Transformation of Islamic Education: A Study of Changes in The Transformation of The Education Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – This study aims to identify the best implementation strategies in transformative Islamic education, explore transformative Islamic education activities that can inspire transformative learning, and analyze the transformation of Islamic education in Indonesia through curriculum transformation.

Design/methods/approach – This research approach uses library research. Literature studies are obtained from various sources such as scientific journals, books, seminar papers, and related publications. The paradigm of data analysis in this research uses content analysis which includes data collection, reduction, presentation and drawing conclusions.

Findings – The researchers obtained three findings in this study. First, there are two best implementation strategies when implementing transformative education: A). To offer critical thinking opportunities b). To offer opportunities to act from a new perspective. Second, there are five transformative educational activities that can inspire transformative learning, including: a). Job shadowing; B). Scenario-based education; C). Cultural adaptation in the workplace; D). Career change; and e). Establish cooperation with various educational institutions. Third, one of the education transformations that has been carried out in Indonesia is by transforming the curriculum starting in 1947, 1964, 1968, 1973, 1975, 1984, 1994, 1997, 2004, 2006, 2013, and current curriculum. The independent learning (self-regulated learning) curriculum has reached its 22nd episode

Research Implications/Limitations – Data sources are limited to online and offline scientific literature. Future researchers can use in-depth interview and observation techniques to make the results more reliable

Originality/value – The findings of this study provide an overview of implementation strategies and transformative Islamic education activities in a new perspective.

Introduction

The situation of educational degradation is increasingly felt by everyone, demanding the need to make changes, especially in behavior. The current era is a form of encouragement to make changes, changes in human structure, values, norms, and behavior. According to Tilaar, three main factors have caused changes in society (Tilaar, 2002), namely the need for democratization, scientific development, and globalization. The form of change occurs directly, requiring us to make individual changes, in this case through an institution that we usually call education, the quality of life which makes and helps us to survive or have competitiveness. Therefore, through one of them, education, we will not be left behind globally. As we expect today, the advancement of information and technology factors makes it easier for us to get access (Utami, 2010) both locally and intellectually, whether in terms of capital, investment, and information about development. Human resources that exist through education (Ningrum, 2016) thus encourage us to be more competitive in the international world, which in the end automatically requires the world of education to carry out many transformations or changes that can answer those demands. Also, the educational world has had a big contribution in terms of making changes (Putro, 2018) , especially its readiness to receive competitiveness so that the world of education can survive (Tahir, 2017) through tricks and intrigues that will be developed by making many changes in the field of science and technology (Lestari, 2018). The change referred to in this case is a change towards something better (Mashabi, 2018) with institutional cohesiveness (Mashabi, 2018) in developing everything that can answer the demands of the times.

Education is, in addition to being the right of every citizen, (Sujatmoko, 2016) also a very strategic tool in building a better society. Still, it cannot be separated from the intervention of policymakers in education, in this case, the government, institutions as a unit, the implementers, and also various cross-stakeholders within. The phenomenon that occurs today does not seem able to satisfy customers, requiring fundamental transformations or changes to make, allowing customers to feel satisfied. One way to make changes is through educational institutions by improving the quality of facilities and infrastructure, teaching staff, as well as tools that support learning activities.

Problems that occur due to customer satisfaction have not been answered (Azizah & Witri, 2021), proven by the still many problems in the field of education like curriculum changes (YM Rahayu, 2016) with various existing policies seem unable to control the orders from the organization that instruct them, for example, many policies that often change before significant changes occur in the world of education which in the end It seems chaotic or erratic, making the implementers of this policy in human resources are not ready for this change. It will also have an impact on output readiness in facing changing times, especially readiness when they are in the business world. It is also from here where social problems arise due to intense competition in the business world, such as poverty, increasing unemployment, crime, and degradation of empathy for the environment. Currently, there are many policy changes in the field of education, especially policies related to learning techniques. They happen due to one of many interests of education

