

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A theoretical framework is very important in a study. It serves as a basic reference used by researchers to explain the variables to be studied. The following is a theoretical framework related to curriculum transition.

#### **2.1 Description of Curriculum**

The curriculum is a guide in the world education system that can guide how the learning and teaching process runs. This is supported by UU Number 20 of 2003, article 1, paragraph 19, which states that the curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding objectives, content, and learning materials, as well as the methods used as guidelines for organizing learning activities to achieve specific educational goals.

Another opinion related to the definition of the curriculum is that, according to Hasmori et al. (2021), the curriculum is defined as covering science and culture that can help teachers teach a subject to a group of students. Meanwhile, Arifin (2015) argues that the curriculum is one of the tools to achieve educational goals, and a guide in implementing learning at all types and levels of education. In addition, Dakir (2010) explains that the curriculum is a process to direct the current curriculum towards the expected educational goals because it has various positive influences from outside or from within itself, and with the hope that students can face their future well. As explained by experts, we can conclude that the definition of the curriculum is a guide in the world of education.

Moreover, Oktavia et al. (2023) say the curriculum also has at least three main roles in learning, namely:

##### **1) Conservative**

The conservative role of this curriculum is expected to channel all the values of cultural heritage from the past to the present to the younger generation, of course, cultures that are still considered relevant. This role is important because as one of the tasks of education, it can foster and influence student behavior in accordance with social values in society.

## 2) Critical and Evaluative

In the second role, namely critical and evaluative, the curriculum is expected to adjust to changing times. Every era in people's lives brings different values and cultural heritage. Not only inherit the values and culture of each development, but also have a role to assess and select new values, culture, and knowledge that will be conveyed or passed on. Thus the curriculum must be able to participate in social control or filtering. Values and cultures that are not in accordance with the current situation can be eliminated or modified and improved to fit the current system.

## 3) Creative

The next role is creative where the curriculum will take a role in creating and organizing something new to meet the needs of society. The curriculum also develops each individual through new lessons, experiences, thoughts, abilities, and skills that can be owned by the community in the learning process.

Based on those roles, the curriculum can be said to meet the demands of the times and conditions in bringing students into the future with inherited culture and a balanced harmony between the three roles. In other words, the development of the previous curriculum to the currently used curriculum must incorporate those three roles so that students can possess the desired character.

Balanced harmonization in the curriculum requires support as a tool to be able to achieve the desired educational goals. In other words, the curriculum has important parts that are able to support its operation properly. These parts can be called components that are always related to each other in an effort to achieve educational goals. Hermawan et al. (2020) in their research explained that curriculum has six components namely:

### 1) Objective of the curriculum

The objectives of this curriculum are divided into two, namely the first goal that the school wants to achieve as a whole. This goal is designed in the form of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Second, the goals to be achieved in each field of

study. This goal is described through the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that each student is expected to have after learning a lesson / field of study at school.

2) Content of the curriculum

Curriculum content is learning material that is organized and adjusted to the educational objectives that have been set. The content of the curriculum is also the teaching material that will be used by students and teachers in the learning process.

3) Media (facilities and infrastructure)

Media in the curriculum becomes a learning tool that aims to be able to describe and explain the curriculum to be more easily understood by students. Examples of media from the curriculum such as textbooks, then technology in the form of computers and so on.

4) Strategy

According to Ahmad (1998) cited from the study of Hermawan et al (2020), this strategy refers to the method and approach that will be used by the teacher in the learning process and the teaching techniques applied.

5) Learning process

In this component, the three main roles mentioned earlier will be realized. Because through the learning process it is hoped that there will be a change in attitude or behavior in students as an indicator of the success of the curriculum implementation.

6) Evaluation

This evaluation is to determine how far the objectives contained in the curriculum are achieved. Then the assessment of all learning processes that have been carried out. Evaluation is also a form of refinement of the determination and formulation of teaching objectives, determination of teaching materials or curriculum content, strategies, teaching media and learning processes (Haryanti, 2014).

