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 10(1), 34-44.
17. Hidayat, A. N., & Nisa, A. N. S. (2023). Peran Guru IPS dalam Mengembangkan Kemampuan Berpikir Kritis Peserta Didik melalui Pendekatan Saintifik pada Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh di SMP Negeri 32 Semarang. *Journal of Indonesian Social Studies Education*, 1(2), 141-148.
18. Hilmi, M. Z. (2017). Implementasi Pendidikan IPS dalam embelajaran IPS di Sekolah. *Jurnal Ilmiah Mandala Education*, 3(2), 164-172.
19. How To Cite This Article Triana Wijayanti, Arif Purnomo upto 3 followed by et. al for more than 3. Full title of article is written here. *International Journal of Research and Review*. 2024; 11(8):1-10. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20240801>

How to cite this article: Triana Wijayanti, Arif Purnomo. Implementation of merdeka curriculum in urban schools in Cepu, Blora Regency. *International Journal of Research and Review*. 2024; 11(8): 480-491. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20240851>
