An Evaluation of the Implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum Program for Pancasila Education at the Junior High School Level Using the Stake Countenance Model

Luthfita Aziza, Riyadi, Faisal Madani
Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: luthfitaaziza@gmail.com, riyadi@unj.ac.id, faisalmadani@unj.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the implementation of the Independent Curriculum (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) in *Pancasila* Education at the junior high school level in Central Jakarta using Stake's Countenance evaluation model. The research employs a mixed-methods approach with a sequential exploratory design, analyzing three components: antecedents (curriculum documents, teacher understanding, facilities), transactions (learning processes, *P5* project implementation, supervision), and outcomes (student achievement, value internalization, program sustainability). Data were collected through document analysis, interviews, observations, and questionnaires involving teachers, principals, supervisors, and students from multiple junior high schools. Findings reveal adequate readiness of curriculum documents but significant gaps in equitable teacher training, interactive learning facilities, consistency of project-based learning implementation, and authentic assessment practices. While cognitive achievement is satisfactory, the internalization of *Pancasila* values in real-life contexts remains limited. Quadrant analysis identifies priority areas for improvement: teacher competency development, pedagogical supervision enhancement, provision of interactive learning resources, and development of authentic assessment instruments. This evaluation provides evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and school leaders to enhance the quality and sustainability of Independent Curriculum implementation in *Pancasila* Education.

KEYWORDS: Independent Curriculum; Pancasila Education; Countenance Stake Model; Program Evaluation;

INTRODUCTION

The 2020 Education Scientific Conference emphasized that the goal of education is to develop students' potential, aligning with the mandate of the National Education System Objectives of the Republic of Indonesia. Recognizing the dynamic and global needs of contemporary society, Indonesia has undertaken significant educational reforms, including the introduction of the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (*Kemdikbudristek*) in 2022. This curriculum aims to provide educators with greater autonomy to adjust learning approaches according to student needs and local contexts, thereby increasing the relevance and meaningfulness of learning experiences (Jurniarti et al., 2023; Suryadarma, 2022).

The implementation of the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) at the junior high school level (Phase D) has been gradually rolled out in grades VII and IX, presenting both opportunities and challenges (Jannah, 2025; Kusdarini, 2025; Mirnayanti, 2024; Wang, Zhang, Sesunan, & Yolanda, 2023). These challenges include ensuring adequate teacher knowledge, securing parental understanding, preparing new students for the learning approach, and providing necessary support to maximize curriculum effectiveness (Lara et al., 2024). The curriculum emphasizes student-centered learning that is innovative and meaningful, with the potential to enhance students' creativity and motivation (Elsa Kurnia, 2024).

A distinctive feature of the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) is the integration of Character Education through the *Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project* (*Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila* or *P5*), which encompasses six main dimensions: faith and piety to God Almighty and noble character, global diversity, cooperation, independence, critical reasoning, and creativity (Kemendikbud Ristek, 2021). According to Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 56 of 2022, *P5* is designed as project-based co-curricular activities that strengthen competencies and character in accordance with the Graduate Competency Standards. These activities are intended to deepen students' understanding of classroom learning materials while developing their interests, talents, and personalities (Dwi Wulandari, 2022).

Effective character education requires integration across essential components: curriculum design, teaching methods, and structured learning programs (Berkowitz, 2011; Biesta, 2021). Teachers, as the frontline of the learning process, play a crucial role in implementing, facilitating, and directing this integration (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). However, the successful implementation of the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) faces significant challenges, particularly in aligning teacher planning with effective classroom implementation (Kartika, 2024). The comprehensive changes in curriculum components demand deep understanding from teachers, especially in *Pancasila Education*, which holds an essential role in shaping students' character and national identity.