In addition, several studies explain their opinions regarding the curriculum principles that each curriculum must have. In their research, Sabriadi et al. (2024)

explained five principles in the curriculum from the results of studies conducted in several articles or journals as follows:

1) Relevance principle

This principle is the principle of correspondence, where education and the demands of life must be in harmony. Education can be considered meaningful and successful when the results of learning in students can be useful in everyday life.

The principle of relevance has 4 parts:

- a) The importance of education for the learner's environment. In other words, the curriculum can adjust to the lives of students.
- b) The importance of education for future life. This means that the materials and teaching materials that will be given to students are expected to prepare and be useful for students in the future.
- c) The importance of education in working life. At this point, every parent hopes that the material or learning at school can help their student work through their educational experience.
- d) The importance of education for knowledge. In the sense that the education provided is in accordance with the conditions of development and progress in society and can advance science. Thus science can continue to develop along with the changing times.

2) Continuity principle

The principle of continuity in the curriculum is that the curriculum continues to be developed continuously which includes the linkage of majors, classes and level of education, thus the learning process takes place systematically. According to Ulum (2020), the purpose of the principle of continuity is to be able to ensure that each curriculum has continuity with other curriculum activities both vertically (gradual/stepped), meaning that between one level of education with a higher level of education does not make the distance between the two in the development of the curriculum or in horizontal which means the curriculum at each level is the same uninterrupted.

### 3) Flexibility principle

The principle of flexibility in the curriculum is that the curriculum can contain all aspects, on the other hand a good curriculum can be modified according to the situation and conditions of the local area at the time of implementation. Not only the conditions of the place but can be adjusted to the time and skills and background of the students. In this principle, the curriculum is also able to provide a place for education in developing learning programs freely. In this case, it is the teacher's authority to be able to adjust the desires, interests, needs of students and the needs of their environmental fields (Kholilaty & Indriyani, 2023). This authority is held by teachers because they know their students.

### 4) Effectiveness principle

The principle of effectiveness is expected to ensure that curriculum development activities achieve their goals without waste, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Then two aspects in this principle of effectiveness are the effectiveness of teacher activity in carrying out the task of implementing the curriculum in the classroom. Furthermore, the curriculum is also considered a tool to achieve educational goals, therefore the characteristics and properties that must be owned by the curriculum are clarity that leads to the selection and definition of content, methods and assessment systems, curriculum models to be used.

### 5) Practical principles

The practical principle can also be called the efficient principle. An ideal and good curriculum requires good skills and expensive equipment. If the curriculum is unrealistic and difficult to implement, then the curriculum is inefficient. As stated by Kholilaty and Indriyani (2023), the curriculum must not only be ideal, but also must be practical. Practical principles are the optimal use of time, costs, and other available resources (Messi & Hasdi, 2020).

To conclude, the purpose of each principle is to raise what is essentially required in order for a curriculum to be meaningful and functional. The relevance principle translates into meaning that education needs to correspond to the lives that

students will face, and their future needs and working environments, together with the scientific knowledge that develops. The continuity principle insists on the importance of the continuity in the curriculum, so that it is developed consequently and systematically through all levels of education. The flexibility principle stresses the necessity for adaptable curricula with methods of enabling localization, student background, and adaptation in respect of changing circumstances. The effectiveness principle seeks to ensure an effective achievement of curriculum goals with precision in content, methods, and assessment. Finally, the principle of practicality underlines a very important approach where in any curriculum applied must be feasible in implementation and resource-efficient to make realistic use in educational settings. Put together, these principles enable the construction of a complete, flexible, and effective curriculum to meet a wide range of educational needs.

## **2.2 Curriculum Transition**

The curriculum has the principle of flexibility or non-permanence, which has been explained in the point Principles of Curriculum. The principle of flexibility in the curriculum indicates that the curriculum can be changed or updated. This change means that the curriculum will always keep up with the times and the needs of society. However, changes to the curriculum can be considered changes if there are differences between the previous curriculum and the latest curriculum. This is supported by the opinion expressed by Soetopo and Soemanto (1991) in their book on curriculum change, which states that there is a difference in one or more components of the curriculum between two specific periods, carried out with deliberate effort. Soetopo and Soemanto (1991) also explain the types of curriculum changes, stating that there are partial changes and comprehensive changes:

### **1) Partial Change**

This change only encompasses a small part of the changes to the curriculum. For example, changes to certain components of the curriculum, such as changes in teaching methods or changes in the assessment system, which do not affect other components.

