



Curriculum Development Mechanism: An Analysis Adaptation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

The curriculum as a fundamental component of the education system, plays a central role in influencing both the learning process and student outcomes. This study aims to examine the mechanisms involved in curriculum preparation using the library research method, which involves the systematic collection and analysis of relevant information from various sources of literature to provide a comprehensive overview of the process. The study begins with an analysis of the needs for curriculum preparation, the absorption of aspirations, curriculum design, prototype trials, revisions and improvements, and the evaluation of curriculum implementation in elementary schools. The data sources used in this study include books, journals, and scientific articles. The findings of this study reveal that curriculum preparation involves several complex stages and requires collaboration among various stakeholders. The results of the analysis indicate that the adaptation of the Merdeka Curriculum requires a more flexible, responsive, and holistic approach to curriculum design. Therefore, this research makes a significant contribution by providing valuable insights into the development of a more effective curriculum preparation mechanism, one that can optimally and diversely meet the learning needs of students.

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ABSTRAK

Kurikulum sebagai komponen fundamental dalam sistem pendidikan, memainkan peran sentral dalam mempengaruhi proses dan hasil pembelajaran siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji mekanisme penyusunan kurikulum dengan menggunakan metode *library research* melalui pengumpulan dan analisis informasi yang relevan dari berbagai literatur secara sistematis, guna mendapatkan gambaran yang komprehensif mengenai mekanisme tersebut yang diawali dengan analisis kebutuhan penyusunan kurikulum, penyerapan aspirasi, perancangan kurikulum, uji coba prototipe, revisi dan perbaikan, dan evaluasi penerapan kurikulum di sekolah dasar. Sumber data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini meliputi buku, jurnal, dan artikel ilmiah. Temuan penelitian ini mengungkap bahwa penyusunan kurikulum melibatkan berbagai tahapan yang kompleks dan memerlukan kolaborasi antara berbagai pemangku kepentingan. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa pengadaptasian Kurikulum Merdeka memerlukan pendekatan yang lebih fleksibel, responsif, dan holistik dalam perancangan kurikulum. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi penting dalam memberikan wawasan yang berguna bagi pengembangan

mekanisme penyusunan kurikulum yang lebih efektif, yang mampu memenuhi kebutuhan belajar siswa secara optimal dan beragam.

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INTRODUCTION

The preparation of the curriculum in primary schools plays a very vital role in building the foundation of children's education, which includes the development of knowledge, skills, and character (Rahmadhani et al., 2023). As a structured framework, the curriculum not only serves as a tool for transferring knowledge, but also as a guideline for developing basic competencies that will be the foundation for further learning at the next level of education (Birbili, 2023; Hattarina et al., 2022). The importance of adjusting and adapting the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools because it has a strategic role in preparing students to be able to adapt to the ever-changing world.

The curriculum should not only focus on achieving cognitive aspects, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, which are the basis for mastery of academic subjects, but also on the development of social and emotional skills that are covered in the content of the Pancasila student profile (Pradipto & Abraham, 2014; Wahyudi et al., 2023). This aspect is important to equip students with the ability to interact effectively both inside and outside the school environment, both with peers, family, and the wider community. In addition, the Merdeka Curriculum also has the goal of instilling moral and ethical values that will guide students' behavior throughout their lives. Thus, the curriculum needs to prioritize holistic learning, which covers all dimensions of child development, including cognitive, social, emotional, and moral aspects (Dempsey, 2023; Tanriverdi & Apak, 2014). This allows students to develop core competencies, such as digital literacy, the ability to communicate in multiple languages, as well as an understanding of global issues that are relevant to the times (Meliza et al., 2024).

Currently, many of the latest research and practices are relevant to the Merdeka Curriculum and curriculum preparation in elementary schools, for example as revealed by [Shihab et al. \(2023\)](#) curriculum renewal to the Merdeka Curriculum is seen as more relevant to the needs of the ever-changing world, which requires students to have critical, creative, and collaborative thinking skills, as well as the ability to adapt to technology and global issues.