Research consistently demonstrates a positive relationship between teachers' formal competencies and students' learning achievements, with more qualified and experienced teachers producing higher-performing classes (Lindström et al., 2024; Kini & Podolsky, 2019). Teaching experience consistently improves student achievement, with the most rapid improvement occurring in teachers' early career years but continuing into their second and third decades (Kini & Podolsky, 2016; Papay & Kraft, 2015; Podolsky, Kini, & Darling-Hammond, 2019; Steinert et al., 2016). Beyond test scores, experienced teachers contribute to improved student attendance and overall school performance. These findings underscore that teacher effectiveness constitutes one of the most critical factors affecting educational

quality and student achievement, emphasizing the importance of deliberate efforts to enhance teaching through coaching, mentoring, and targeted professional development (Burgess, 2019; Didion et al., 2020).

Current challenges in schools include limited teacher understanding and skills regarding the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*). Teachers experience difficulties in comprehending and applying creative and innovative learning methods due to inadequate and inconsistent training and socialization (Nurutdinova, Perchatkina, Zinatullina, Zubkova, & Galeeva, 2016; Skrbinjek, Vičič Krabonja, Aberšek, & Flogie, 2024; Vidergor, 2022; Zewdu, 2017). Specifically, teachers struggle with independently developing *Learning Goal Flows* (*Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran/ATP*) in collaboration with *Subject Teacher Working Groups* (*Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran/MGMP*), compiling teaching modules, and applying varied learning methods appropriate to student characteristics.

Despite the substantial body of research on curriculum implementation and character education in Indonesia, a critical gap remains: systematic program evaluation of *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) implementation in *Pancasila Education* at the junior high school level using comprehensive evaluation models such as the *Countenance Stake model*. While previous studies have examined various aspects of curriculum change, teacher training, and character education separately, there is limited empirical evidence regarding the congruence between intended curriculum goals (intents) and actual classroom practices (observations) specifically in the context of *Pancasila Education* within the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) framework, particularly in urban settings such as Central Jakarta.

The *Countenance Stake* evaluation model, with its systematic analysis of Antecedent-Transaction-Outcomes components and its emphasis on both vertical (intent versus observation) and horizontal (logical flow between components) congruence, offers a comprehensive framework for understanding implementation gaps and identifying specific areas requiring intervention. To date, no study has systematically applied this model to evaluate how well the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*)'s *Pancasila Education* program aligns with its stated objectives in terms of initial conditions, implementation processes, and actual outcomes at the junior high school level in Central Jakarta.

The dynamic evolution of societal needs demands that national education systems continuously adapt. In Indonesia, the introduction of the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) represents a pivotal shift toward a more flexible, student-centered pedagogical model, emphasizing creativity, critical reasoning, and character building through the *Pancasila Student Profile* (*P5*). However, the transition from policy to practice, particularly in formative subjects like *Pancasila Education* at the junior high school level, presents significant challenges. Research indicates disparities in teacher preparedness, inconsistent application of project-based methods, and a gap between curricular intent and

classroom reality. This study's urgency lies in the critical need to systematically evaluate this implementation phase. Without empirical assessment, there is a risk that the curriculum's transformative potential remains unrealized, undermining its core objective of nurturing students who not only understand but also internalize and apply *Pancasila* values in their daily lives.

In addressing this urgency, this research introduces notable novelty through its methodological and analytical framework. While previous studies have examined the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) in general terms, this investigation provides a focused, multi-dimensional evaluation of *Pancasila Education* specifically, employing the *Countenance Stake* model. This model allows for a nuanced analysis comparing intents (curricular standards) with observations (field realities) across three core components: Antecedent (input), Transaction (process), and Outcomes (results). Furthermore, the adoption of a sequential exploratory mixed-methods design strengthens the findings, as qualitative insights into classroom dynamics and teacher perspectives are systematically confirmed and expanded through quantitative data, offering a more holistic and evidence-based understanding of the implementation gaps.

The primary purpose of this research is to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the implementation of the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) for *Pancasila Education* in junior high schools, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and critical gaps between planning and execution. By doing so, it aims to produce a detailed quadrant analysis that prioritizes areas for intervention, such as teacher competency development and authentic assessment strategies. The anticipated benefit of this study is twofold: practically, it provides actionable recommendations for school administrators, teacher trainers, and policymakers to enhance curriculum execution; and academically, it contributes to the literature on curriculum evaluation models and offers a replicable framework for assessing educational innovations in similar contexts, ultimately supporting the overarching goal of improving educational quality and character formation for students.