policymakers. Even worse, the changes of stakeholders to replace new policies, when in reality old policies have been replaced. The new policy remains oriented toward change for the better, however, policy implementers feel unprepared, tend to complain, and inevitably have to continue implementing the new existing policy. The results, of course, cannot be optimal. Policymakers should issue new policies without leaving the substance of the old policy so that there is still a sequence or follow-up of the old policy, making it not confusing for the implementers and easier to adjust in carrying out any change. This research is highly crucial to do since the current condition of education requires a breakthrough for its development. Also, the study results can be used by policymakers and education implementers to face current challenges (Nur Hidayat, 2010), to empower learners (Husniyah & Ramadhanisnaini, 2022), to improve the quality of education (Suhardiyanto, 2009), to increase needs, and to deal with social, technological and economic changes occurring at the global level. Moreover, they can also be used to answer questions regarding the transformation. The education curriculum can identify relevant issues (Sukirman, 2021), such as radicalization, extremism, human rights, and pluralism, and assist in developing appropriate approaches to overcome these challenges through education.

Another problem that is practically faced is that frequent changes to the curriculum impact the competencies of existing graduates. On the one hand, graduates get a variety of new knowledge information, but on the other hand, graduates also need complete and in-depth information. This will affect the quality of graduates' competencies.

Responding to change, Nadiem stated during the commemoration of National Education Day, Move Simultaneously, Achieve Independent Learning (Saragih, 2021) "A new chapter in Indonesian education means transformation," said the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia who emphasized that the expected transition must be based on the nation's historical calendar and have the courage to create new historical glory. He explained, there are four continuous improvement efforts with various elements of the company. First, improve infrastructure and technology. Second, improve policies, procedures, and funding, as well as give greater autonomy to educational institutions. "Third, strengthen leadership, society. and culture. And, fourth, improve curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment," continued Minister of Research and Technology Nadiem Makarim, in the episode launching Merdeka Learning, and there will be more independent breakthroughs in the future. The Ministry of Education and Culture will conduct the review. We carry out this meaningful transformation so that everything that has stagnated so far in this country can turn into a leap," such as during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 crisis has allowed us to make progress. And this is not the only challenge we face, for in the future, we will face other crises have to deal with. We must understand that the pandemic is not the only challenge we face, Nadiem said. In the future, there are still many challenges that we will and must overcome together. Let's overcome all challenges with innovation and solutions. Let's make glorious history in the world.

The research questions of this study are what implementation strategy is most appropriate in transformative Islamic education? What forms of transformative Islamic

education activities can inspire transformative learning? And, how has the education transformation been carried out through curriculum transformation?

Methods

This study uses a library research approach. Literature-based research is a type of research that studies literature. (Sawarjuwono, T., 2004) by analyzing literature studies related to the transformation of Islamic education and studies on changes in the transformation of the educational curriculum. Literature studies are obtained from various sources such as scientific journals, books, seminar papers, and other publications related to the research topic. In the early stages of research, researchers determined keywords relevant to the research topic, such as "education transformation", "Islamic education", "curriculum change", "educational curriculum," and "curriculum transformation". After that, the researchers searched for related literature sources using online databases such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Publish or Perish, WOS, Beliefe search engine, and JSTOR. Once obtaining relevant literature sources, researchers made selections using certain inclusion and exclusion criteria. If the researchers found relevant literature sources of good quality, they further analyzed and synthesized them. The data obtained from the literature study were then analyzed descriptively by grouping the main themes and subthemes related to the transformation of Islamic education through the study of changes in the Islamic education curriculum. Literature study data were evaluated using interactive qualitative models. This data analysis paradigm includes data collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing (Rijali, 2019). Technical analysis uses content analysis to explore in depth the data obtained according to the study theme. The researchers discussed and concluded the analysis results to provide a comprehensive picture of the transformation of Islamic education through the study of changes in the educational curriculum. By using a literature research approach, researchers can explore and gain a broader understanding of the research topic by accessing related literature sources. This approach also allows researchers to discover the strengths and weaknesses of existing literature studies and builds a framework for further research.

