



IMPLEMENTATION OF MERDEKA MANDIRI CURRICULUM CHANGES IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEARNING AT UPT SMP NEGERI 2 GRESIK

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Abstract:

The Merdeka Mandiri curriculum is the curriculum chosen by UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik to implement the independent curriculum initiated by the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim. This research aims to determine the design of the Merdeka Mandiri curriculum that has changed Islamic Religious Education learning and the implementation of the Merdeka Mandiri curriculum that has changed the learning of Islamic Religious Education, as well as evaluate the Merdeka Mandiri curriculum that has changed in the learning of Islamic Religious Education. To achieve the objectives of this research, qualitative research was the choice to reveal the implementation of the independent learning curriculum, especially in Islamic Religious Education learning with the method used to collect data: interviews, observations, and documentation. Meanwhile, the data analysis techniques used are data condensation, data presentation, and concluding. The results of the research are the design of the Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum Changes in Islamic Religious Education learning in accordance with the central learning outcomes and developed by teachers in charge of Islamic Religious Education through teaching modules, the implementation of the Merdeka Mandiri Changed Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education learning is carried out in accordance with the teacher's understanding and when there are problems in the process solutions were sought for learning together through MGMPs Islamic Religious Education and teacher meetings. Evaluation of the Merdeka Mandiri Changed Curriculum for Islamic Religious Education learning was carried out internally from UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik and externally from the Education supervisor at the end of the semester.

Keywords: Independent Curriculum; Islamic Religious Education; Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum.

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Received : February 29, 2024; Revised : May 23, 2024; Accepted : June 11, 2024; Published : June 15, 2024

INTRODUCTION

Human resources (HR) who believe and are devoted to God Almighty can support the achievement of a nation's dignity, dignity, and civilization, have good morals, are physically and spiritually healthy, and are independent, knowledgeable, creative, and responsible individuals. Good educational results can create complete and superior

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humans.¹ The results of good education can make complete and superior humans, as in the first revelation to the Prophet Muhammad SAW by Allah SWT.² From the beginning of creation until the afterlife, humans have been well-educated.³ Education is an effort to grow and develop human talent and dignity.⁴ Education is an effort to achieve physical and physical maturity and a better standard of living.⁵ According to Hasbullah, Education is a process of direction to achieve predetermined educational goals.⁶ In line with this opinion, Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system in the first article explains, "Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious, spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals and skills. Which is needed by himself, society, nation and state".⁷

In the Preamble to the 1945 Republic of Indonesia Constitution, the fourth paragraph discusses the ideals of the Indonesian nation, one of which is how to make the nation's life more intelligent.⁸ In line with this, the function of education is to eliminate various sources of suffering in society, such as backwardness, poverty and ignorance.⁹ By being educated, you can avoid ignorance and poverty; with the knowledge and skills obtained from education, you can overcome life's problems.¹⁰ Allah SWT. confirms it in His word QS. Al-Mujjadi verse 11, truly with faith and knowledge, humans will be dignified in building civilization. This goal can be achieved easily through the educational curriculum.

The function of the curriculum cannot be divorced from the field of education; the curriculum is an absolute requirement in education, and an essential part cannot be separated. The curriculum is the heart of education.¹¹ The curriculum is a collection of lessons that students need to learn.¹² The definition of curriculum has evolved to encompass the required lessons and the learning strategies the instructor wants to use both within and outside the classroom. Thus, the curriculum is not only seen as a document that contains written educational programs.¹³ National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 explains that the curriculum is a set of rules or plans that include objectives, content, materials, and learning methods that serve as guidelines for implementing learning to achieve predetermined goals.¹⁴

¹ Mokh Iman Firmansyah, "Pendidikan Agama Islam: Pengertian, Tujuan, Dasar, dan Fungsi," *Ta'lim: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 17, no. 2 (2019), h. 79–80.

² QS al-Alaq: 1-5.

³ Hidayatullah, "Tujuan Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif Al-Quran," *al-Burhan* 16, no. 1 (2016), h. 26.

⁴ Mohamad Mustari, *Manajemen Pendidikan di Era Merdeka Belajar* (Bandung: UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, 2022), h. 1.

⁵ Hamid Hamadi, *Pengantar Pendidikan Era Globalisasi* (Tangerang: Anlimage, 2019), h. 7.

⁶ Hasbullah, *Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Pendidikan* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, tt), h. 11.

⁷ Republik Indonesia, *Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional* (Jakarta: Sekretariat Negara, 2003), pasal 1.

⁸ Republik Indonesia, *3 Undang-Undang Dasar Republik Indonesia: UUD 1945 Setelah Amandemen, Konstitusi RIS Tahun 1950, dan UUDS Tahun 1950* (Jakarta: Gramedia Press, 2014), h. 2.

⁹ Mahmudi, *Ilmu Pendidikan Mengupas Komponen Pendidikan* (Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2022), h. 34.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, h. 34.

¹¹ Umi Mahmudah, "Kurikulum Pendidikan dalam Kajian Al-Qur'an Hadits Tematik," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 2 (July 2018), h. 95.

¹² Heri Gunawan, *Kurikulum dan Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2012), h. 1.

¹³ Wira Sanjaya, *Pembelajaran Dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi* (Jakarta: Kencana Media Group, 2006), h. 4–5.

¹⁴ Republik Indonesia, *Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*, Pasal 19.

The education curriculum in Indonesia has undergone various changes and improvements. Hopefully, these changes will overcome all the problems in Indonesia's educational system.¹⁵ In the history of the development of the Indonesian education curriculum, the 1947 Curriculum was first adopted (Decomposed Lesson Plan). Over time, The 1952 curriculum (Decomposed Lesson Plan 1952) replaced this curriculum.¹⁶ Curriculum changes continued until the 2013 curriculum, which had a revised version.¹⁷ Curriculum changes occur inseparable from developments over time to perfect the previous curriculum to suit the situation and conditions of the time.

As with yesterday's phenomenon, The COVID-19 pandemic has been reported in around 215 countries and has spread to nearly every continent, including Indonesia, so the coronavirus is better known as Coronavirus Disease 2019,¹⁸ designated by WHO as a Global Pandemic.¹⁹ To prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus from spreading quickly, the Minister of Education and Culture issued a Notification Letter from the Secretary General of the Ministry of Education and Culture Number 36603/A.A5/OT/2020 of 2020, which came into effect on March 15, 2020, and became effective on March 16, 2020.²⁰ The letter states that it demands the public to adopt the habit of implementing health protocols.