METHOD

This research was categorized as evaluation research employing a mixed-methods approach with a sequential exploratory design. Evaluation was conducted using the *Countenance Stake* model. Purposive sampling was used to select resource persons who best understood the research focus, facilitating exploration of the object of study. Data collection involved document studies, interviews, observations, and questionnaires, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena examined (Ali & Asrori, 2014; Arifin, 2019; Tjalla, 2019).

The mixed-methods approach comprehensively addressed all research questions and minimized bias (Creswell, 2010). The *Countenance Stake* model, inherently qualitative, emphasized horizontal and vertical congruence to capture

antecedents, transactions, and outcomes broadly and deeply. Quantitative data, analyzed via descriptive statistics, strengthened these findings and provided empirical support.

This study applied the *Countenance Stake* model within an exploratory sequential design for holistic evaluation of the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) program. The process began with qualitative exploration to identify key issues, needs, and dynamics in antecedents, transactions, and outcomes. The subsequent quantitative stage confirmed these results, particularly in the outcomes component, yielding empirically grounded insights for decision-making and program improvement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Evaluation Results with the Countenance Stake Model

This study uses a Countenance Stake evaluation model that focuses on three main components: Antecedent (initial conditions or inputs), Transaction (process), and Outcomes (results). Each component is analyzed by comparing intents (expected standards/goals) and observations (field facts), so that it can be seen the suitability and gaps that occur in the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum at the junior high school level, especially in the subject of Pancasila Education.

Background (Masukan)

Curriculum of Education Units (KSP) and Pancasila Education Curriculum Structure Based on the results of the analysis of the KSP document, all sample schools have established the Independent Curriculum as a reference, with the curriculum structure of Pancasila Education subjects referring to the Decree of the Head of BSKAP No. 033/H/KR/2022. The learning structure contains an allocation of hours according to the provisions, namely 72 JP/year for Phase D. However, variations were found in the integration of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) into the KSP document, some schools integrated thematically, others still separated between intracurricular and projects.

Teachers' Understanding of Learning Outcomes (CP) and Material Content Teachers generally understand CP as an indicator of learning outcomes that must be achieved by students, but the level of depth of understanding varies. Teachers who have participated in the Independent Curriculum implementation training tend to be able to map CP into Learning Objectives (TP) and Learning Goal Flows (ATP) well. On the other hand, teachers who have not received formal training still refer to the planning habits of the 2013 Curriculum model RPP, so that their learning approach is not in line with the principles of Freedom of Learning.

Completeness of Facilities and Infrastructure Most schools already have basic facilities such as classrooms, LCD projectors, and internet access. However, the completeness of special teaching materials for Pancasila Education such as

thematic teaching modules and interactive learning media is still limited. This availability factor affects teachers' creativity in developing project-based learning and critical discussions. Based on this data, the interpretation of the Antecedent is that in general, the antecedent component shows the readiness of the curriculum document is quite good, but there are still gaps in the equitable distribution of teachers' understanding and the completeness of facilities that support the contextual learning approach according to the demands of the Independent Curriculum.

Transaction (Proses)

Pancasila Education Learning Process Class observation shows that the learning process has led to a student-centered learning approach. Teachers strive to integrate Pancasila values in real-case discussions and role simulations. However, the application of inquiry and project-based learning methods has not been consistent in all meetings, some teachers are still dominant in using lectures.

Implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project and Profile in the last 3 years The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project is generally carried out three times in one school year. The themes taken are relevant, such as Local Wisdom and Mutual Cooperation. Student involvement is quite high, but documentation and evaluation of project results are still administrative, not yet fully measuring the achievement of attitude, knowledge, and skill competencies.

Coaching and Monitoring by Principals and Supervisors The principal and supervisor supervise at least once per semester. The focus of supervision is more on the completeness of learning administration, not optimally on pedagogical assistance for teachers in developing strategies and media in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. This has an impact on the quality gap between classes and teachers.