## 2) Comprehensive Changes

Comprehensive changes encompass the entire system within the curriculum and undergo significant transformations. Such changes include alterations in curriculum objectives, curriculum content, strategies, and the implementation of the curriculum. In other words, comprehensive changes affect all components within the curriculum.

In addition, Soetopo and Soemanto (1991) in their book also mention the general factors that can influence changes in the curriculum, including:

- 1) Liberation from colonial rule made the society aware that they were left behind in an education system that no longer aligned with national aspirations. With this awareness, the community began planning changes to the curriculum and education system to meet their needs.
- 2) The rapid development of science and technology has led to advancements in the branches of knowledge taught in schools, discovering both old and new theories. Furthermore, developments in other fields of knowledge provide new methods in the learning process. With these two developments, there is an opportunity to make changes to the curriculum.
- 3) The increase in the population of a country or region leads to a growing number of people who need proper education. This issue necessitates that the curriculum be reviewed or modified to align with the needs of the community.

It can be concluded, curriculum transition is the change from one curriculum to the latest curriculum. Furthermore, changes in the curriculum according to Soetopo and Soemanto (1991) have two types and several common factors that influence changes in the curriculum, namely partial changes and comprehensive changes. Then, the factor of public self-awareness of the education system that is no longer relevant to the times, developments in IPTEK are increasingly rapid, and findings that can add new ways in the learning process, as well as the increase in population and require proper education, so the curriculum must be updated according to the needs of society.

## **2.3 Curriculum Transition in Indonesia Since 2013 – 2024**

This curriculum transition will focus on discussing the curriculum transition from 2013 until 2024 and briefly mentioning several curricula that have been implemented in education in Indonesia. First of all the education curriculum in Indonesia has existed or started since the time when Indonesia was colonized by the Dutch, namely since 1947, which was called *Rentjana Peladjaran* 1947. After implementing the curriculum, Indonesia evaluated and changed the curriculum 12 times until 2024. Curricula that have been applied to the education system in Indonesia include *Rentjana Peladjaran Terurai* 1952, Education Plan 1964, Curriculum 1968, Curriculum 1973, Curriculum 1975, Curriculum 1984, Curriculum 1994, Curriculum 2004 or KBK (*Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi*), and KTSP.

Furthermore, in the transformation era there are one curricula that have been used for a long time and one new curriculum launched by the *Kemendekburistek*. These two curricula have similarities and differences from each aspect. The following is a brief explanation of the three curricula based on research conducted by Oktavia & Qomariah (2023) and Maharani et al. (2023):

### **2.3.1 2013 Curriculum**

The 2013 curriculum is a competency-based curriculum. This competency-based curriculum has been done before in the KBK curriculum which had failed. The determination of the 2013 curriculum is listed in the Ministry of Education and Culture regulation No. 160 of 2014 on December 11, 2014. The 2013 curriculum has many learning competencies to achieve the skills of students as a criterion of success. The theme raised by the 2013 curriculum is able to produce and create productive, creative, innovative, and affective Indonesian society. This can be observed through the integration of attitudes, skills, and knowledge. Maharani et al. (2023) explained that the 2013 curriculum emphasizes the mastery of inventive, creative, and critical thinking skills that students must have. In this way, students are able to improve their creativity skills, be more innovative, and have thinking skills that continue to improve.

Furthermore, the approach used by the 2013 curriculum is a scientific approach which is an approach in the form of taking scientific steps in building knowledge using the scientific method (Saely & Sukiman, 2023). The learning activity plan in the 2013 curriculum has the term RPP (*Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran*) which is made to guide the student learning process in achieving KD (*Kompetensi Dasar*). The assessment applied by the 2013 curriculum based on KI (*Kompetensi Inti*) is explained by Setiadi (2016), as follows:

1) Knowledge Assessment

Assessment of knowledge is an assessment carried out to assess students' knowledge through the results obtained from learning activities through their own experiences. The knowledge assessment process can be through written tests, oral tests, and assignments.