The Ministry of Education and Culture followed up on this by issuing Circular No. 4 of 2020, which mandates using the internet or remote learning environment for instruction.²¹ Learning carried out at home is also stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System article 1 paragraph 15 that "Distance education, in the future, referred to as PJJ, is Education, where teachers and students are not together and where learning occurs, uses various learning resources through communication technology, information, and other media. "Meanwhile, in its implementation, PJJ is divided into two approaches, namely online or online distance learning and offline or offline distance learning."²² Meanwhile, in its implementation, when offline, the number of students taking part in the learning is limited. In this case, educational institutions have policies; some are offline, and half follow online. There are also half offline and the other half offline after finishing the first.

As explained by Nadiem Makarim in the webinar "Adjusting Learning Policies during the Covid-19 Pandemic", the emergency curriculum is an option and can be chosen by educational institutions in implementing PJJ. This curriculum simplifies the basic competencies in each subject and focuses on essential and main competencies used as

¹⁵ Ahmad Rifa'i, N. Elis Kurnia Asih, and Dewi Fatmawati, "Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Pembelajaran PENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAM di Sekolah," *Jurnal Health Sains* 3, no. 8 (August 23, 2022), h. 1007.

¹⁶ Farah Dina Insani, "Sejarah Perkembangan Kurikulum di Indonesia Sejak Awal Kemerdekaan Hingga Saat Ini," *As-Salam: Jurnal Studi Hukum Islam & Pendidikan* 8, no. 1 (2019), h. 46.

¹⁷ Juliati Boang Manalu, Pernando Sitohang, and Netty Heriwati Henrika Turnip, "Pengembangan Perangkat Pembelajaran Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar," *Prosiding Pendidikan Dasar: Journal Mahesa Center* 1, no. 1 (2022), h. 80–81.

¹⁸ Tya Ayu Pransiska Dewi and Arief Sadjiarto, "Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Daring Pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19," *Jurnal Basicedu* 5, no. 4 (June 25, 2021), h. 12.

¹⁹ Sri Gusty. dkk., *Belajar Mandiri: Pembelajaran Daring Di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19* (Medan: Yayasan Kita Menulis, 2020), h. 1.

²⁰ I Ketut Sudarsana et al., *Covid-19 Perspektif Pendidikan* (Medan: Yayasan Kita Menulis, 2020), h. 2–3.

²¹ Sri Gusty, dkk., *Belajar Mandiri: Pembelajaran Daring Di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19*, h. 1.

²² Asmuni, "Problematika Pembelajaran Daring di Masa Pandemi Covid-19 dan Solusi Pemecahannya," *Jurnal Paedagogy* 7, no. 4 (October 1, 2020), h. 281.

prerequisites for continuing education at the next level. In its implementation, it will be valid until the 2020/2021 academic year.²³

The emergency curriculum cannot run as smoothly as it should. The Ministry of Education and Culture responded to problems by creating a "Freedom to Learn" policy. Nadiem Makarim stated firmly that his idea was an effort to realize freedom of thought.²⁴ On February 11, 2020, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Research and Technology launched the independent learning program, Episode 15, as an independent curriculum accompanied by an independent teaching platform.²⁵ An independent curriculum emphasizes students, giving students freedom and teachers becoming facilitators in the teaching and learning process.²⁶

The curriculum aims to answer challenges in education in the current era by supporting creative, innovative, critical thinking in solving problems, being skilled in public speaking, and working with other students.²⁷ In summary, this autonomous curriculum grants students the autonomy to pursue their education while granting educational establishments the power to encourage learning and modify it to suit the classroom's needs.

The concepts of KI Hajar Dewantara, the Father of Indonesian Education, are considered while creating the autonomous curriculum. Education is a civilizing process that is not only oriented toward becoming an intelligent person but also preparing individuals to become good citizens.²⁸ Thus, education must have a dual orientation that can develop students to understand themselves and their environment.²⁹ In the 2021/2022 academic year, around 2,500 driving schools in Indonesia implemented the independent curriculum³⁰ so that all subjects taught refer to the independent curriculum, including Islamic Religious Education subjects.

Islamic Religious Education is a subject that aims to guide students to become true Muslims with solid faith, noble character, and good deeds, as well as to be beneficial for society and the nation. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education classes must be polished to ensure the autonomous curriculum's success.³¹ Thus, Islamic religious education teachers need to understand the concept of an independent curriculum, especially the learning objectives, for its execution to adhere to the schedule.

In the 2022/2023 academic year, the Merdeka Curriculum can be implemented in schools that are not driving schools. Note that this school has its inspiration to implement

²³ Ihsana El Khuliqo and Istaryatiningtias, *Model Pengembangan Manajemen Pengembangan Kurikulum* (Feniks Muda Sejahtera, 2022), h. 130.

²⁴ Syamsul Arifin, dkk. "Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Pengembangan Desain Evaluasi Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Dirasat: Jurnal Manajemen dan Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (2021), h. 67.

²⁵ Mahlianurrahman and Rapita Aprilia, "Menyusun Cerita Praktik Baik Pembelajaran Berbasis Kurikulum Merdeka di Sekolah Dasar," *Jurnal Anugerah* 4, no. 1 (2022), h. 44.

²⁶ Miftakhul Rohman and Asyharul Muttaqin, "Evektifitas Scientific Approach terhadap Materi Pendidikan Agama Islam pada Merdeka Belajar," *SINDA: Comprehensive Journal of Islamic Social Studies* 2, no. 1 (April 2022): 75.

²⁷ Juliati Bonang Manalu, dkk., "Pengembangan Perangkat Pembelajaran Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar", h. 82.

²⁸ Dini Irawati, dkk., "Profil Pelajar Pancasila Sebagai Upaya Mewujudkan Karakter Bangsa," *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (2022), h. 1255.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Aini Qolbiyah, "Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Pendidikan Indonesia* 1, no. 1 (2022), h. 45.