[Sahnan & Wibowo \(2023\)](#) through the results of their research analysis related to the Merdeka Curriculum policy informed that the curriculum emphasizes the importance of digital literacy, cross-cultural communication, and understanding of global issues, in line with the development of education in developed countries that have already integrated global technology and skills in their curriculum. Interestingly, the adaptation of the Merdeka Curriculum in student learning in elementary school is also revealed through the results of [Andita & Kurniawati \(2024\)](#) research which provides many opportunities for students to get used to carrying out scientific project activities that are relevant to real life, which not only improves their understanding, but also collaboration and communication skills.

According to [Cholilah et al. \(2023\)](#), the Merdeka Curriculum is more than just mastering 21st century skills that are synonymous with mastery of technology, but also focuses on developing social skills, character, and understanding of local and global values, all of which are important to prepare students for an increasingly complex and connected future. These abilities are not only important in an academic context, but they are also highly relevant in facing global challenges and changing increasingly connected worlds. The development of global skills, such as digital literacy, cross-cultural communication, and understanding of global issues, is an integral part of the curriculum, preparing students to compete in an increasingly evolving and connected world.

Although the adaptation of the Merdeka Curriculum in primary schools emphasizes the development of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication, its implementation still requires more attention. Some schools may not be fully prepared or used to this adaptation, which has the potential to be an obstacle to its realization ([Anjeliani et al., 2024](#); [Rusmiati et al., 2023](#); [Solikhah & Wahyuni, 2023](#)). Therefore, this study aims to provide a comprehensive explanation of the mechanism of curriculum preparation in elementary schools, by paying attention to the various stages, stakeholders involved, and influencing factors.

Curriculum preparation is not a linear process ([Ariesanti et al., 2023](#)), it is an effort that involves various parties, ranging from the government, teachers, to the community. This collaboration between stakeholders, especially from teacher readiness, will be an important key to ensuring the resulting curriculum can reflect the balance between local and global needs ([Arrafi, 2021](#); [Heryahya et al., 2022](#)). In relation to the preparation of the curriculum in elementary schools, the Merdeka Curriculum can be seen as an effort to design a learning experience that is more inclusive, empowering, and based on students' individual potentials and interests.

The implication of the adaptation of the Merdeka Curriculum is the importance of updating the curriculum continuously, based on the latest research, and involving collaboration between various parties to ensure that the curriculum prepared remains relevant to existing social, technological developments, and cultural values. A good curriculum will not only provide strong knowledge but also the competencies necessary to live in an increasingly interconnected and changing world.

METHOD

The research method used in the preparation of this article is library *research*. According to Zed (2014), literature research refers to the collection and analysis of data derived from published sources, such as books, articles, journals, research reports, and official documents. The main advantage of this method, as pointed out by Zed, lies in its efficiency in saving time and cost, as it does not require field data collection. The literature research approach focuses on gathering information from the existing literature to build a solid theoretical foundation and identify gaps in relevant research.

The method of literature research that collects information from existing literature sources to build a strong theoretical foundation is also in line with the stages of curriculum preparation, which involves a series of systematic and structured processes. Starting with the identification of educational needs and objectives, this approach requires researchers to review various literatures to understand the broader context of education. For example, literature related to the development of global education, the competency needs of students in the 21st century, as well as references to various curricula applied in various countries, can provide significant insights.

This literature research plays an important role in building a deep theoretical foundation related to the educational needs that must be met by the curriculum, so that it can formulate educational goals that are relevant to the demands of the times. By utilizing existing literature resources, curriculum preparation can identify competencies that need to be developed in students, such as digital literacy, problem-solving skills, creativity, and the ability to communicate in various languages, which are very relevant to the development of a constantly changing global world.

