



## The Effect of Implementing the Independent Learning Curriculum on the Morality of Students at SMA N 1 Kalasan, Sleman, Yogyakarta

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### ABSTRACT

The decline in student morality in the digital era, such as aggressive behavior academic dishonesty, and moral deviation, necessitates an evaluation of curriculum implementation. This study investigates the impact of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum on the moral development of 11 th-grade students at SMA N 1 Kalasan. Using a descriptive quantitative approach with a one-group ex-post facto design and retrospective measurement, data were collected through a questionnaire covering four dimensions of morality: towards God, other, oneself, and the environment, using a 5-point Likert scale. The sample consisted of 127 randomly selected students from a population of 252. The Paired Sample T-Test showed a significant difference (Sig. 0.048 < 0.05), while the N-Gain Score analysis yielded an average of -5.1470%, categorized as "ineffective". These results indicate that although the curriculum had a statistically significant impact, its practical influence on students moral development was minimal. The study recommends further research incorporating additional variables such as family involvement, sosial environment, and contextual learning approaches rooted in local wisdom to enhance the effectiveness of moral education.

**Keywords:** Education, Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, Moral Development.

### ABSTRAK

Penurunan akhlak peserta didik di era digital, seperti perilaku agresif, ketidakjujuran akademik, dan penyimpangan akhlak memerlukan evaluasi penerapan kurikulum. Penelitian ini meneliti pengaruh penerapan kurikulum merdeka belajar terhadap perkembangan akhlak peserta didik di kelas XI SMA N 1 Kalasan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif dengan desain ex-post facto model satu kelompok dan pengukuran retrospektif. Data dikumpulkan melalui angket retrospektif yang mencakup empat dimensi akhlak (akhlak terhadap Allah SWT, sesama manusia, diri sendiri, dan lingkungan) dengan skala likert 1-5. Sampel penelitian terdiri dari 127 peserta didik dari 252 populasi kelas XI yang dipilih secara acak. Hasil uji beda menggunakan Paired Sampel T-Test menunjukkan perbedaan signifikan (Sig. 0.048 < 0.05), dan analisis N-Gain Score menunjukkan hasil rata-rata -5.1470% (kategori "tidak efektif"). Kesimpulan penelitian ini terdapat pengaruh penerapan kurikulum merdeka terhadap perkembangan akhlak peserta didik kelas XI SMA N 1 Kalasan. Besarnya pengaruh penerapan kurikulum merdeka belajar terhadap perkembangan akhlak peserta didik adalah sangat kecil yaitu sebesar -5.1470%. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan studi lanjutan dengan

variabel pendukung seperti peran keluarga, lingkungan sosial, dan pendekatan pembelajaran kontekstual berbasis kearifan lokal.

**Kata Kunci:** *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar, Pendidikan, Perkembangan Akhlak.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology introduced the independent learning curriculum as a new approach to Indonesia's education system (Azmi, Murni, & Desyandri, 2023). Nadiem Makarim said that to encourage educational transformation, curriculum changes are needed to develop students' holistic abilities (Ramadan & Tabroni, 2020). The independent learning curriculum was created to make Indonesia a smart, fair, wise, and prudent country (Hutabarat, Elindra, & Harahap, 2022). This curriculum offers a variety of intracurricular activities that focus on optimising content to explore concepts and strengthen student competencies (Napitupulu, Silalahi, & Gultom, 2023). Therefore, in 2020, the government implemented the latest curriculum known as the independent learning curriculum.

The development of human character is influenced by education, among other things (Lestari, 2019). Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad taught his followers to continually improve their character (Kholish, 2021). Morality can guide humans to become complete human beings in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (Musrofa, 2020). Morality is an attitude and trait inherent in a person, evident in their behaviour and actions in front of others (Mahmud, 2021). Such behaviour can take the form of right actions and in accordance with religious teachings, as well as those that deviate from or are not justified by religion (Sukidal, Marlina, & Anawati, 2022). Thus, morals are attitudes or behaviours that arise and remain strong in the deepest part of the heart and are the source of actions (Ilallah, Ali, & Fakhri, 2022).