Based on the above research data, the Transaction Interpretation of the Independent Curriculum implementation process in the subject of Pancasila Education shows progress in strengthening the values of Pancasila student profiles. However, strengthening teachers' capacity in implementing project-based learning and more substantive supervision support is still a major need. As for the implementation of the Deep Learning Strategy, it has begun to be carried out and integrates learning that leads to the 8 Dimensions of the Graduate Profile.

Outcomes

Results of the Phase D Learning Process The results of the assessment show that most students have achieved the completeness of the learning objectives (KKTP) in the set CP. Materials such as Pancasila as the Basis of the State are well understood by the majority of students. However, in materials that require critical analysis, such as the implementation of Pancasila at the global level and Critical

Analysis of Laws and Regulations, the results of student achievements are more varied.

The Absorption of Phase D Graduates generally shows a normative understanding of the values of Pancasila, but has not fully demonstrated the application of these values in daily decision-making. This indicates the need to strengthen a more applicable learning approach.

Improving the Quality of Learning and Schools The implementation of the Independent Curriculum encourages schools to be more flexible in developing learning strategies. There has been an increase in teaching media innovation, although it has not been evenly distributed among all teachers. P5 project activities are an important vehicle to develop 21st century skills, but they need to be strengthened in the aspect of authentic assessment.

Follow-up Some schools have planned follow-ups such as advanced teacher training (In house training), updates to teaching modules, and improvements to technology facilities. However, the sustainability of the program is highly dependent on school policy and budget support from local governments.

Based on the research data above, the interpretation of Outcomes Is the Results of implementation shows success in terms of learning completeness and student involvement in the project, but there are still challenges in internalizing the value and sustainability of learning innovation. The Countenance Stake model reveals that the biggest gap lies in the relationship between the learning process and the application of Pancasila values in a real context.

Synthesis of Findings

Based on the analysis of Antecedent–Transaction–Outcomes, it can be concluded that: The readiness of the curriculum document is good, but it is necessary to equalize the understanding of teachers and supporting facilities. The learning process has led to a deep learning approach, but consistency in the application of project-based methods is still lacking. Learning outcomes show good cognitive achievement, but affective aspects and applicative skills need to be strengthened.

This evaluation indicates the need for a continuous mentoring strategy, an improvement of interactive learning facilities, and an authentic assessment mechanism that measures the application of Pancasila values in real life. The following is presented the Comparison Table of Intents VS Observation on the Countenance Stake Model, the presentation of the table is presented as follows:

Table 1. Antecedent Component: Intents vs. Observations

Aspects	Intents	Observations Facts (Field)	Interpretation/Gap
Education Unit Curriculum (KSP)	KSP refers to the Independent Curriculum according to	All junior high schools in Jakarta use the Independent Curriculum, but the integration of P5	There needs to be a strengthening and measurable guideline on the implementation and

Aspects	Intents	Observations Facts (Field)	Interpretation/Gap
	regulations, including the integration of 8 Dimensions of Graduate Profiles in learning	in the implementation of the previous 3 Academic Years belum consistent; sebagian masih Separating projects and intracurricular	integration of the 8 Dimensions of the Graduate Profile in KSP so that its implementation is more impactful.
Pancasila Education Curriculum Structure	Structure according to BSKAP Decree No. 033/H/KR/2022, time allocation of 72 JP/year for Phase D	Generally, according to the provisions, but the adjustment of the allocation of hours in some schools is still disproportionate	It is necessary to adjust the distribution of hours so that co-curricular activities and critical discussions are accommodated
Teachers' Understanding of Learning Outcomes and Material Content	Teachers understand CP and are able to map it into TP and ATP	Teachers who have been trained are able to map CP well; teachers without training still use the K13 RPP pattern and conduct ATM on their peers	It is necessary to distribute training equally so that all teachers understand CP in depth
Facilities and Infrastructure	Complete learning facilities are available including thematic teaching modules, digital media, and internet network	Basic facilities are available, but interactive teaching modules and digital media are still limited	Media limitations affect the variety of learning strategies