2) Attitude Assessment

Attitude assessment is carried out to find out the development or changes in students before and after carrying out learning activities, both learning activities in the classroom and outside the room. Attitude assessment can be through several sides, such as assessing students' attitudes towards subjects that are expected to be positive in accepting the material presented so that it can provide interest and motivation in learning. Furthermore, students' attitudes towards teachers and classmates. This assessment process can be carried out by the teacher through observation, self-assessment, assessment by friends conducted with the teacher, and journals in the form of teacher notes containing information on the attitude of students from observations during the learning process both strengths and weaknesses possessed by students.

3) Skill Assessment

This assessment is measured by how students are able to demonstrate or apply the knowledge they gain during the learning process. This assessment can be done with project assignments that include designing, presenting and making reports orally or in writing with a time limit.

### 2.3.2 *Merdeka* Curriculum

The *Merdeka* Curriculum has been known since 2020. This curriculum is a solution taken by the government as an alternative to catch up with the learning process after the Covid-19 pandemic. The *Merdeka* curriculum has few differences from previous curricula, this curriculum emphasizes active, project-based, and learner-centered learning (Ananta & Sumintono, 2020).

A brief explanation of active learning is that students will be directly involved in the learning process, both individually and in groups. Furthermore, the project-based learning process approach creates opportunities for students to learn and apply concepts and skills that are relevant to everyday life starting from thinking critically to being able to solve a problem. Then, participant-centered learning means that students will play a more active role in the learning process through their understanding through direct experience, reflection on each lesson, and dialogue carried out in groups or together with the teacher (Syah, 2019). In this way, students will be more active in exploring themselves in various ways.

In addition, this approach makes the learning process in Indonesia a little different, where the teacher only explains the material and students answer questions given by the teacher or it can also be called teacher centered. With the *Merdeka* curriculum, the teacher acts as a guide and facilitator in the learning process, while students will be active and focus on constructing their knowledge and skills (Tuerah & Tuerah, 2023). The position of teachers in the *Merdeka* curriculum is no longer always the center of learning and in the learning process, the teacher only gives a little direction so that students know the learning objectives or material provided. Based on a study from Maulana et al. (2024), the *Merdeka* curriculum has key characteristics that support learning recovery, including:

#### **1) Project-based learning through the *Pancasila* Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)**

Learning through project activities can provide students with many opportunities to be more active in exploring issues that are currently happening in real life, which is expected to support the development and enhancement of character and competencies in the *Pancasila* Student

Profile. In addition, project-based learning is more interactive and relevant for students, because when their education is completed, they will go through work or have to solve problems in groups, then be able to produce a work, collaborate, think creatively, and actively develop their character, according to the Ministry of Education and Culture.

**2) *Merdeka* curriculum focuses on the essential and crucial so that students have sufficient time to understand the basic context in depth, including literacy and numeracy**

Focusing on the essence and crucial material makes learning easier and more profound. Thus, the students' competence will gradually develop slowly and according to their abilities. The implementation of the curriculum makes the learning process more meaningful, relaxed, and enjoyable. In addition, standardized assessments and results are much simpler and give teachers more time to explain complex topics.

**3) Flexibility is given to teachers to adapt materials locally and provide instruction according to students' abilities**

Flexible learning in the *Merdeka* curriculum provides freedom for students, teachers, and schools. At the secondary school level, there are no special programs; students are free to choose the majors they are interested in, according to their skills and goals. Furthermore, there is no separation between students for science or social studies classes. Then, schools are also given the authority to create and oversee the learning curriculum based on the characteristics of each educational environment, each student, and each school.

Furthermore, the assessment system in the *Merdeka* curriculum described in Saely & Sukiman's research (2023) is to use authentic assessment which consists of several assessment techniques, including:

- 1) Measures learners' skills directly in relation to long-term educational attainment or outcomes,
- 2) Assessment through evaluation of assigned tasks that require extensive learner participation and good execution in the completion of the task,
- 3) Assessment of the process of learner responses to changes in attitudes, skills and knowledge.

*Kemendikbudristek* also stated that the *Merdeka* curriculum has quality characteristics. Project-based learning through P5 provides opportunities for students to be active in exploring issues that occur in real life. Learning with this method makes students more interactive in group work, able to produce work, collaborate, think creatively and is relevant in developing their character. Furthermore, learning that focuses on important things makes students more concentrated on student competencies and makes the learning process more meaningful, enjoyable and fun.