Results and Discussion

The research findings illustrate that there have been many changes in the transformation of the Indonesian education curriculum. The changes made are adjustments to educational conditions based on scientific needs and community needs, especially in the world of work, following the competencies and fields of knowledge possessed. Four essential themes were found: the foundation of educational transformation, Educational Transformation in Curriculum Evolution, the emergence of the Independent Curriculum, and the superiority of the independent curriculum.

1. Foundations of Education Transformation

Transformative education is a change in education where the change leads to a better direction. According to Freire (Rosmilawati, 2017) transformative educationis education

that is displayed at critical value in seeing a social reality, this view can be embodied when someone has a critical awareness to not only agree to social inequality takes place. Jack Mezirow was an American sociologist who continued his education at Teachers College (Sinaga, 2014), Columbia University. He argued that transformative education, as quoted by Nur Effendi, is an activity oriented towards changing one's frame or reference. The frame of reference is understood as the assumed structure that a person uses to see, understand, and interpret life experiences. Mezirow abandoned the transformative theory he developed in 2000. He started this theory in 1978 (Rosmilawati, 2017) while studying adult women who decided to re-enter higher education. Through initial research and further study, he concluded that individuals do not apply old ways to learn new situations. (Nasukah & Winarti, 2021) Instead, they find the need to gain a new way of looking at something to better understand changes in an event.

Several components can be drawn from the theory left by Mezirow, including (Rosmilawati, 2017):

a. Critical reflection. Individuals need to think critically about their experiences, which in turn leads to a transformation of perspective. This process increases self-awareness and promotes a deeper level of self-understanding.

b. Centrality of experience. This component of transformative learning theory refers to experiences that can result in transformative learning. It is presented in theory in the form of discussions with others, focusing on personal and social beliefs and assumptions, which are carried out logically and rationally to point out biases, blind spots, or differences that allow individuals to consciously overcome them.

c. Rational discourse. In the final component of Mezirow's transformative learning theory, such experiences would include what people do, what they believe, what they can endure, how or the way they react to certain situations, what they are willing to suffer from, and want their perspectives, dreams, and beliefs. Simply put, this component describes their life story so far and the experiences they have.

Regarding the transformation of Islamic education, it is, of course, inseparable from the transformational education that has been taught by the prophets and messengers of Allah, as well as the short-term transformation as the hadith narrated by Al-Hakim, requiring us to continuously transform for the better. If not, we are considered losers, or even worse, wretched people if we are worse than yesterday (Kurniawan, 2015). It contains the purpose of an educational transformation, namely to self-prepare for better changes and to keep on striving to survive in dealing with the development of the times. The theory of transformation in Islam is very futuristic and very capable of responding to the development of the times. In addition to hadith, there is also the Qur'an surah al-Baqarah verse 218 which means "*Verily those who believe, those who do hijrah, and do jihad in the cause of Allah, they expect the mercy of Allah, and Allah is the most forgiving and the most merciful.*" It means faith, hijra, and jihad, or we commonly call them faith, change, and struggle.

The above principles must go hand in hand to achieve the goal, namely the happiness of the world and the hereafter. Starting from the belief that the goal is achievable, then transformation is highly essential to do. The reason is that without the transformation process, the goal will not be achieved. They cannot be achieved optimally and change is also impossible to achieve without having a belief as a foundation at first. In QS. ar-Ra'du:11 (Habibi, 2016) Allah SWT stated the meaning, "*Verily Allah will not change the condition of a people before they change the situation that exists in themselves.*" Transformation is one of the principles in life, especially in the world of education, which must be interpreted correctly (Maulani, 2019). We can do transformation if two things are met, namely, some are left behind and some are goals, and both must be fulfilled if education is to make changes. Therefore, we can draw a common thread that the transformation of Islamic education is a form of education that focuses on the form of change with the spirit of progress in a better direction to make the vision and mission of Islamic education into realization (Sholeh et al., 2023). Some phases that can be the basis of educational transformation are, among others, the Disorienting dilemmas, (Insiyah, 2018). Self-examination of Critical assessment of assumptions, Recognition that others have shared similar transformations, Exploration of new roles or actions, Development of action plans, Acquisition of knowledge and skills to implement such plans, (Joyce & Showers, 2003), Trying out the plan, Developing competence and confidence in new roles, and reintegration into life based on new perspectives.