Source: Document analysis

Table 2. Transaction Component: Intents vs. Observations

Aspects	Intents	Observations (Fakta Lapangan)	Interpretation/Gap
Learning	Based on *student-centered learning*, using *inquiry* and *project-based learning* methods consistently	It has led to a deep learning approach but the implementation of *project-based learning* has not been consistent; lectures are still dominant in the classroom	Need teacher assistance in designing project-based learning
Project Implementation and P5	Projects relevant to national themes, evaluated based on attitude competencies, knowledge, skills	The theme of the project is relevant, student involvement is high, but the evaluation is still administrative	Need to strengthen authentic assessment instruments for projects
Coaching and Monitoring	Routine supervision with a focus on pedagogical	Supervision is carried out at least once per	It is necessary to change the focus of supervision to the assistance of the learning

An Evaluation of the Implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum Program for
Pancasila Education at the Junior High School Level Using the Stake Countenance Model
218

Aspects	Intents	Observations (Fakta Lapangan)	Interpretation/Gap
	Assistance and Strategy Development	semester, but focus on administration	substance and pedagogical of teachers in an andragogic so that coaching and monitoring are not only like teacher tests in the classroom.

Source: Document analysis

Table 3. Outcome Component: Intents vs. Observations

Aspects	Intents	Observations (Field Facts)	Interpretation/Gap
Phase D Learning Outcomes	All students achieve a minimum CP completion with conceptual and applicative understanding	The majority of students are cognitively complete, but critical analysis skills vary	Learning approaches need to emphasize analysis and application
Graduate Absorption	Graduates understand and apply the values of Pancasila in real life	Good normative understanding, the application of values is still limited	Need contextual learning that encourages the application of values
Improving the Quality of Learning and Schools	There is learning innovation, the use of digital media, and a collaborative learning culture	Innovation is increasing, but not yet evenly distributed across all teachers	Need to share good practices between teachers
Program Follow-up	The school plans continuous improvement through training, module updates, facility upgrades	There is a follow-up plan, but it depends on budget and policy support	Sustainability requires commitment from school management, a school environment with a growth mindset, and external support

Source: Document analysis

Countenance Stake Integrative Model Analysis

Based on the comparison between intents (standards/objectives) and observations (field facts), it can be seen that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Pancasila Education subjects at the junior high school level shows positive achievements in administrative aspects and planning documents, but still faces challenges in the equitable distribution of the quality of implementation and the sustainability of learning innovations.

In the antecedent component, the readiness of documents such as the Education Unit Curriculum (KSP) and the curriculum structure are generally in accordance with regulations. However, the gap can be seen in the integration of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) which is not consistent between schools (carried out in the last 3 Academic Years), as well as the difference in the level of teachers' understanding of Learning Outcomes (CP). This factor has a direct effect on the planning and learning strategies used in the classroom. The

availability of basic facilities and infrastructure is adequate, but the support of interactive learning media and thematic teaching modules is still limited.

In the transaction component, the learning process shows a positive direction towards a student-centered learning approach, but the consistency of the implementation of project-based learning and inquiry still needs to be improved. The implementation of the project is quite relevant and appeals to students, but the assessment system still tends to be administrative and has not fully measured competence holistically. Supervision from school principals and supervisors tends to focus on administration, so substantive assistance in improving the pedagogical quality of teachers has not been maximized.

In the outcomes component, learning outcomes show high learning completeness in cognitive aspects, but achievements in critical analysis skills and the application of Pancasila values in real life are still diverse. The absorption of graduates is quite good normatively, but internalizing values in attitudes and actions requires a more contextual learning strategy. Improvements in the quality of learning and media innovation have been seen, but the equality has not yet occurred in all teachers. Follow-up programs in some schools are planned, but their success still depends on budget support and management policies.