## 2.4 Differences Between 2013 Curriculum and *Merdeka* Curriculum

It is important to note the significant differences between the two curricula, namely the 2013 curriculum and the *Merdeka* curriculum. These two curricula are often referred to or abbreviated as *Kurtilas* and *Kurmer*. Next, to better understand the differences between the two curricula, a table will be presented that explains the comparison sourced from the Curriculum and Learning Center website, simplified by Amarudin et al. (2023) in their study.

**Table 2.1 Differences Between 2013 Curriculum and *Merdeka* Curriculum**

| No. | Aspects         | 2013 Curriculum   | <i>Merdeka</i> Curriculum   |
|-----|-----------------|---|---|
| 1)  | Basic framework | The main foundations used in the 2013 curriculum are:<br>1) The objectives of the National Education System | The main foundations used by the <i>Merdeka</i> curriculum are:<br>1) The goals of the National Education System<br>2) The National Education Standards |

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|  | 1) The National Education Standards | 3) The development of the <i>Pancasila</i> student profile among learners |
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| 2) Targeted competencies | <p>The 2013 Curriculum uses <i>Kompetensi Dasar</i> (KD), which are a scope and a sequence grouped into four <i>Kompetensi Inti</i> (KI), namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) spiritual attitudes,</li> <li>b) social attitudes</li> <li>c) knowledge, and</li> <li>d) skills.</li> </ul> | <p>In the <i>Merdeka</i> curriculum, the term CP or <i>Capaian Pembelajaran</i> is used. CP in the <i>Merdeka</i> curriculum is adjusted to the educational level. CP for early childhood education includes a series of knowledge, attitudes, and skills to achieve, strengthen, and enhance students' competencies in religious and moral values, self-identity development, as well as literacy, numeracy, science, technology, engineering, and arts competencies.</p> <p>Next, the levels of elementary school/middle school/high school/vocational school/and equivalent encompass a series of knowledge, attitudes, and</p> |
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skills to achieve, strengthen, and enhance competence.

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| 3) | Curriculum structure | <b>Early Childhood Education / Kindergarten level:</b> Lesson hours ( <i>Jam Pelajaran</i> / JP) are set at 900 minutes per week.<br><b>Elementary and Secondary School Levels:</b> JP is scheduled weekly. Learning time is allocated regularly every week in each semester so that students receive grades for each subject. | <b>Early Childhood Education / Kindergarten level:</b> JP is set at 900 minutes per week.<br><b>Elementary and Secondary School Levels:</b> JP is regulated annually. Educational units are able to flexibly allocate learning time to achieve the predetermined JP. Then the structure of the <i>Merdeka</i> curriculum is divided into two, namely:<br><b>a)</b> regular or routine learning, which is an activity in the form of intracurricular.<br><b>b)</b> projects to strengthen the <i>Pancasila</i> student profile.<br><b>c)</b> Additionally, vocational school levels have a group of vocational subjects. |
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| 4) | Learning   | The 2013 curriculum's learning approach is scientific. It also utilises extracurricular and extracurricular structures.   | Early childhood education levels using educational units can apply various learning approaches. Meanwhile, at the elementary, middle, and vocational school levels, a differentiated approach is used according to the student's achievement stages. Then, the combination of extracurricular learning (70-80% of class hours) and co-curricular activities through the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (20-30% of class hours) is used. |
| 5. | Assessment | <b>Early Childhood Education Level:</b><br>Weekly or monthly assessment summaries include the assessment process and <i>Capaian Pembelajaran</i> on student development. These are made into conclusions as a basic form of | Early Childhood Education Level:<br>The assessment report provided to parents is given at least every six months, and the assessment content relates to a description of the child's <i>Capaian Pembelajaran</i> (CP) and a report on verbal communication with  |

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development reports on parents that can be students to parents. conducted at any time.