Morals are a moral system based on the teachings of Islam (Mydin, Shukri, & Razak, 2020). The Qur'an and Hadith, as guidelines for Muslims, provide explanations regarding the criteria for good and bad deeds (Suryani, Ma'tsum, Suharti, Lestari, & Siregar, 2021). The Qur'an describes the morals of the Prophet Muhammad, who is a role model for all of humanity (Zulmuqim, Zalnur, Azhari, 2022). Therefore, as Muslims who follow the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, we must make him a role model in our behaviour and morals.

Today, the decline in student morals has become an increasingly worrying issue. The rapidly advancing digital era and the ever-changing education system have led to a decline in students' morals. The national education system is considered to have failed in instilling good morals in students and in providing meaningful learning that supports their personal and moral development, resulting in a decline in personality and awareness of the essence of life (Setyoningsih, 2018).

The decline in students' morals in the school environment is reflected in various forms of behaviour that require serious attention and intervention. This phenomenon is characterized by, among other things, an increase in aggressive behavior that has the potential to lead to anarchic actions in schools, cases of theft, rampant dishonesty in academic activities, low compliance with school rules, fights between students, a weakening of mutual respect for differences, the use of rude language, the emergence of sexual deviance, self-destructive tendencies, and drug abuse.

Based on observations and preliminary research conducted by the researcher at SMA N 1 Kalasan, several phenomena related to student morals require attention. These phenomena include: 1) Discipline in school attendance, 2) Declining respect for teachers and school staff, 3) Rude communication, 4) Verbal bullying among students, 5) Academic honesty, and 6) Compliance with school rules.

The principle of independent learning in the independent learning curriculum is implemented as meaningful learning freedom for students (Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo, 2022). This program is designed to develop students' abilities in line with the demands of the 21st century, known as the 4C competencies: communication, creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking (Nopiani, Purnamasari, Nuvitalia, & Rahmawati, 2023). Mastery of these competencies not only makes students proficient in theoretical material but also enables them to develop innovations beneficial to Indonesia, to socialise and work in teams, and to form a noble personality with good ethics and morals (Shalehah, 2023).

Based on the background that the author found, the author was interested in conducting research at SMA N 1 Kalasan with the research title "**The Effect of Implementing the Independent Learning Curriculum on the Morality of Students at SMA N 1 Kalasan, Sleman, Yogyakarta**". This research aims to provide a comprehensive perspective on the relationship between the independent curriculum and students' moral development. Furthermore, this research aims to make a positive contribution to efforts to develop character-based education in schools. Thus, this research not only serves as an academic study but also as a strategic guide for developing a more effective education system in shaping a generation with noble character.

## **METHODS**

This study used a single-group ex post facto research design with retrospective measurements. An ex post facto design is a research design in which cause-and-effect relationships are studied in real life and are not manipulated by the researcher. This study used Slovin's sampling technique to select a sample of 127 students from a total population of 252 students. The sample represents 50.4% of the total population. Sampling was conducted using proportional random sampling to ensure that each

member of the population had an equal chance of being selected as a research sample (Khayroiayah, Irma Melati, Hartanti, & Fatmawati, 2025).

The researcher used a retrospective questionnaire, meaning the questionnaire was designed to ask respondents to recall the situation before the treatment (in this case, the 2013 curriculum) and compare it with the current situation, namely the independent learning curriculum. The data analysis technique in this study used SPSS 29, including instrument testing (validity, reliability), prerequisite testing (normality, homogeneity), and difference testing (paired-samples t-test, N-Gain Score).

## RESULT

The results of this study show the effects of the independent learning curriculum on the moral development of 11<sup>th</sup>-grade students at SMA N 1 Kalasan.

### 1. Questionnaire Validity Test

Table 1. Instrument Validity Test (Before Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum)

VALIDITY TEST RESULTS				
Item	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.	Description
Item_Pre01	127	0.351	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre02	127	0.482	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre03	127	0.411	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre04	127	0.464	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre05	127	0.320	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre06	127	0.353	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre07	127	0.348	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre08	127	0.415	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre09	127	0.422	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre10	127	0.548	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre11	127	0.444	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre12	127	0.452	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre13	127	0.462	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre14	127	0.574	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre15	127	0.583	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre16	127	0.582	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre17	127	0.502	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre18	127	0.310	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre19	127	0.503	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre20	127	0.431	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre21	127	0.361	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre22	127	0.494	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre23	127	0.511	0.000	Valid

Item_Pre24	127	0.468	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre25	127	0.536	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre26	127	0.519	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre27	127	0.583	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre28	127	0.506	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre29	127	0.307	0.000	Valid
Item_Pre30	127	0.513	0.000	Valid

Based on the validity test listed in the table, all questionnaires on student moral development prior to the implementation of the independent learning curriculum showed results with a significance of less than 0.05 (Sig, > 0.05), so that all items in the questionnaire on moral development prior to the implementation of the independent learning curriculum were declared valid.