³¹ Ahmad Rifa'i, dkk., "Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di Sekolah", h. 1007.

it, provided that it submits a proposal first to obtain permission to implement the independent curriculum. One of the schools that submitted a proposal to implement an independent curriculum was UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik. Schools that have inspiration like this must be ready to take part in training and learn about independent curriculums. By obtaining permission to implement the independent curriculum, all subjects must also be adapted to the independent curriculum, as well as PAI subjects, even if only for class VII. The curriculum chosen by UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik is the Merdeka Mandiri Changed Curriculum. With this background, we want to know in detail how the Merdeka Mandiri curriculum design has changed the learning of Islamic Religious Education, how the implementation of the Merdeka Mandiri curriculum has changed the teaching of Islamic Religious Education, and the evaluation of the Merdeka Mandiri curriculum has changed in the learning of Islamic Religious Education.

Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum Changes

The Merdeka curriculum is a learning process that uses an approach to students' interests and talents. Nadiem Makarim initiated this curriculum to improve the previous emergency curriculum during the COVID-19 pandemic. Freedom to learn is an effort to provide opportunities for students to develop their talents. It is still monitored by teachers and parents so that the talents they have This does not lead to anything harmful.³²

The Merdeka Mengajar platform, an instructional tool for teachers and school principals to execute the independent curriculum, was launched with the independent curriculum. You may utilize this platform whenever you want and access it using an Android handset. The independent curriculum answers the challenges of the current era by requiring creativity, critical thinking, innovation, and communication skills to solve problems.³³

This curriculum provides freedom for students in learning to have better quality because students can memorize, reason critically, and solve their problems.³⁴ The independent curriculum is under the thoughts of the Father of Indonesian education, Ki Hajar Dewantara, that education is a civilizing process to develop knowledgeable individuals capable of becoming good citizens. Thus, education must have a dual-orientation, allowing students to understand themselves and their environment.³⁵

The teacher's position is essential to the success of this dual educational function. Teachers must be free to achieve their goals, not just from confinement and policies.³⁶ Implementing an independent curriculum cannot run effectively if teachers only lecture in class. Teachers are supposed to be the main facilitators of learning, and students can talk to their teachers and friends about what they think and encourage others to take risks by becoming public. Students are encouraged to comprehend the learning objectives,

³² A. Faiz and I. Kurniawaty, "Konsep Merdeka Belajar Pendidikan Indonesia Dalam Perspektif Filsafat Progresivisme, Konstruktivisme," *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemberdayaan* 12, no. 2 (2020), h. 159.

³³ Juliati Boang Manalu, dkk., "Pengembangan Perangkat Pembelajaran Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar", h. 82.

³⁴ Meylan Saleh, "Merdeka Belajar Di Tengah Pandemi Covid 19," *Prosiding Sempras Hardiknas* 1 (2020), h. 52.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Najelaa Shihab and Komunitas Guru Belajar, *Merdeka Belajar Di Ruang Kelas* (Tangerang: Kampus Guru Cikal, 2020), h. 18.

which teachers are allowed to create and modify to fit the needs of their particular learning environment.³⁷

The independent curriculum does not determine students' abilities and understanding based on grades alone. However, the kids' skills, character, and the curriculum's planned outcomes demonstrate that they will have the skills necessary to sustain themselves.³⁸ In addition, the autonomous curriculum modifies the teaching and learning process, formerly limited to the classroom and now possible outside of it. Students should be allowed to practice engaging with peers and their surroundings.³⁹ Students do not feel pressured or burdened by their study habits; they can feel comfortable learning, exploring their potential, and capturing information.

Structure of Merdeka Curriculum

The orientation of the independent curriculum is outcome-based education, usually abbreviated as OBE, which is an educational process oriented towards results, abilities, and behavior.⁴⁰ In its implementation, students must be able to design, make decisions, solve problems, and provide opportunities for each student to work independently and in groups.⁴¹

The profile of Pancasila students in the independent curriculum is a reference for developing curriculum structures, learning outcomes, and learning assessments.⁴² The structure has three sections: intracurricular activities, projects to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students known as P5, and extracurriculars.⁴³ This extracurricular activity is a teaching and learning process to complete the learning outcomes in class, and teachers have autonomy in creating their work schedules.

Meanwhile, the project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students (P5) is a cross-disciplinary project carried out in various subjects in educational institutions.⁴⁴ The time allocation for study hours is written for a year and accompanied by the time allocation for each week.⁴⁵ There is no change in the total number of lesson hours. Nonetheless, time is allotted for projects and extracurricular activities in each topic to enhance the Pancasila student profile (P5), with details of 75% for extracurricular learning and 25% for P5 activities. Many subject-matter teachers worked together to assist this initiative.⁴⁶ The

³⁷ Ibid., 29.

³⁸ Hasnawati, "Pola Penerapan Merdeka Belajar Pada Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Meningkatkan Daya Kreativitas Peserta Didik di SMAN 4 Wajo Kabupaten Wajo", *Tesis* (Parepare: IAIN Parepare, 2021), h. 26.

³⁹ Juliati Boang Manalu, dkk., "Pengembangan Perangkat Pembelajaran Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar", h. 83.

⁴⁰ Mai Yuliasri Simarmatal, "Analisis Keterampilan Berbicara Melalui Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila Di SMP Negeri 1 Kuala Mandor B," *Vox Edukasi: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 12, no. 1 (2022), h. 48.

⁴¹ Suhardi, "Analisis Penerapan Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Dimensi Profil Pancasila," *Journey Liaison Academia and Society* 1, no. 1 (2022), h. 472.

⁴² Muhamad Yahya, dkk., *Menyorot Kurikulum Prototipe Dari Paradigma Hingga Implementasinya* (Surabaya: CV Global Aksara Press, 2021), h. 4.

⁴³ Dini Irawati, dkk., "Profil Pelajar Pancasila Sebagai Upaya Mewujudkan Karakter Bangsa", h. 1235.

⁴⁴ Jamiatul Hamidah, "Pelatihan Penyusunan Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila Pada Kepala Sekolah Dan Guru-Guru Sekolah Dasar di Kabupaten Banjar Kalimantan Selatan," *Jurnal Cemerlang: Pengabdian pada Masyarakat* 4, no. 2 (2022), h. 260.