Some stages that can be the basis for educational transformation include:

a. Disorienting dilemmas, (Insiyah, 2018) where one's current meaning structure is incompatible with previous experiences, causing a confusing dilemma.

b. Self-examination is a phase or place After a confusing dilemma, learners self-test their beliefs and understanding and think about how past experiences relate to current problems. A person who is learning gains a new perspective when they realize that their perspectives may not be the same or the only point of view.

c. Critical assumption assessment, in which past assumptions need to be assessed, critically reviewed, and checked for validity. It will help them accept that some of their assumptions are wrong and keep an open mind to new information.

d. Recognition that others have shared similar transformations. An employee can realize that one's dissatisfaction in the process of transformation is shared and others also experience a similar situation.

e. Explore new roles or actions. In the process of educational transformation, individuals can seek new roles that correspond to new skills. They also create deeper relationships with coworkers while looking for them to help complete tasks in new positions.

f. Development of action plans While following the path of educational transformation, we must also build confidence in belief and understanding. This allows individuals to make their own decisions.

g. Acquisition of knowledge and skills to implement plans, (Joyce & Showers, 2003) After understanding how past beliefs may be false or misguided, employees gain perspective transformation and plan for actions. This plan demands the kind of learning necessary to fully understand the situation.

h. Trying out the plan. This is where the real learning happens as individuals carry out their plans further in their transformational learning. It takes hard work and a lot of effort to learn new things and consider new perspectives.

i. Developing competence and confidence in new roles. The key to success in transformational learning is exploration and trying to comprehend all the changes. That is beyond regular learning, yet actively working to gain new experiences.

j. Reintegration into life following a new perspective, These phases allow individuals to successfully integrate them into their life based on a new perspective as people develop an implementation plan. They acquire the knowledge and skills needed for this plan.

From the various developmental phases of educational transformation, (Abidin & Walida, 2017), in this case, educational institutions, one of which is madrasah, also go through various phases (Anwar, 2014), producing students that can answer the development of the times. Madrasah has a crucial role in preparing students (Prastowo, 1970) to deal with the changing times due to uncertain development. The success of madrasah in preparing students to face more complex future challenges will produce graduates who have a competitive advantage and become community leaders (Amadin, 2020), the leaders of the nation who also determines the direction of the nation's development. In the era of globalization and free trade that is full of competition, madrasah must also prepare their students to be ready to compete in whatever world they enter. The purpose is to make madrasah graduates won't be marginalized by other public school graduates in the struggle for places and roles in the nation-developing movement. Producing graduates that have a global outlook, madrasah must prepare their students to continue studying and working overseas. For this reason, mastery of foreign language skills (especially Arabic and English) becomes very essential, as well as the cultural introduction. Islamic education in Madrasah is an education that has distinctive characteristics (Hardiyanto, 2016), not only presenting religious subjects. It means that these characteristics are not just presenting Islamic religious subjects in madrasah institutions, but more importantly the embodiment of Islamic values in the totality of madrasah life. Madrasah has a characteristic that is not merely the presentation of religious subjects, (Akhwan, 2008) meaning that this characteristic not only presents Islamic religious subjects in madrasah institutions but more importantly is the embodiment of Islamic values in the totality of madrasa life. 2023). Madrasah, as a term for an institution or forum that accommodates the process of knowledge transformation, has experienced a development of meaning in the historical range of Muslim development since the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW up to date. Madrasah is interpreted as a term that refers to the learning process from informal to formal.

Disorienting dilemmas occur in educational environments when individuals or trainees are given space for critical analysis of new ideas and developments. There is no instant or accurate way to apply theory to all lines of education. Therefore, the application of theory must be assessed with resilience. Despite the fact that the application process may vary depending on the institution or the team capabilities, we can find some of the main conclusions from the application of the theory below.

a. Appropriate learning conditions emphasize trust in the learning environment (S. Arifin, 2017). In this theory, a trusted environment is a facilitator in education and learning.

b. The theory supports a learner-centered approach. (Anggraeni, 2019) In addition, it facilitates effective learning methods, student independence, collaboration, and participation during the transformative educational process.

c. Activities that support critical reflection of the individual (Fakhriyah, 2014) are essential in education.