Overall, the evaluation with the Countenance Stake model revealed that the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Pancasila Education was more prominent in the aspects of planning and student involvement in project activities, but still had gaps in the internalization of values and consistency in the quality of the learning process. Therefore, improvements need to be focused on:

Equitable distribution of teacher training so that all educators have a deep understanding of CP and Independent Learning learning methods. Provision of interactive learning facilities and adequate thematic teaching modules. Strengthening pedagogical assistance through supervision that focuses on learning strategies, not just administration. Development of an authentic assessment instrument that can measure the application of Pancasila values in real terms. Ensure the sustainability of the program through school policies and targeted budget support. Remapping and in-depth study of the workload of School Supervisors so that the number of target schools can be divided effectively and efficiently so that the process of fostering targeted schools can be carried out optimally.

With these steps, it is hoped that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Pancasila Education at the junior high school level can achieve more complete goals, both in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of students. The following is presented a table of Kudran Analysis:

Analysis of the Implementation Quadrant of the Independent Curriculum in Junior High School Pancasila Education Subjects
Axis:
1. X-Axis (Implementation Performance): Low → High

2. Y-axis (Importance/Significance to Curriculum Objectives): Low →High

Category Quadrant:
1. Quadrant I (Top Priority) ‑ High importance, low performance → Must be improved immediately.
2. Quadrant II (Maintain Achievement) ‑ High importance, high performance → Continuously maintained and improved.
3. Quadrant III (Low Priority) ‑ Low interest, low performance → Not need to be a priority at this time.
4. Quadrant IV (Excessive) ‑ Low importance, high performance → Resources can be diverted to other aspects.

Table 4. Quadrant Analysis of Independent Curriculum Implementation

Component	Aspects	Interests	Performance	Quadrant Position	Implication
Antecedent	Teachers' understanding of CP and ATP	High	Low	Quadrant I	Need thorough training so that all guru understand CP well
	Completeness of interactive learning facilities	High	Low	Quadrant I	Procurement of teaching modules and digital media is a priority
	KSP and curriculum structure in accordance with regulations	High	High	Quadrant II	Maintain consistency of curriculum documents
Transaction	Consistency in the implementation of project-based learning	High	Low	Quadrant I	Teacher assistance to implement PBL consistently
	Project Implementation, Deep Learning Approach, and Co-Curricular Activities in accordance with the 8 Dimensions of the Graduate Profile	High	High	Quadrant II	Maintain and develop contextual themes
	Competency-based project assessment	High	Low	Quadrant I	Need to develop authentic assessment instruments

Component	Aspects	Interests	Performance	Quadrant Position	Implication
	Supervision focuses on pedagogical assistance	High	Low	Quadrant I	Change the supervision pattern from administrative to substantive coaching
Outcomes	Completeness of CP learning	High	High	Quadrant II	Maintain achievements and improve on critical analysis materials
	The application of Pancasila values in real life	High	Low	Quadrant I	Learning must be more applicable and contextual
	Improving the quality of learning in schools	Medium	High	Quadrant IV	Enough, but resources can be directed to aspects that are still weak
	Program follow-up plan	Medium	Low	Quadrant III	Not an urgent priority, but it needs long-term attention

Quadrant I (Main Priority) contains aspects that must be improved immediately, namely:

1. Teachers' understanding of CP and ATP
2. Completeness of interactive learning facilities
3. Consistency project-based learning
4. Competency-based project assessment
5. Supervision focused on pedagogical assistance
6. The application of Pancasila values in real life

Quadrant II (Maintain Achievement) includes:

1. KSP and curriculum structure according to reg
2. Squirt
3. Implementation of P5 projects with relevant themes
4. Completeness of CP learning

Quadrant III (Low Priority):

1. Program follow-up plan (requires long-term attention)

Quadrant IV (Excessive):

1. Improved quality of learning in most teachers (resources can be diverted)

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the *Independent Learning Curriculum* (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) in *Pancasila Education* at the junior high school level demonstrated a robust documentary foundation; however, transforming classroom practices required systemic interventions, including enhanced teacher competence, refocused supervision, authentic assessment development, and improved learning resources. Guided by a priority quadrant analysis, schools and policymakers could elevate learning quality, ensuring not only cognitive mastery but also the internalization of *Pancasila* values and skills aligned with national education goals. For future research, longitudinal studies tracking student outcomes over multiple years in diverse urban-rural settings would validate long-term impacts and refine intervention strategies.