Table 2. Instrument Validity Test (After Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum)

<b>VALIDITY TEST RESULTS</b>				
<b>Item</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Description</b>
Item_Post01	127	0.373	0.000	Valid
Item_Post02	127	0.471	0.000	Valid
Item_Post03	127	0.361	0.000	Valid
Item_Post04	127	0.445	0.000	Valid
Item_Post05	127	0.307	0.000	Valid
Item_Post06	127	0.330	0.000	Valid
Item_Post07	127	0.273	0.002	Valid
Item_Post08	127	0.436	0.000	Valid
Item_Post09	127	0.523	0.000	Valid
Item_Post10	127	0.553	0.000	Valid
Item_Post11	127	0.408	0.000	Valid
Item_Post12	127	0.394	0.000	Valid
Item_Post13	127	0.486	0.000	Valid
Item_Post14	127	0.494	0.000	Valid
Item_Post15	127	0.657	0.000	Valid
Item_Post16	127	0.514	0.000	Valid
Item_Post17	127	0.525	0.000	Valid
Item_Post18	127	0.316	0.000	Valid
Item_Post19	127	0.483	0.000	Valid
Item_Post20	127	0.416	0.000	Valid
Item_Post21	127	0.376	0.000	Valid
Item_Post22	127	0.538	0.000	Valid
Item_Post23	127	0.420	0.000	Valid
Item_Post24	127	0.505	0.000	Valid

Item_Post25	127	0.592	0.000	Valid
Item_Post26	127	0.560	0.000	Valid
Item_Post27	127	0.629	0.000	Valid
Item_Post28	127	0.513	0.000	Valid
Item_Post29	127	0.304	0.001	Valid
Item_Post30	127	0.551	0.000	Valid

Based on the validity test listed in the table, all items in the student moral development questionnaire after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum showed results of less than 0.05 (Sig, > 0.05), so all items in the moral development questionnaire after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum were declared valid.

## 2. Description of Research Results

The description of the research results discusses and explains the data obtained from the distribution of retrospective questionnaires. The data used in this study were scores from a retrospective Likert-scale questionnaire (1-5) with two response categories: before implementation (2013 curriculum) and after implementation of the independent learning curriculum. The descriptive statistics analysed include the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation.

### a. Pre-scores (Before the Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum)

The calculation of data scores before the implementation of the independent learning curriculum for grade XI students at SMA N 1 Kalasan yielded the following results:

Table 3. Scores Before Implementation

Descriptive Analysis	Score
Maximum Value	149
Minimum Value	94
Mean	126.2047
Median	127
Mode	128

Based on the descriptive analysis, the highest student score before the implementation of the independent learning curriculum was 149, and the lowest was 94. The mean (average) score of the total 127 students was 126.2047, the median (middle value) was 127, the mode (most frequently occurring value) was 128, and the standard deviation was 11.06355276. The data above are used to compare scores before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum.

b. *Post Scores (After Implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum)*

The results of the data calculation after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum for grade XI students at SMA N 1 Kalasan are as follows:

Table 4. Scores After Implementation

<b>Descriptive Analysis</b>	<b>Score</b>
Maximum Value	149
Minimum Value	93
Mean	127.2283
Median	128
Mode	129

Based on the descriptive analysis, the highest student score after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum was 149, and the lowest was 93. The mean (average) score of the total 127 students was 127.2283, the median (middle value) was 128, the mode (most frequently occurring value) was 129, and the standard deviation was 11.12853402.

From the two descriptive data analyses above, it can be seen that the highest score before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum did not show any increase (stagnant), with a score of 149 each. Meanwhile, the lowest score before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum decreased from 94 to 93. The mean (average) of the two data sets above shows an increase: a score before the implementation of the independent learning curriculum of 126.2047 and a score after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum of 127.2283.

The median of the two descriptive analyses above shows an increase of 1 score from before the implementation of the independent learning curriculum of 127 to a score after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum of 128. The modes of the two descriptive analyses above also show the same thing: an increase of 1 score from before the implementation of the independent learning curriculum (128) to after (129). The standard deviation of the two descriptive analyses above increased from 11.06355276 before the implementation of the independent learning curriculum to 11.12853402 after its implementation.