⁴⁵ Kemendikbud RI (last), *Buku Saku: Tanya Jawab Kurikulum Merdeka*, h. 15.

⁴⁶ Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan, *Dimensi, Elemen, Dan Subelemen Profil Pelajar Pancasila Pada Kurikulum Merdeka* (Jakarta: Kemdikbud RI, 2022), h. 2.

project to strengthen the Pancasila student profile is a series of activities formed based on the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile with themes agreed upon by the school.

The project has several themes to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students at primary and secondary school levels, namely local wisdom, building body and soul, entrepreneurship, sustainable lifestyles, the voice of democracy, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, and engineering and technology.⁴⁷ Apart from that, the Pancasila student profile has six competencies, which are vital dimensions.⁴⁸ Every school is free to select the theme to be applied.

Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum

The Merdeka curriculum was first only introduced at driving schools; it was not deployed concurrently with other curricula.⁴⁹ Non-school driving schools can implement the Independent or Merdeka Curriculum Implementation (MCI). The Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology provides MCI support through independent channels by registering interested schools. The school will receive independent learning assistance in MCI. Thus, the school can independently create MCI practice-sharing activities through seminars or workshops.⁵⁰

Schools that are not driving schools can select from three categories that the government has divided MCI into⁵¹ (a) MCI Independent Learning Pathway: schools still use the 2013 Curriculum but have started to apply the principles of the Independent Curriculum. It is evident from the principles of character education, increasing reading proficiency, and many more.; (b) MCI Independent Path has changed, and schools have fully used the independent curriculum. Thus, schools can fully utilize the Merdeka Mengajar platform that the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology has prepared. Schools can choose teaching modules on the platform or create their own; and (c) MCI Independent Sharing Path: Schools can collaborate with other educational institutions in Indonesia if they have the infrastructure, personnel, and facilities necessary to advance and innovate in teaching. The school makes the decision, taking into account its resources. There are no specific conditions for selection. It is also permitted when it is running and you want to change to another route because the MCI independent pathway emphasizes school capabilities. Thus, you can go up when you feel capable at the next stage, and vice versa.

⁴⁷ Jamiatul Hamidah, "Pelatihan Penyusunan Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila Pada Kepala Sekolah Dan Guru-Guru Sekolah Dasar di Kabupaten Banjar Kalimantan Selatan," h. 256.

⁴⁸ Suhardi, "Analisis Penerapan Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Dimensi Profil Pancasila", h. 471.

⁴⁹ Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan, "Tahapan Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka," accessed January 19, 2022, <https://kurikulum-demo.simpkb.id/tahapan-ikm/>.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ BBPMP Jatim, "Mengenal Kembali Opsi Mandiri Belajar, Berubah, Dan Berbagi Di Kurikulum Merdeka," accessed January 19, 2022, <https://lpmpjatim.kemdikbud.go.id/site/detailpost/mengenal-kembali-opsi-mandiri-belajar-berubah-berbagi-di-kurikulum-merdeka>.

Process of Merdeka Curriculum Learning

The learning process implemented in the independent curriculum must be able to foster students' creativity.⁵² Therefore, students are expected to be more active and not passively listen to explanations, and the learning process can take advantage of advanced technology. The independent curriculum requires teachers to innovate in teaching and learning activities.⁵³ The media and models used are to be varied so that learning for students is not dull.

The learning process in the independent curriculum uses differentiation classes. Differentiated learning means that the teacher becomes a facilitator in the learning process; for this reason, teachers must be able to choose suitable learning methods and models so that differentiated learning is not learning that imposes differences on students.⁵⁴ Tomlinson's opinion, quoted by Dinar Westri Andini, defines differentiation learning as creating diverse classes.⁵⁵ Because the existing differences are used as a reference for determining actions in carrying out learning, this learning process allows students to be more active in improving their learning outcomes.

The Merdeka Curriculum uses the teaching at the Right Level (TarL) approach. This approach is an approach to learning that is based on students' abilities.⁵⁶ In the process, teachers assess students to determine their characteristics and abilities. Then, the teacher carries out the learning process's design, process, and evaluation. In this curriculum, several assessments are required.⁵⁷ (1) diagnostic assessment: an assessment at the beginning of the learning process to obtain information about students' abilities or deficiencies. This assessment is carried out as a reference for implementing the teaching and learning process; (2) formative assessment is carried out to provide feedback to students and teachers in improving the subsequent learning process. The purpose of this assessment is to determine student progress and provide quick feedback on each material or competency; and (3) summative assessment: assessment given to assess learning outcomes that have been implemented. This assessment is carried out at the end of the semester to ensure that the overall learning objectives have been achieved. Independent curriculum learning seeks interactive, innovative, and fun learning to make learning objectives straightforward.

⁵² Ahmad Rifa'i, N. Elis Kurnia Asih, and Dewi Fatmawati, "Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Sekolah," *Jurnal Syntax Admiration* 8 (2022), h. 1008.

⁵³ Aini Qolbiyah, "Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam", h. 46.

⁵⁴ Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan, "Pembelajaran Berdiferensiasi Dan Penerapannya Di Kelas," accessed January 19, 2022, <https://ayoguruberbagi.kemdikbud.go.id/artikel/pembelajaran-berdiferensiasi-dan-penerapannya-di-kelas/>.

⁵⁵ Dinar Westri Andini, "Differentiated Instruction: Solusi Pembelajaran Dalam Keberagaman Siswa Di Kelas Inklusif," *Trihayu: Jurnal Pendidikan Ke-SD-an* 2, no. 3 (2016), h. 341.

⁵⁶ Merdeka Mengajar, "Apa Itu Asesmen Murid?," accessed January 19, 2022, <https://pusatinformasi.guru.kemdikbud.go.id/hc/en-us/articles/7126931962649-Apa-Itu-Asesmen-Murid-#:~:text=Asesmen%20adalah%20proses%20pengumpulan%20dan,landasan%20untuk%20meningkatkan%20mutu%20pembelajaran.>

⁵⁷ NaikPangkat.com, "Macam-Macam Asesmen Dalam Pembelajaran Kurikulum Merdeka," accessed January 19, 2022, <https://naikpangkat.com/macam-macam-asesmen-dalam-pembelajaran-kurikulum-merdeka/#:~:text=Asesmen%20kurikulum%20merdeka%20memiliki%20satu,penilaian%20belajar%2C%20dan%20penilaian%20belajar.>

Definition, Aims, and Scope of Islamic Religious Education

Imam al-Ghazali defines education as an effort made by educators to eliminate wrong actions and instill good actions to obtain happiness in this world and the hereafter.⁵⁸ Ki Hajar Dewantara defines education as a demand to grow and develop students' potential.⁵⁹ Then, the word education is juxtaposed with 'Islamic Religion' to become one term, namely, Islamic Religious Education, which has its meaning.