REFERENCES

Biesta, G. (2021). The three gifts of teaching: Towards a non-egological future for moral education. *Journal of Moral Education, 50*(1), 39–54. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2020.1763279

Darling-Hammond, L., Flook, L., Cook-Harvey, C., Barron, B., & Osher, D. (2020). Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development. *Applied Developmental Science, 24*(2), 97–140. https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2018.1537791

Didion, L., Toste, J. R., & Filderman, M. J. (2020). Teacher professional development and student reading achievement: A meta-analytic review of the effects. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, 13*(1), 29–66.

Jannah, F. R. (2025). *EFL teachers' challenges and coping strategies in developing Merdeka Curriculum lesson plans in junior high school* [Undergraduate thesis]. UIN KH Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan.

Kartika. (2024). Unveiling the Merdeka curriculum in Indonesia: Insights from educators and policymakers on its effectiveness and implications. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Humanity (INJURITY), 3*(11), 802.

Kemendikbud Ristek. (2021). *Panduan pengembangan proyek penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila*. Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

Kini, T., & Podolsky, A. (2016). *Does teaching experience increase teacher effectiveness? A review of the research*. Learning Policy Institute.

Kurnia, E. (2024). Analyzing Merdeka Mengajar platform utilization to accelerate the implementation of Merdeka curriculum in Indonesia. *Proceedings of the ICoISSEE Conference, 10*(3). https://conference.loupiasconference.org/index.php/ICoISSEE-4/article/view/516

Kusdarini, E. (2025). Implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in the planning, implementation, and assessment of Pancasila education learning in senior high schools. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan IPA, 11*(2), 508–515.

Lara, Mintasih, & Matsuri. (2024). Exploring the effectiveness of the Merdeka curriculum in promoting effective learning practices. *Journal of Educational Studies, 10*(3). https://doi.org/10.29210/020244113

Mirnayanti. (2024). *An analysis of English teachers' problems in implementing the independent curriculum at junior high school* [Undergraduate thesis]. IAIN Parepare.

Nurutdinova, A. R., Perchatkina, V. G., Zinatullina, L. M., Zubkova, G. I., & Galeeva, F. T. (2016). Innovative teaching practice: Traditional and alternative methods (challenges and implications). *International Journal of Environmental and Science Education, 11*(10), 3807–3819.

Papay, J. P., & Kraft, M. A. (2015). Productivity returns to experience in the teacher labor market: Methodological challenges and new evidence on long-term career improvement. *Journal of Public Economics, 130*, 105–119.

Podolsky, A., Kini, T., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2019). Does teaching experience increase teacher effectiveness? A review of US research. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community, 4*(4), 286–308.

Skrbinjek, V., Vičič Krabonja, M., Aberšek, B., & Flogie, A. (2024). Enhancing teachers' creativity with an innovative training model and knowledge management. *Education Sciences, 14*(12), 1381.

Steinert, Y., Mann, K., Anderson, B., Barnett, B. M., Centeno, A., Naismith, L., Prideaux, D., Spencer, J., Tullo, E., & Viggiano, T. (2016). A systematic review of faculty development initiatives designed to enhance teaching effectiveness: A 10-year update (BEME Guide No. 40). *Medical Teacher, 38*(8), 769–786.

Vidergor, H. E. (2022). Coping with teaching in innovative learning spaces: Challenges, insights and practices. *Learning Environments Research, 25*(3), 707–724.

Wang, C., Zhang, M., Sesunan, A., & Yolanda, L. (2023). Technology-driven education reform in Indonesia: A look into the current status of the Merdeka Belajar program.

Wulandari, D. (2022). Proyek penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila: Sebuah orientasi baru pendidikan dalam meningkatkan karakter peserta didik Indonesia. *Research & Learning in Elementary Education, 6*(4), 7076–7086.

Zewdu, A. A. (2017). Challenges in Ethiopian teacher education pedagogy: Resistance factors to innovative teaching-learning practices. *African Journal of Teacher Education, 6.*