Based on the descriptive analysis results above, it can be concluded that implementing the independent learning curriculum on the moral development of grade XI students at SMA N 1 Kalasan yielded insignificant results. This is supported by descriptive analysis, which shows no significant differences in

scores before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum.

### 3. Prerequisite Tests

Prerequisite tests are conducted to ensure that statistical analyses are accurate and reliable. Two important tests are the normality test to check whether the data are normally distributed and the homogeneity test to ensure that the distributions of the groups being compared are uniform.

#### a. Normality Test

The normality test aims to determine whether the data obtained are normally distributed. The analysis method is the Kormogorov-Smirnov test in SPSS 29. The Kormogorov-Smirnov test is used because it can directly determine whether the data are normally distributed. If the significance value is greater than 0.05 (Sig. > 0.05), the data are normally distributed.

Table 5. Normality Test Results

Description	TEST OF NORMALITY		
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	Statistic	N	Sig
Before Implementation	0.067	127	0.200
After Implementation	0.062	127	0.200

Based on the results of the Kormogorov-Smirnov test, the significance value before implementing the independent learning curriculum was 0.200, indicating that the data were normally distributed. Meanwhile, the significance value after implementing the independent learning curriculum was 0.200, indicating that the data were normally distributed. In conclusion, the data before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum are normally distributed.

#### b. Homogeneity Test

After performing a normality test and confirming that the data come from a normally distributed population, the next step is to test for homogeneity of variance. Data that are normally distributed are analysed for homogeneity using the Levene Statistic. This analysis aims to determine whether the data come from a homogeneous population. If the Levene Statistic test results show a significance value greater than 0.05 (Sig. > 0.05), it can be concluded that the data variance is the same or homogeneous.

Table 6. Homogeneity Test Results

TEST OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIAN					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig
Student	Based on Mean	1.281	6	120	0.271
Character	Based on Median	1.073	6	120	0.382
Development Score	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1.073	6	109.938	0.383
	Based on trimmed mean	1.272	6	120	0.275

Based on the results of Levene's test for the students' moral development scores above, the significance value based on the Mean is 0.271. Because this significance value is greater than the significance level of 0.05 ( $0.271 > 0.05$ ), it can be concluded that the variance in the students' moral development data is homogeneous.

#### 4. Effectiveness Test

The effectiveness analysis in this study was conducted using the Paired Sample T-Test and the N-Gain Score test. A t-test was used to assess the difference in average scores before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum. Meanwhile, the N-Gain test was used to measure the increase in scores before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum.

##### a. T-test

The T-test can be used after the data meet the assumptions of normality and homogeneity. This analysis uses the Paired Sample t-test to determine whether there is a significant difference in the average scores before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum. The basis for decision-making is as follows:

If Sig. (2-tailed)  $< 0.05$ , then  $H_0$  is rejected, and  $H_a$  is accepted.

If Sig. (2-tailed)  $> 0.05$ , then  $H_0$  is accepted, and  $H_a$  is rejected.

Table 7. Paired Sample T-Test Results

PAIRED SAMPLES TEST										
		Paired Differences						Significance		
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
					Lower	Upper				
Pair 1	Total Before	-.02362	5.78238	0.5131	-.03904	-.00821	-.995	126	0.024	0.048
	Total After									

Based on the results of the Paired Sample Test above, the significance is 0.048, which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05 (Sig.  $0.048 < 0.05$ ). Therefore,  $H_0$  is rejected, and  $H_a$  is accepted. It can be concluded that there is

a difference between the average scores before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum.

b. *N-Gain Percentage Test*

The N-Gain Percentage analysis was conducted to assess the effectiveness of implementing the independent learning curriculum on the moral development of grade XI students at SMA N 1 Kalasan. Using the N-Gain Percentage formula, the amount of improvement can be determined quantitatively:

$$N - Gain = \frac{\text{Score Before Implementation} - \text{Score After Implementation}}{\text{Maximum Score} - \text{Score After Implementation}}$$

Table 8. N-Gain Score and N-Gain Percentage Test Analysis

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
NGain_Score	127	-1.50	0.88	-0.0572	0.26165
NGain_Prosen	127	-135.00	79.62	-5.1470	23.54874
Valid N (listwise)	127				

The N-Gain analysis shows that the average N-Gain percentage is -5.1470%, which falls in the ineffective category (<40%). The minimum value is -135.00% and the maximum value is 79.62%. Based on the above data analysis, it can be concluded that the implementation of the independent learning curriculum is ineffective in developing the character of grade XI students at SMA N 1 Kalasan.