Based on the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 55 of 2007 concerning Religious Education and Religious Education in Chapter 1 Articles 1 and 2, which explains: "Religious and religious education is education that is carried out through subjects or lectures at all levels, education that aims to provide knowledge as well as forming attitudes, human personalities who believe and are devoted to God Almighty, as well as students' skills and abilities in responding to religious values, as well as to prepare students to become human beings who can carry out and practice the teachings of their religion."⁶⁰

Zakiah Daradjat describes Islamic religious education, usually abbreviated as IRE, as guidance and teaching to understand and practice Islamic teachings as a guide to life.⁶¹ Not much different, Muhammad Tholchah Hasan explained that PENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAM is a way to get closer to Allah SWT.⁶² It can be concluded that Islamic religious education is all the steps taken to educate, guide, and nurture students to understand, appreciate, and practice Islamic teachings well in their personal and social lives.

Ibnu Khaldun believes Islamic Religious Education aims to "educate people to become real human beings."⁶³ Meanwhile, according to Ahmad Tafsir, there are three goals: the realization of human beings, the realization of Kaffah people as individuals with a religious, scientific, and cultural spirit, and fostering the soul of the caliph on earth.⁶⁴ In the words of Allah SWT, it is stated as follows:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

Meaning: I did not create jinn and humans except to worship Me. (QS. Az-Zariyah ayat 56)

This verse explains that, in general, Islamic religious education aims to prepare people to obtain the title 'Ibad al-Rahman,' namely, a worshiper of Allah with noble qualities.⁶⁵ As stated in the competency standards, Islamic religious education aims to grow and increase faith by providing insight and familiarization with Islamic teachings,

⁵⁸ Mokh Iman Firmansyah, "Pendidikan Agama Islam: Pengertian, Tujuan, Dasar, dan Fungsi," h. 82.

⁵⁹ Ibid., h. 83.

⁶⁰ Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, *Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia Nomor 55 Tahun 2007 Tentang Pendidikan Agama Dan Pendidikan Keagamaan* (Jakarta: Sekretariat Negara, 2007), Pasal 1-2.

⁶¹ Halimatussa'diyah, *Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Agama Islam Multikultural* (Surabaya: CV Jakad Media Publishing, 2020), h. 12-13.

⁶² Muhammad Tholchah Hasan, *Pendidikan Multikultural Sebagai Opsi Penganggulangan Radikalisme* (Malang: UNISMA, 2016), h. 2.

⁶³ Muhammad Kosim, *Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam Ibn Khaldun: Kritis, Humanis, Dan Religius* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2012), h. 63.

⁶⁴ Mokh Iman Firmansyah, "Pendidikan Agama Islam: Pengertian, Tujuan, Dasar, dan Fungsi," h. 84.

⁶⁵ Hidayatullah, "Tujuan Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif Al-Quran," *al-Burhan* 16, no. 1 (2016), h. 32.

increasing devotion to Allah, and having noble morals applied in daily life as implemented by the Prophet Muhammad.⁶⁶

Not only that, but Islamic religious education also aims to achieve spiritual, intellectual, and emotional intelligence in humans. Through spiritual intelligence, humans are expected to obey and obey Allah. To be able to understand and utilize the resources that God has given requires intellectual intelligence. Meanwhile, emotional intelligence is used in interacting with others, reflected in behaviour full of compassion, empathy, and tolerance for differences.⁶⁷

A similar opinion states that Islamic Religious Education aims to create students who are faithful and devoted to Allah SWT and have noble morals.⁶⁸ The noble morals referred to include character, ethics, and the values of Islamic teachings. With noble morals, students can interact with the environment well.

One of the verses that contains the objectives of Islamic religious education learning is QS. Al-Jumu'ah verse 10 as follows:

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

Meaning: When the (Jumat) prayer has been performed, spread out on the earth, seek Allah SWT grace, and remember Allah SWT as much as possible so that you may be successful. (QS, Al-Jumu'ah ayat 10)

This verse is one of the fundamental objectives of Islamic Religious Education. This verse shows that the aim of Islamic religious education is not just for the afterlife but for the welfare of the world. By being equipped with spiritual knowledge, humans become individuals not barren of divinity and humanity.⁶⁹ Allah SWT confirms it. In His words, QS. Al-Qasas ayat 77:

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ
إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Meaning: And, seek what Allah has bestowed upon you (rewards) in the land of the afterlife, but do not forget your share in this world. Do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you, and do not cause harm on earth. Indeed, Allah does not like those who do damage." (QS. Al-Qasas ayat 77)

⁶⁶ Tatang Hidayat and Abas Asyafah, "Konsep Dasar Evaluasi Dan Implikasinya Dalam Evaluasi Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di Sekolah," *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 10, no. 1 (2019), h. 162.

⁶⁷ Moh. Sulaiman, dkk., "Emotional Spiritual Quotient (ESQ) Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Kurikulum 2013," *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 1 (2018), h. 79.

⁶⁸ Yunus and Abu Bakar Dja'far, *Manajemen Pendidikan Islam: Konsep, Prinsip, Ruang Lingkup Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* (Indramayu: CV Adanu Abimata, 2021), h. 111.

⁶⁹ Hilda Ainissyifa, "Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Perspektif Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Pendidikan Universitas Garut* 8, no. 1 (2014), h. 14.