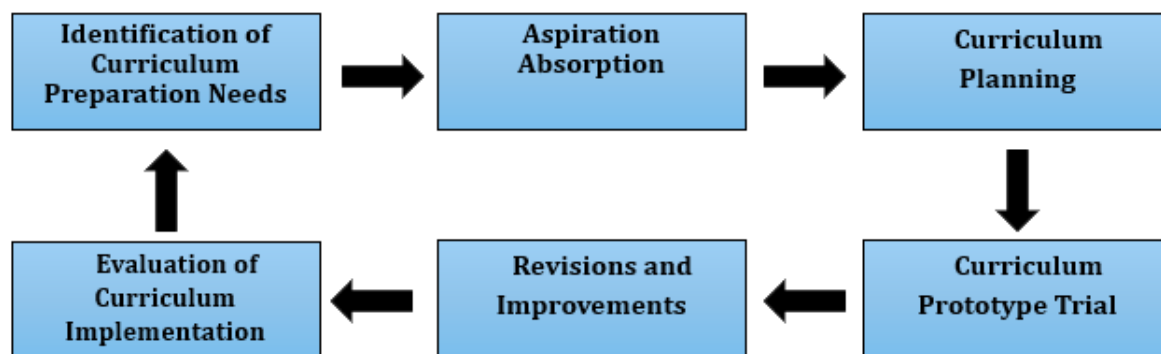


Figure 1. General Cycle of Curriculum Preparation Mechanism

At the stage of absorbing community aspirations, the application of literature research methods has a very important role in understanding the social and cultural context of the local community. Through literature review, information related to local values, culture, and community expectations for education for their children can be obtained. In addition, this study also includes an understanding of existing education policies, as well as the aspirations of educators and other stakeholders. By exploring relevant literature, the curriculum drafting team can gain a deeper understanding of local values that should be integrated in the curriculum, so that the education that is prepared still respects cultural diversity and meets the needs of the local community.

At the curriculum design stage, the information obtained from this literature research is very valuable to design a curriculum based on empirical evidence and proven theories. For example, if the literature indicates the importance of integrating technology in the learning process or the development of social and emotional skills, this can be accommodated in curriculum design. Literature research can also assist the curriculum drafting team in designing a systematically integrated curriculum structure, developing basic competency standards, and determining teaching materials that are in accordance with the needs of students' cognitive, social, and emotional development.

In the curriculum prototype trial stage, the results of literature research also provide guidance on methodologies and approaches that have been proven to be effective. This trial aims to evaluate the implementation of the curriculum in a real context and identify whether the curriculum that has been designed can achieve the goals that have been set. At this stage, literature on curriculum trials conducted elsewhere can provide insight into the challenges that may be faced and ways to overcome them. The results of this trial are then used to obtain constructive feedback that can improve weaknesses or strengthen the strengths of the curriculum that has been prepared.

After the curriculum prototype is tested, the revision and improvement stages are carried out. At this stage, literature serves as a reference to improve aspects that are still not optimal from the curriculum prototype. For example, if a trial shows that a particular aspect of the curriculum does not succeed in achieving the desired learning objectives, the drafting team can refer to the relevant literature to find a more effective alternative method or approach. This revision may include changes in materials, methods, or assessments to ensure that the resulting curriculum can meet educational needs more optimally.

Finally, at the stage of evaluating the implementation of the curriculum, a literature review is very useful to compare the implementation of the new curriculum with the implementation of the previous curriculum, as well as with the curriculum implemented in other countries. This evaluation aims to assess the extent to which the curriculum implemented is successful in achieving the educational goals that have been set. By referring to relevant research and theory, evaluations can be carried out systematically and evidence-based. The results of this evaluation will produce recommendations for further improvement and provide guidance to improve the curriculum to be more responsive to student needs and global educational developments.

In a more comprehensive review, the application of literature research methods in analyzing the process of preparing and adapting the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools plays an important role in every stage, from the identification of needs to the evaluation of curriculum implementation. Through an in-depth literature review, the curriculum preparation process becomes more evidence-based, relevant to the challenges of the times, and directed in meeting the needs of holistic and comprehensive education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Results

The curriculum preparation process in elementary schools has a very strong relevance to efforts to adapt the Merdeka Curriculum based on meeting the learning needs of students (Akdemir et al., 2015; Setiawan & Ahla, 2022). The curriculum provides greater freedom for schools and teachers to tailor learning to the needs and characteristics of students, which includes an in-depth understanding of the social, cultural, and aspirational contexts of local communities (Borrero & Naidoo, 2023; Noer et al., 2023).