**Levels of Elementary, Middle, and Vocational Schools:** Levels of Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational

- Schools:
- a) The use of formative and summative assessments by teachers that function to monitor and observe learning progress, *Capaian Pembelajaran*, and are able to detect students' needs to continuously improve students' *Capaian Pembelajaran*,
    - a) Formative assessments and their results are used to design learning according to students' achievement stages.
    - b) The implementation of authentic assessments, especially in projects to strengthen the *Pancasila* student profile.
    - c) There is no separation between the assessment of readiness, knowledge, and skills.
  - b) Strengthening the implementation of authentic assessments in every subject,
  - c) The assessment process is also divided into attitudes, knowledge, and skills assessments.
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In conclusion, the differences between the 2013 curriculum and the *Merdeka* curriculum encompass several aspects such as the basic framework, targeted competencies, curriculum structure, learning, and assessment. In the 2013 curriculum, the use of *Kompetensi Dasar* (KD), whereas in the *Merdeka* curriculum, it uses *Capaian Pembelajaran*. (CP). Next, the 2013 curriculum Jam Pelajaran (JP) structure is arranged weekly each semester, while the *Merdeka* curriculum allocates learning hours annually. Then, the learning process in the 2013 curriculum consists of intramural and extracurricular activities, unlike the *Merdeka* curriculum which uses intramural, extracurricular, and co-curricular activities. Finally, in terms of assessment, the 2013 curriculum uses formative and summative assessments, while the *Merdeka* curriculum uses formative assessments whose results are used to design learning based on students' abilities.

## **2.5 Study of Relevant Research**

The following studies investigate the challenges Junior High School English teachers face in dealing with curriculum transition. The study by Agustina and Mustika (2023) examined teachers' perceptions of the change from the 2013 curriculum to the *Merdeka* curriculum. The results obtained from this study are that the teachers' opinions vary greatly. Most teachers agree that transitioning from the 2013 curriculum to the *Merdeka* curriculum is beneficial and can help students achieve their learning goals. Teachers' perceptions of changes in lesson plans state that the latest curriculum supports teacher involvement in curriculum development and the learning process. Furthermore, perceptions of changes in the teaching and learning process stated that some teachers still cannot adapt to the changes from the previous curriculum to the *Merdeka* curriculum. Lastly, perceptions of changes in assessment stated that some teachers did not find it difficult to change the assessment, although there were still some other teachers who felt that the independent curriculum assessment system was too much.

Furthermore, Husna and Rigianti (2023) aimed to analyse the difficulties experienced by teachers when two curricula were run simultaneously in elementary

schools. The research results show several problems in implementing the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, such as planning, implementing and assessing learning, because the *Merdeka* curriculum is newly implemented. In addition, there are limited books for students, teachers' lack of ability and readiness to use varied learning methods and media, teachers are suspected of being less adept at using technology in learning and teaching processes, according to other teachers the material that must be given is too broad, in project-based learning the teachers have difficulty determining the projects to be given to their students, then the lack of time allocation for project-based learning in grades I and IV.

Another study that aimed to explore the perceptions of English teachers in junior secondary schools on curriculum transition was conducted by Jasrial et al. (2023) in Bengkulu province, Indonesia. His research shows the positive acceptance of teachers in the curriculum transition, and benefits students and teachers. Because *the* Merdeka curriculum is easy to adapt, flexible, and able to meet students' needs in learning English, although this transition or curriculum change provides positive things for students, teachers also face difficulties in facilities and infrastructure for the learning process and knowledge of the assessment system.

Then, Sene and Metom (2024) aimed to investigate teacher perceptions of the transition from Curriculum 13 to the *Merdeka* Curriculum in Sumba, Timor, and Flores. The results of the study show that teachers consider this curriculum transition to be quite good in various aspects such as absorption, understanding, evaluation and perceptual roles. On the other hand, the challenge posed by this curriculum transition according to teachers is the lack of sufficient information about the *Merdeka* curriculum, which has an impact on curriculum implementation and results.

Hunaepi and Suharta (2024) conducted a study to evaluate the impact of the curriculum in fostering students' critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills and identifying challenges faced in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum. The results showed that the *Merdeka* curriculum had a positive impact on students. Furthermore, the challenges teachers face include a lack of logistics and preparation for teachers in preparing learning materials and media and gaps in digital resources.