This verse explains that there is a balance between this world and the hereafter, which means it is not biased. Thus, Islamic Religious Education goals are under the Divine message, which is not only focused on the world or the afterlife but both.⁷⁰ Islamic Religious Education in the Madrasah Curriculum, which the Ministry of Religion oversees, is divided into several subjects, such as fiqh, creeds, morals, history of Islamic culture, kalam science, Al-Qur'an Hadith, tafsir science, and hadith science.⁷¹ However, implementing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum in schools under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture is only one subject, namely Islamic Religious Education and Character. However, Islamic Religious Education subjects still include faith, morals, Qurdis, fiqh, and SKI material.

The Islamic Religious Education learning method is used to achieve the educational goals.⁷² These learning methods vary and the selection is adjusted to the material or topic to be presented by the teacher. The learning methods that Islamic Religious Education students often use are as follows: (1) the lecture method is a teaching and learning method that emphasizes the delivery of material orally by the teacher.⁷³ (2) the storytelling method conveys material by telling a chronology or explanation about something.⁷⁴ (3) cooperative learning is a teaching and learning method that is focused on group formation. The group is used as a forum for learning together to understand the material. Using this method can foster attitudes of cooperation, tolerance, responsibility, etc. in students.⁷⁵ (4) the question and answer method is a method of conveying material simply by asking questions to students. Then, from the question and answer process that has been carried out, students can be invited to make good and correct conclusions according to their understanding.⁷⁶ (5) the discussion method is a method of student interaction in solving problems. This method is generally carried out by students being given a problem or problem and then finding a solution by discussing it with other students.⁷⁷ This method is often combined with cooperative methods. One of the benefits of using this method is that it can open students' horizons by exchanging ideas and understanding with other students. (6) the demonstration method delivers material by providing demonstrations or showing students the subject matter.⁷⁸ (7) the problem-solving method is a way of presenting material by giving students a problem. A solution is sought to solve the problem, which can then lead to conclusions regarding the material being studied.⁷⁹ (8) drill method The drilling method is a method that is carried out by providing training to students. This method can be used on learning materials that require

⁷⁰ Abd. Muqit, Pendidikan Agama, Antara Kesejahteraan Duniawi Dan Kebahagiaan Ukhrawi, Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pemikiran Keislaman, Februari 2019. Vol.6. No.1

⁷¹ Moh. Sulaiman, dkk, "Emotional Spiritual Quotient (ESQ) Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Kurikulum 2013," h. 93.

⁷² Ibid., h. 26.

⁷³ Syahraini Tambak, "Metode Ceramah: Konsep dan Aplikasi Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Jurnal Tarbiyah* 21, no. 2 (2014), h. 376.

⁷⁴ Syahraini Tambak, "Metode Bercerita Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Jurnal Al-Thariqah* 1, no. 1 (2016), h. 2.

⁷⁵ Syahraini Tambak, "Metode Cooperative Learning dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam", *Jurnal Al-Hikmah*, Vol. 14, No. 1, (2017), h. 5.

⁷⁶ Khoirul Budi Utomo, "Strategi Dan Metode Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam MI," *Modeling: Jurnal Program Studi PGMI* 5, no. 2 (2018), h. 149.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Nur Ahyat, "Metode Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam", h. 29.

students to master skill aspects. This method aims to familiarize students.⁸⁰ Several learning methods have been described above; teachers can choose one or combine it with other learning methods. The choice of method is adjusted to the objectives of the material to be delivered and the students' character.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to find out in a naturalistic way about natural conditions.⁸¹ Qualitative research is research that will emphasize a deep understanding of the implementation of an independent and independent curriculum that changes in Islamic Religious Education.⁸² This research focuses more on the descriptive domain, which produces explanatory data in the form of text⁸³ about the research object because it aims to uncover information from various sources in a comprehensive, in-depth, detailed manner and can be illustrated scientifically.⁸⁴ Field research⁸⁵ was chosen because researchers need to go to the location to obtain accurate and factual data and information through observation, interviews and documentation studies. The data analysis technique uses Milles and Huberman's theory, namely reducing, presenting and verifying data regarding the implementation of the independent and independent curriculum in Islamic Religious Education learning at UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik Jalan KH. Kholil No. 16, Pekelingan, Gresik, with research subjects, school principals, curriculum assistants and Islamic Religious Education teachers.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik is a school that participates in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum (IMC), and the chosen one from IMC is Independent Change. Thus, the curriculum at UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik is the Merdeka Mandiri Changing Curriculum. Even though this curriculum has only been implemented for grade 7 students, grade 8 and grade 9 still apply the 2013 Curriculum.

Design of Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum Changes in Islamic Religious Education Learning

The independent curriculum for education at the SMP/MTs level consists of one stage, namely stage D for classes VII, VII and IX. UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik implements the completely changed Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum in class VII,⁸⁶ and the description of the Merdeka curriculum as follows:⁸⁷

⁸⁰ Syahraini Tambak, "Metode Drill dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam", *Jurnal Al-Hikmah*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2016), h. 111.

⁸¹ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan: Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*, 11 (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2015), h. 14.

⁸² Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2010), h. 6.

⁸³ A. Muri Yusuf, *Metode Penelitian: Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan Penelitian Gabungan* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2017), h. 331.

⁸⁴ Sandu Siyoto dan Ali Sodik, *Dasar Metodologi Penelitian* (Yogyakarta: Literasi Media Publishing, 2015), h. 28.

⁸⁵ Husain Usman, *Metodologi Penelitian Sosial* (Jakarta: PT Bumi Aksara, 2006), h. 5.

⁸⁶ Wawancara dengan Waka Kurikulum, Rojak, pada tanggal 4 Januari 2023.

⁸⁷ Wawancara dengan Kepala Sekolah, Mohammad Salim, pada 9 Januari 2023.