The curriculum preparation process that begins with the identification of basic educational needs and the determination of educational goals is very much in line with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, which prioritizes adjusting the curriculum to the individual needs of students and providing space for the development of their potential and interests (Nisa' et al., 2023). The preparation of this needs-based curriculum involves the evaluation of the curriculum that has been implemented previously, as well as the analysis of social, economic, and political changes that affect basic education (Suryaman, 2020).

This approach is particularly relevant to the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes context-based learning and changing times, where students not only learn academically, but also develop 21st century skills, such as digital literacy, creativity, and critical thinking skills. The adaptation of the curriculum is based on the evaluation of social development and the future needs of students, in line with the principle of flexibility and strengthening competencies contained in the curriculum.

The formation of a curriculum team consisting of education experts, subject matter experts, psychologists, and other stakeholders to design learning structures and strategies also supports the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This team is expected to be able to design a curriculum that is not only in accordance with national standards but also takes into account the uniqueness of students' learning needs. By involving various parties, including teachers, parents, and local communities in the consultation stage, the curriculum development process can ensure that the education provided respects cultural diversity, local values, and community aspirations. This is in line with the principles of the curriculum which encourages contextual and based learning on the needs and potentials of students.

Curriculum trials and evaluations carried out on a limited scale are also relevant to efforts to adapt the Merdeka Curriculum. This trial allows the curriculum to be tested in a real context, then evaluated and refined to ensure that learning can run effectively and in accordance with the goals that have been set. These evaluations provide constructive feedback for curriculum improvement, a very important principle in the curriculum that emphasizes continuous renewal and adjustment. Thus, the mechanism for preparing the curriculum involving evaluation, consultation, trials, and revisions is the main foundation in the implementation of the curriculum.

The Merdeka Curriculum, which is based on meeting the learning needs of students, ensures that basic education can be more responsive to the changes and demands of the times, and is able to provide a more inclusive and meaningful learning experience for all students. To adapt the curriculum based on the stages that have been mentioned, here is a more detailed explanation of each stage:

1. Analysis Stage of Identifying Needs for Curriculum Preparation

The first stage is to conduct an in-depth analysis to identify the needs in the preparation of the curriculum to be implemented. At this stage, the curriculum development team conducts:

- a. Evaluate existing curriculum: Assess the weaknesses, strengths, and challenges of previous curricula (e.g. the 2013 Curriculum) in the context of student needs, social change, technology, and local needs.
- b. Identify global and local challenges: Analyze the needs of 21st century skills, such as critical thinking skills, creativity, collaboration, and relevant communication to prepare students for a dynamic and global world.
- c. Mapping student needs: Identifying students' characteristics, potentials, and challenges based on factors such as their academic abilities, social-emotional, and interests and talents.
- d. Review government policies: Align with national education policies and regulations, such as education policies that emphasize competency-based learning and strengthening character education.

2. Analysis Stage on the Absorption of Stakeholders' Aspirations

This stage focuses on gathering and analyzing input from stakeholders related to the curriculum that will be implemented with the following strategies:

- a. Surveys and interviews with teachers, principals, parents, and students to understand their expectations, concerns, and needs related to learning.
- b. Group discussions and focus groups with other stakeholders such as local communities, local governments, and education experts to gain a broader perspective on the integration of local values, culture, and wisdom into the curriculum.
- c. Analyze industry needs and expectations to ensure that the curriculum includes skills relevant to the future of work.

3. Stage of Determination of the Ideal Curriculum Design Model

After collecting and analyzing needs and aspirations, the next stage is to design an ideal curriculum model. These stages include:

- a. Preparation of curriculum goals: Setting curriculum goals that include the competencies to be achieved, including aspects of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values.
- b. Curriculum structure design: Arrange the division of time for subjects, arrangement of learning hour allocation, and subject integration that combines thematic and cross-disciplinary teaching.
- c. Development of teaching materials: Determining teaching materials that are relevant to local and global contexts, as well as integrating information and communication technology in the learning process.
- d. Learning approach: Designing a learning model based on an active, creative, and collaborative approach, and paying attention to different student learning needs (differentiated instruction).