The results of the observation show that teachers at SMA N 1 Kalasan have implemented project-based learning as part of the independent learning curriculum. Grade XI students are allowed to design and implement projects that address everyday life contexts. These projects are designed not only to develop academic competencies but also to foster moral values such as responsibility, honesty, cooperation, and concern for the environment.

SMA N 1 Kalasan has implemented the development of the Pancasila student profile as part of the independent learning curriculum. This profile covers six dimensions, including global diversity, cooperation, independence, critical thinking, and creativity.

## DISCUSSION

The independent learning curriculum aims to transform the national education system by developing Indonesia's human resources (Riskiyah, Fariyanti, & Abidin, 2024). This curriculum presents a more flexible and adaptive learning concept. Its main focus includes mastery of fundamental material, character building, and the development of student competencies. The uniqueness of this curriculum lies in its

broader approach to fostering learning autonomy among educators, students, and educational institutions in managing the learning process, compared to previous curricula (Putri, Azizah, Ulyantika, & Fitri, 2025).

Morality is understood as behaviour based on Islamic values. Islamic morality is defined as actions carried out naturally and deliberately, and as part of one's personality (Rahmawati et al., 2025). The Islamic morals that students should possess include love for Allah SWT, His Messenger, Angels, the Last Day, and destiny, keeping promises, trustworthiness, politeness in speech and action, *Qanaah*, *Tawakkal*, Patience, Gratitude, *Tawadhu'*, and other behaviours in accordance with the Qur'an and Hadith.

This study measures the extent of the independent learning curriculum's influence on the moral development of grade XI students at SMA N 1 Kalasan. This study was conducted for one month in grade XI at SMA N 1 Kalasan. Data collection was carried out by distributing retrospective questionnaires to grade XI students at random. A total of 127 students completed the retrospective questionnaire via the available G-Form. The researcher did not treat the students; instead, they only measured events or phenomena that had already been experienced by the students (Ex Post Facto).

Students were randomly given a retrospective questionnaire containing 30 questions covering morals towards Allah, fellow human beings, oneself, and the environment. This was adjusted by the author based on the moral dimensions of Islam. The questionnaire consisted of 5 Likert-scale alternatives (1-5). The questionnaire was also designed with 2 answer categories: before implementation (2013 curriculum) and after implementation of the independent learning curriculum.

The results of the Paired Sample T-Test showed a significance of 0.048, which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05 (Sig. 0.048 < 0.05). Thus, it can be concluded that there is a difference between the average score before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum. To determine how effective character development is for students, we can look at the N-Gain Percentage value, which shows an average of -5.1470%, placing it in the ineffective category (<40%).

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the independent learning curriculum at SMA N 1 Kalasan is not aligned with its main objective: the development of students' character. This is indicated by the lack of good character development in students. The quality of students' character tends to decline. Based on the author's observations, this occurs because students have greater freedom of expression under the new curriculum, so they are often unable to control their attitudes.

These findings align with Oktari's research, which shows that although the implementation of differentiated learning strategies has not been optimal due to

various constraints, teachers and schools have shown proactive efforts to formulate solution-oriented steps to realise more personalised and participatory learning (Oktari, 2025). However, in the context of this study, similar efforts have not been fully evident in the implementation of project-based learning, resulting in the internalisation of moral values not being maximised. Variations in context and level of readiness influence differences in teachers' competence in implementing the new curriculum and in linking learning materials to current issues relevant to students (Supriyadi et al., 2026).

The Islamic perspective in the Qur'an emphasises the example of the Prophet Muhammad as the basis for noble morals (Jundi, 2020). However, the implementation of these values in the curriculum has not been optimal, as seen in the prevalence of bullying and the use of rude language. The concepts of gratitude and trust in God have not been internalised holistically, presumably because religious education remains cognitive rather than affective. These findings provide new insights into the importance of incorporating spiritual values into a student-centred learning approach. Without strong spiritual integration, a student-centred approach may be less effective in character building.