Table 1. Aspects of change in the curriculum

Number	Aspect	Description
1	Curriculum Structure	Using the Merdeka Curriculum structure
2	Teaching materials	Using teaching materials provided by the Ministry while learning to make your own
3	Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementing differentiated learning (TaRL)• Applying the learning principles of the Independent Curriculum
4	Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The question format uses the Minimum Competency Assessment pattern• Applying the Merdeka Curriculum assessment principles• The form of the report follows the Merdeka Curriculum
5	PPP Project	Carry out the PPP project as a whole using project teaching modules provided by the Ministry
6	Curriculum Document Name	Educational Unit Operational Curriculum
7	Teacher Document	Annual Program, Semester Program, Teaching Module, PPP Project Module

Consequences of UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik implementing IMC Mandiri Berubah must bring in mentors and experts to guide and train teachers regarding the independent curriculum at their own expense. In addition, schools encourage teachers to actively participate in technical guidance, whether held by the department, MKKS, or MGMP.⁸⁸ To ensure the success of IMC Mandiri, a learning community was established. This community consists of school principals, educators and educational staff to strengthen each other and discuss problems experienced in learning activities.⁸⁹ The project activity to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students in the Merdeka curriculum carried out by UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik is on the theme of entrepreneurship and building the body and soul by creating a working title about typical Gresik City snacks. Meanwhile, the theme of building the body and soul, UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik, familiarizes students with eating healthy food by having breakfast together at school before entering and food filters in the school canteen.

⁸⁸ Wawancara dengan Waka Kurikulum, Rojak, pada tanggal 4 Januari 2023.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Design is making a sketch pattern outline or preliminary plan.⁹⁰ The Mandiri IMC design changes, meaning the pattern must be the same with provisions adapted to the conditions of the school and its environment. Therefore, the school has prepared an Educational Operational Curriculum (EOC) as a guideline for implementing education within one year. The head of the school curriculum prepared this EOC. Meanwhile, the Merdeka Mandiri curriculum structure has changed for Islamic Religious Education learning at UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik to be adjusted to existing provisions. The allocation for Islamic Religious Education lessons, which used to be three lesson hours for extra-curricular activities, is now two lesson hours and one lesson hour for P5 activities.⁹¹

The learning outcomes for Islamic Religious Education at the junior high school level are based on the following elements:⁹²

Table 2. Learning Achievements of Islamic Religious Education

Number	Element	Learning Outcomes
1	Al-Quran and Hadith	Students understand the definition of the Al-Quran and Hadith of the Prophet SAW and their position as sources of Islamic teachings. Students also understand the importance of preserving nature and the environment as an inseparable part of Islamic teachings. Students are also able to explain their understanding of moderate attitudes toward religion. Students also understand the high scientific enthusiasm of several great Islamic intellectuals.
2	Aqidah	Students will explore the six pillars of faith.
3	Morals	Students explore the role of prayer activities as a form of protecting themselves from evil; students also understand the importance of verifying (<i>Tabayyun</i>) information so that they avoid lies and fake news. Students also understand the definition of tolerance in Islam based on verses from the Koran and the Hadiths of the Prophet. Students also begin to recognize the dimensions of beauty and art in Islam, including their expressions.

⁹⁰ Abd. Muqit & Djuwairiyah, “DESAIN STRATEGI PEMBELAJARAN MENUJU CAPENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAMAN PEMBELAJARAN”, JPII Volume 1, Nomor 2, April 2017, 209

⁹¹ Wawancara dengan Guru Pengampu Pelajaran PENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAM, Ning Choiriyah, pada tanggal 27 Desember 2022.

⁹² Hasil Observasi Dokumen Keputusan Kepala Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Nomor 033/H/KR/2022 Tentang Perubahan Atas Keputusan Kepala Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Nomor 008/H/KR/2022 Tentang CaPendidikan Agama Islaman Pembelajaran Pada Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Jenjang Pendidikan Dasar, dan Jenjang Pendidikan Menengah Pada Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Tanggal 7 Januari 2022.

Number	Element	Learning Outcomes
4	Fiqh	Students understand the internalization of values in prostration and prayer, the concepts of Muamalah, usury, and Rukhsah, and become familiar with several schools of jurisprudence and provisions regarding sacrificial worship.
5	History of Islamic Civilization	Students can appreciate the application of noble morals from important stories from the Umayyads, Abbasids, Ottoman Turks, Syafavids and Mughals as an introduction to understanding the historical flow of the arrival of Islam to Indonesia.

Based on the learning outcomes of Islamic Religious Education, teachers can formulate learning objectives and materials adapted to school conditions. In this case, it was carried out by the teacher in charge of the class VII Islamic Religious Education subject.

Implementation of the Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum Changes in Islamic Religious Education Learning

IMC Mandiri Changes to Islamic Religious Education learning, UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik uses teaching module learning tools. The Merdeka Mengajar Platform supports teachers in learning independently; teachers can create teaching modules. Teachers can take from the platform, create their own, or collaborate on MGMP. However, it must still be adapted to each school environment.⁹³ The teaching module format has no definite provisions; teachers are free to choose the arrangement. Its creation includes at least three important aspects: learning objectives, learning steps, and assessment design.⁹⁴ Creating teaching modules is through the School Subject Teachers' Conference (MGMPs) for Islamic Religious Education. In this case, MGMPs determine CP and TP.⁹⁵ Ideally, teaching modules should be made differently for each class. Because the diagnostic test results for each class are different when making each class individually, it is feared that the teacher will be busy with administrative matters and not focus on teaching, so the teacher will only make one teaching module for several classes.⁹⁶

The Merdeka Mandiri Changed Curriculum uses differentiation classes in the learning process. Diagnostic assessments regarding student learning styles are carried out by the school together. The Head of Curriculum distributes the results to their respective homeroom teachers. Meanwhile, this knowledge diagnostic test is free to Islamic Religious Education teachers. Teachers can create individually or collaborate with other teachers through MGMPs Islamic Religious Education.

⁹³ Wawancara dengan Guru Pengampu Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, Ning Choiriyah, pada tanggal 27 Desember 2022.

⁹⁴ Wawancara dengan Guru Pengampu Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, Siti Nor Hanifah, pada tanggal 2 Januari 2023.

⁹⁵ Wawancara dengan Guru Pengampu Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, Ning Choiriyah, pada tanggal 9 Januari 2023.

⁹⁶ Wawancara dengan Guru Pengampu Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, Siti Nor Hanifah, pada tanggal 9 Januari 2023.

There are three types of differentiated learning processes, namely differentiation in content (material including readiness to learn), differentiation in process (learning style), and differentiation in product (results of practice). What is called a differentiation class and its assessment process has a policy according to the students' abilities. The following example: Based on learning styles, kinesthetics are grouped with kinesthetics and others. Then, the Student Worksheets (LKPD) are also different and adapted to the student's abilities. Meanwhile, product differentiation provides different results with the existence of policies when providing value. For example, this is product differentiation in reading the Koran and writing it. For students who cannot read the Koran, the product can be just reading it well or even imitating it.