4. Curriculum Prototype Trial Stage

The trial phase aims to test the effectiveness of the curriculum model that has been designed in real conditions in schools carried out in the following steps:

- a. Limited trial implementation: Implementing the curriculum on a small scale in several different schools to obtain data related to the effectiveness and challenges faced.
- b. Data collection: Using instruments such as observations, interviews, and questionnaires to gather feedback from teachers, students, and parents regarding the successes and difficulties in implementing the curriculum.
- c. Monitoring and evaluation: Monitor the learning process and results achieved by students, as well as evaluate whether the curriculum is able to meet the goals that have been set.

5. Stages of Revision and Improvement of Curriculum Preparation Results

Based on the results of the trial, revisions and improvements were made to the curriculum that had been tested. This stage includes:

- a. Analysis of trial results: Identify problems or shortcomings that arise during the trial, either in terms of materials, learning methods, or learning support provided to students.
- b. Curriculum improvement: Adjusting the curriculum based on the results of the evaluation by adding, subtracting, or replacing components that are less effective or not in accordance with student needs.
- c. Improving teacher professionalism: Providing training to teachers to better understand and implement curriculum changes effectively.
- d. Strengthening facilities and resources: Improving learning facilities, such as digital media, teaching aids, and other supporting facilities, that support the maximum implementation of the curriculum.

6. Evaluation Stage of the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Elementary Schools

The last stage is the continuous evaluation of the implementation of the adjusted curriculum. This evaluation process is carried out to ensure that the curriculum can be implemented effectively and has a positive impact on student learning. The steps taken include:

- a. Periodic evaluation: Conduct periodic evaluations through surveys, interviews, and discussions with stakeholders (teachers, students, parents) to assess whether the curriculum is achieving the goals that have been set.
- b. Reflection on learning outcomes: Looks at student development in cognitive, social, emotional, and character aspects to ensure the curriculum supports holistic and well-rounded learning.
- c. Reporting of evaluation results: Prepare an evaluation report that includes the results achieved, challenges faced, and recommendations for further development.
- d. Recommendations for further adjustments: Based on the results of the evaluation, provide recommendations for continuous curriculum adjustments to remain relevant and adaptive to changing times and student needs.

Through these stages, the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools can be systematically adapted to create a more relevant, contextual, and in-depth learning experience for students, in accordance with the challenges of globalization and evolving local needs.

B. Discussions

Curriculum development and adaptation in primary schools plays an important role in preparing students for the increasingly complex challenges of the future ([Almethen & Alomair, 2024](#); [Gholtash & Yarmohammadian, 2011](#)). Basic education is the main foundation in the formation of individual character and academic ability, which will later play a role in shaping the quality of superior human resources at the global level. According to [Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo \(2022\)](#), the Merdeka Curriculum is prepared by paying attention to various aspects of student development, local needs, and global demands, becoming very relevant in facing the challenges of the times.

The process of developing an effective and responsive curriculum to global changes requires a deep understanding of the various factors that affect education ([Falloon, 2024](#)). The curriculum preparation mechanism as revealed by [Kim \(2024\)](#) includes many considerations involving stakeholders, including educators, parents, the community, and the government. This is very important because the curriculum is not only a tool to achieve the goals of formal education, but also a guide that directs the formation of students' character, social skills, and academic competence.

Sometimes curriculum adaptation is often urgent due to various challenges faced, both in terms of technological developments, socio-economic changes, and globalization (Berhanu & Naidoo, 2024). This change requires a more flexible, contextual and student-based approach. The Merdeka Curriculum provides greater space for teachers and students to be creative in the learning process, which in turn supports the development of 21st century competencies such as critical thinking, digital literacy, and the ability to collaborate in an increasingly globally connected world.