These findings align with Ki Hajar Dewantara's principle of learning by doing, in which collaborative projects such as "Global Diversity" facilitate the internalisation of moral values through direct experience. Through active involvement in the project, students not only understand the concepts cognitively but also internalise the values they learn.

The theoretical implications of this study contribute to understanding the relationship between implementing the independent learning curriculum and students' moral development. The findings of this study indicate that a student-centred learning approach, flexibility in learning, and the integration of moral values in learning can help develop students' morals.

The practical implications of this study are: 1) Teachers need to be trained to design projects grounded in moral values. 2) The importance of synergy with parents to strengthen moral habits at home. 3) To increase the effectiveness of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project, especially the "Morality" project, a more contextual approach is needed. Activities such as visits to orphanages or ecological activities can deepen students' understanding through direct experience. Collaboration between schools and families is also necessary, such as: 1) Islamic parenting programs in the form of workshops for parents on strategies for strengthening moral values at home, such as family evaluation (muhasabah). 2) A shared digital platform in the form of a WhatsApp group to share good practices, such as video recordings of students helping their parents as a form of role modelling.

Based on the results of the study, there are several effective strategies for developing students' morals through the implementation of the independent learning curriculum:

1. Project Development with Integrated Moral Values

Learning projects designed with integrated moral values have been proven to develop students' morals. Projects related to social, environmental, and ethical issues offer students opportunities to develop moral values in a real-world context.

2. Reflective Learning Approach

Students are encouraged to reflect on their learning experiences and their implications for moral values, which has proven effective in developing students' awareness and understanding of moral values.

3. Collaboration between Schools, Families, and Communities

Collaboration among schools, families, and communities in implementing the independent learning curriculum has proven effective in developing students' moral (Sukmara, Kurahman, & Rusmana, 2024). This collaborative approach enables consistent moral character development in various contexts.

4. Mentoring and Guidance Programs

Students receive support and guidance from teachers or senior students, which has proven effective in developing students' moral character. This program provides personal support and role models for students.

This study faced several obstacles. First, external variables, such as the influence of the family environment and social media, cannot be controlled, which may affect the internal validity of the research. Second, the several-month research period may be insufficient to measure the formation of long-term character. Third, the use of retrospective questionnaires in the research risks recall bias, especially among students who have difficulty remembering the conditions before the implementation of the independent learning curriculum. External challenges that can be prevented include the influence of social media, with its proliferation of negative content that contradicts Islamic values, and the lack of family involvement.

The findings of this study emphasise that curriculum transformation requires not only structural changes but also a more comprehensive approach. This approach includes: 1) synergy between schools, families, and communities in creating a consistent educational environment, 2) spiritual-emotional education designed as a process of soul purification, not merely a transfer of knowledge, and 3) a curriculum that is responsive to the challenges of the times, such as digital literacy and the identity crisis faced by future generations.

Thus, the independent learning curriculum has not had a significant impact on students' moral development. Given that the goal of implementing an independent curriculum is to develop students' character, its implementation in schools must be

maximised. Although the results of this study are not significant, it is in line with the research hypothesis, namely that the implementation of the independent learning curriculum influences the moral development of 11th-grade students at SMA N 1 Kalasan.

## CONCLUSION

Data analysis shows that the effect of implementing the independent learning curriculum has not been as expected, namely, improving students' character. The results of the Paired-Samples T-Test indicate that there is no significant difference in scores before and after the implementation of the independent learning curriculum. The N-Gain Score calculation results show an average of -5.1470%, which is classified as ineffective because it falls in the <40% range. Based on these results, it can be concluded that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted. In other words,  $H_a$ , that there is an effect of implementing the independent learning curriculum on the moral development of grade XI students at SMA N 1 Kalasan, is accepted.

## DECLARATIONS

I hereby declare that the journal article entitled "The Effect of Implementing the Independent Learning Curriculum on the Morality of Students at SMA N 1 Kalasan, Sleman, Yogyakarta" is an original scientific work that I have compiled based on theoretical studies, analysis, and research results that have been conducted. This article is not a plagiarised work of others in any form, either in part or in whole, except for those that are explicitly quoted and cited according to scientific writing standards.

I also declare that this article has never been submitted or published in any other scientific journal in any form. If in the future there is a violation of this statement, it will be entirely my responsibility as the author.

I hereby make this declaration truthfully so that it can be used as intended.

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