Meanwhile, for those who can read the Koran well, their task is to memorize it. Then, for those who write, some students are used to making calligraphy, so their task is to make calligraphy, while children who can't just write the verse. In providing value, of course, you must have a policy. For example, those with good calligraphy and the rules are correct get a score of 90, then those who just write also get 90 if the rules are correct and neat. If you look at the level of difficulty and complexity, it is calligraphy, but because he is used to it, it is normal for him. Thus, a policy in this assessment is needed.⁹⁷ It can be seen that differentiation learning aims to ensure that students do not feel compared. Apart from that, students feel comfortable when participating in the teaching and learning process. However, differentiation learning sometimes also creates difficulties for teachers, especially because they are just adapting, so it is still not implemented optimally.⁹⁸

The choice of UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik to use the independent and independent change curriculum was a matter of determination and courage in making policies carried out by the school. It cannot be denied that this curriculum is applied in the learning process and must be understood by all teachers in charge of the subject.⁹⁹ For this reason, while learning, in addition to teaching to improve quality and keep up with the times.¹⁰⁰

Evaluation of the Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum Changes in Islamic Religious Education Learning at UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik

Evaluation of the Merdeka Mandiri curriculum changes at UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik is carried out internally and externally, internally carried out by MGMPs every week and every month in official meetings by the principal, head of school, teachers and education staff. Meanwhile, supervisors carry out external evaluations at the end of each year.¹⁰¹ In the internal evaluation by MGMPs and the school, changes were made when obstacles or problems emerged in implementing the Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum.

The independent curriculum has been running for one year at the driving school. But it has only been running for one semester at schools that are not driving schools. This curriculum is still new and explanations regarding the curriculum are still limited. Meanwhile, schools that will implement the independent curriculum known as IKM, especially as independent IMC changes, need to be introduced to the independent

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Wawancara dengan Guru Pengampu Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, Ning Choiriyah, pada tanggal 2 Januari 2023.

⁹⁹ Wawancara dengan Guru Pengampu Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, Siti Nor Hanifah, pada tanggal 9 Januari 2023.

¹⁰⁰ Wawancara dengan Waka Kurikulum, Rojak, pada tanggal 9 Januari 2023.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

curriculum independently. The efforts made by UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik to deal with this problem were by holding workshops independently and also attending seminars and workshops held by the education department or via online webinars.¹⁰² In this curriculum, there is also the term driving teacher, namely for teachers who have passed the selection as a driving teacher and then undergo training as a driving teacher for nine months. This step was taken to address some teachers who felt they did not understand the implementation of the independent curriculum so that they could discuss it with the driving teachers.¹⁰³

The curriculum used before the Merdeka curriculum was Curriculum 2013. Curriculum 2013 can be said to have been implemented well by the teachers of UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik; however, the Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum Changed requires teachers to adapt and understand and must try to implement it well.¹⁰⁴ In the independent learning curriculum that uses differentiated learning, teachers must be creative in choosing learning media packaged through learning methods. It is done so that the learning process is not boring and the material provided is easy for students to understand well and completely.¹⁰⁵ Differentiated learning is related to learning styles, where there are auditory, visual and kinesthetic students. To combine, the teacher chooses videos or films covering the two learning styles, auditory and visual. Meanwhile, kinesthetic learners can later be given tasks such as making a concept map, re-explaining, or others.¹⁰⁶

Differentiated learning is one of the characteristics of the independent curriculum. This learning is carried out to make learning fun for students. However, implementing differentiation learning is not as easy as turning the palm of your hand. Usually centered on the teacher, learning turns the teacher into a facilitator. In differentiation learning, teachers need to group students first. The teacher performs a diagnostic assessment of the learning style and content aspects to determine the group. Once this is done, the teacher can design a learning process that is innovative and adapted to the conditions of the class. It has not been applied maximally because differential learning necessitates instructor preparedness, astuteness, and habituation.¹⁰⁷

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this research, it can be concluded that implementing the Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum Changes in Islamic Religious Education learning at UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik is going well. The detailed explanation regarding this is (1) The Merdeka Mandiri curriculum design changes to Islamic Religious Education learning in accordance with the provisions of the independent curriculum; Learning outcomes and assessments used are in accordance with existing provisions; the learning design for Islamic Religious Education is handed over to the teacher in charge of the Islamic Religious Education

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Wawancara dengan Guru Pengampu Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, Ning Choiriyah, pada tanggal 2 Januari 2023.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Wawancara dengan Guru Pengampu Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, Siti Nor Hanifah, pada tanggal 4 Januari 2023.

¹⁰⁶ Wawancara dengan Guru Pengampu Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, Siti Nor Hanifah, pada tanggal 9 Januari 2023.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

subject, and references in implementing learning are contained in teaching modules created by the teacher personally, or through MGMP, or even taking from the independent learning platform; (2) The implementation of the Independent Independent Curriculum changes to the learning of Islamic Religious Education at UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik is going well. When creating teaching modules as a reference in the learning process, teachers are given the freedom to take them from the Mandiri Belajar platform or create their own. When teachers face problems that are considered to arise from their factors, teachers try to solve them immediately. Teachers make efforts by participating in workshops held by the school and government agencies. Diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments are also free, and they can be made personally or jointly with other Islamic Religious Education teachers. Apart from that, teachers hold discussions with other teachers, especially driving teachers. Teachers discuss various things, from learning media to assessments used in learning; and (3) Evaluation of the Merdeka Mandiri curriculum changes in Islamic Religious Education learning at UPT SMP Negeri 2 Gresik is carried out internally and externally. Internally, this includes Islamic Religious Education teachers, the MGMP Islamic Religious Education group, and regular school service meetings. Meanwhile, external evaluation is carried out by supervisors at the end of each semester.

To achieve complete success in Islamic religious education, (1) school principals need to be firm with teachers to implement the independent curriculum and provide rewards to teachers who excel and teachers who have good performance; (2) the head of the curriculum needs to accompany teachers by providing insight regarding the independent curriculum; and (3) teachers need to continue to be enthusiastic about learning to innovate learning.

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