Thanh et al. (2024) explained that the urgency of curriculum adaptation lies in the need to present a curriculum that is more responsive to student development. Along with the development of the times, social changes, and technological advancements, the curriculum preparation process must consider aspects of student development holistically. This includes their cognitive, social-emotional, as well as physical development which must be adapted to the age stage and characteristics of each student (Boudouaia et al., 2024). Therefore, involving various parties, such as developmental psychologists, educators, and other education experts in curriculum development, is a crucial step in ensuring that the learning provided is truly in accordance with the needs of students.

The Merdeka Curriculum must also pay attention to local and cultural values that exist in the community, such as cultural diversity, traditions, and social values that develop in the student environment. The integration of these local values is very important so that students not only have academic competence but also be able to maintain their cultural identity in the midst of an increasingly strong globalization current. Therefore, the adaptation of this curriculum must involve consultation with community leaders, religious leaders, and parents to ensure that the curriculum implemented reflects the values and aspirations of the local community.

Curriculum adaptation should consider technological developments as a social reality that occurs, whose presence is increasingly important in the world of education (Camicia, 2023; Ollila & Macy, 2019). Information and communication technology provides great potential to increase student interaction and engagement in learning. Therefore, the curriculum must be able to accommodate the use of technology in the learning process, both through digital media, online learning platforms, and technology-based learning tools. In this case, the development of digital competencies for teachers and students is an aspect that should not be ignored in the preparation of the curriculum.

On the other hand, globalization demands the curriculum of educational units to integrate international standards and develop global competencies in students (Oeschger et al., 2022). Skills such as digital literacy, foreign language skills, and an understanding of global issues should be part of the designed curriculum. This competency development aims to enable students not only to compete at the local level, but also to be able to compete at the global level (Sari et al., 2024). Therefore, the adapted curriculum must pay attention to the need to prepare students for increasingly profound global challenges.

First of all, to understand the mechanism of curriculum preparation in elementary schools, it is important to look at the development of the education system at the national level. Each country has different education policies, which reflect national values, culture, and educational goals. For example, in Indonesia, the curriculum in primary schools has undergone a significant evolution along with various social, economic, and political changes. Since its independence, Indonesia has revised the elementary school curriculum several times as an effort to improve the quality of basic education and meet the demands of the times.

One of the important factors in curriculum changes is the understanding of the development and needs of students (Altun & Büyüköztürk, 2014). According to Sivesind (2023), an effective curriculum must be responsive to children's needs, interests, and development. Therefore, the curriculum preparation process must involve developmental psychologists, education, and other educational experts to ensure that learning materials and teaching methods are appropriate for the developmental stages of elementary school children. It emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to curriculum planning, which not only pays attention to the academic aspects but also the social, emotional, and physical aspects of the learners.

It is important to pay attention to technological developments in the curriculum preparation process. The digital age has fundamentally changed the educational landscape, introducing a range of new learning tools and resources that can enhance student interaction and engagement (Taber, 2023). The curriculum development process in elementary schools must be inclusive and take into account cultural diversity and the diversity of local communities.

Through consideration of globalization currents in curriculum preparation, it has brought changes in the demands of competencies and skills needed by students to succeed in this increasingly connected era (Mawati et al., 2023). Therefore, the curriculum in elementary schools must be able to integrate international standards and develop global competencies in students, such as foreign language skills, digital literacy, and understanding of global issues. It demands active involvement in international education networks and the adaptation of curriculum content to relevant global standards (Barghi et al., 2017).

In addition, the role of parents and the community in the preparation of the curriculum should not be ignored (Saracaloğlu et al., 2010). Parents are key partners in children's education, and their participation in the curriculum development process can increase understanding and support for learning programs. Similarly, the involvement of local communities can provide valuable insights into the needs and challenges faced by students in the region.

Running through the process, it is important to ensure that the resulting curriculum is responsive to learner development, integrates technology and local values, is relevant to global demands, and engages all stakeholders in an inclusive manner (Chen et al., 2021; Ulu & Kiraz, 2014). Only in this way, curriculum adaptation orientation can be an effective

tool in preparing the younger generation to face future challenges with confidence and adequate competence.

The Merdeka Curriculum, initiated by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology during the Nadiem Makarim era, is an important step in responding to the dynamics of education that continues to develop, especially in the midst of the challenges of globalization and the technological revolution although until now the policy still raises pros and cons, especially among education practitioners. The main concept of the curriculum is to provide greater freedom to students and teachers in managing the learning process, with a focus on learning that is more flexible, contextual, and relevant to the needs of students and the development of the times ([Angga et al., 2022](#)).

The preparation of the curriculum in elementary schools, especially in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, is a complex process and requires the involvement of various parties and in-depth consideration of various external and internal factors ([Lestari et al., 2023](#)). This process begins with the identification of the needs of educational goals, which serve as the basis for designing a relevant and effective curriculum. In this case, it is important to consider social, economic, political developments, as well as the aspirations of society and educators in order to identify the main needs of students that need to be considered in the curriculum.

For example, in the context of globalization and technological advancements, the identification of educational needs includes the development of 21st century skills, such as digital literacy, critical thinking skills, and an understanding of global issues ([Dilekçi & Karatay, 2023](#)). In addition, local values that are characteristic of Indonesian society, such as cultural diversity and local traditions, must also be accommodated in the curriculum so that students can maintain their national identity even in an era of increasing global connectivity. Therefore, the identification of the needs of these educational objectives includes an understanding of global challenges as well as local needs, with the aim of ensuring the curriculum equips students with relevant skills for their future.

The next step is the formation of a curriculum drafting team, which must involve various experts, such as curriculum experts, educators, educational psychologists, as well as other stakeholders such as parents and local communities. The formation of this team is important because the preparation of the curriculum not only involves technical aspects, but also requires a deep understanding of the social, cultural, and political aspects that affect the world of education. In this case, according to [Asmayawati et al. \(2024\)](#), the curriculum drafting team needs to ensure that the curriculum developed is able to accommodate the diversity and challenges that exist in society, as well as pay attention to the evolving global dynamics.

Designing the curriculum structure is the next stage that details the main components in the curriculum, such as learning objectives, competencies to be achieved, subject matter, and learning methods and strategies used. In the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, the design of the curriculum structure must also pay attention to the aspect of flexibility, where students are given the freedom to explore their interests and talents,

while still following the development of basic competencies that are a requirement for continuing education at the next level. This structure should facilitate more competency-based learning, by providing space for students to learn independently, creatively, and contextually.

After the curriculum structure is prepared, the next step is the socialization of the curriculum prototype to various related parties, both to educators, parents, and the community. This socialization aims to get constructive feedback on the material and approaches to be applied. This socialized curriculum prototype must reflect the results of discussions and consultations with various stakeholders, and provide a clear picture of the implementation of the curriculum in schools. Thus, the adaptation of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools is very important to ensure relevant and effective education in the face of the demands of the changing times.

This curriculum must be able to accommodate the development of students, technology integration, and adequate local and global values (Dello-Iacovo, 2009; Nalbantoğlu & Bümen, 2024; Pang & Ki, 2024). Only by involving all parties in the process of curriculum development and implementation, as well as providing freedom for students to explore their interests and talents, can we create a generation that is not only academically intelligent, but also ready to face global challenges with confidence and adequate competence.

CONCLUSIONS

The mechanism for the preparation and adaptation of the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools emphasizes the importance of structured and systematic stages in creating a curriculum that is relevant and responsive to the needs of students as well as social, economic, political, and cultural dynamics. The process begins with the identification of needs, which includes determining the basic competencies of students and mapping the demands of society and the development of the times. Furthermore, through the absorption of the aspirations of stakeholders, such as parents, educators, and the industry sector, the curriculum can be designed with local and global needs in mind. After that, curriculum design is carried out by integrating technology and local cultural values, in order to create a holistic curriculum. The curriculum prototype is then piloted to evaluate its effectiveness and identify shortcomings that need to be improved. Revisions and improvements are carried out based on the results of the trial, to produce a more effective and adaptive curriculum. The final stage is the evaluation of the implementation of the curriculum in elementary schools, which aims to assess its impact on students' competencies and character, as well as become the basis for continuous improvement. By going through this comprehensive stage, the curriculum is expected to prepare students to face global challenges, while still respecting and maintaining local cultural values.

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