The following are two of the best implementation strategies to consider when implementing transformative education:

a. Offer critical thinking opportunities. Critical thinking opportunities are presented through the introduction of new ideas or opinions. Educators work with the latest content and discuss with colleagues while critically reflecting on their assumptions and beliefs.

b. Offer the opportunity to act from a new perspective. With newfound beliefs, educators should be allowed to apply them. One of the indications of a successful transformation is when an employee actively acknowledges their new opinion. Transformative experiences give individuals the ability to reflect on situations or things that others assume or are not aware of and make decisions that have a purpose. (Fitriana & Khoiri Ridlwan, 2021) Mezirow's learner-centered theory provides learners with critical ways to consciously interpret their lives.

Some examples of transformative educational activities that can inspire transformative learning in an organization include:

a. Job shadowing

One of the most common examples of transformative learning is gaining knowledge of the responsibilities involved and gaining practical experience in senior member roles that are in your desired position. (Rony et al., 2019). Job shadowing is a form of training in which an employee follows more experienced colleagues and observes how they perform in their roles. The most common use of job shadowing (Mader et al., 2018). is during the induction process where new hires can sit down and learn from their new colleagues. An ideal opportunity to learn new ways of working (Ghufron, 2018) and especially the perspective of more experienced people without overwhelming them with mentoring programs or long

training sessions. (Fachruddin et al., 2020) If you are thinking of adding job shadowing into your training routine, there will be several advantages, including a deeper understanding of the role, Opportunities to learn new skills and ways of working, Professional Development, Networking between educational institutions, Building relationships between staff, Trainers will know what problems to expect, (Fathurrochman, 2019) Trainees can learn solutions to potential problems, Trainers will know what hard skills and soft skills they need, (*Proceedings* , 2013) Perspectives on how educational institutions can run. By having your new employee shadow someone during their training, you'll have plenty of opportunities to contact them. Having a fresh perspective, they can bring new ideas to increase productivity. (Iim Ibrohim dkk., 2020).

b. Scenario-based education

Good transformative education is when educators develop skills (Imron et al., 2021) and abilities (Susanto et al., 2015) through scenario-based opportunities in safe environments conducted by senior members of educational institutions.

c. Cultural adaptation at work

Thanks to Internet enhancement, educational institutions get the opportunity to work with different teams based around the globe (Ghufron, 2018). To make teams in these educational institutions work together effectively, they need to understand the cultural differences of their co-workers. (Wiradharma, 2021) Thus, exposing employees to different cultural experiences can facilitate the expansion of their worldviews and help them apply empathy, compassion, and respect for diversity.

d. Career change

Experiencing a career change can have a radical effect on individuals (Djati, 2016) and change their perspective (Heridiansyah, 2014). This is because the individual will gain a wider experience of an entirely new environment, which can then be compared to previous experiences. It can ultimately change their perspective on things they didn't really think or believe at first. One example is when an employee is promoted to a higher position within their department. When such career advancement happens, they gain new information, have greater responsibility, and begin to see things differently. For example, one good scenario is when an employee believes that a certain part of the business is too restrictive, or that there is an easier way to do something to speed up a certain process, only the employee realizes that this is not true. The way they originally think and post promotion.

e. Establish cooperation with various educational institutions

Working with different departments within a company can improve employees' knowledge, understanding, and ability to work differently. (Cintamulya, nd) This collaboration can also facilitate the development of various perspectives of employees who come from different backgrounds.

2. Education Transformation in the Curriculum Evolution

The curriculum is at the core of the educational process. (Astuti et al., 2018) The curriculum is the area that most directly influences educational outcomes. (Pranata & Wijoyo, 2020) The curriculum determines the process and outcome of an education system. The curriculum can also function as a medium to achieve goals as well as a guideline in the teaching implementation at all types and all levels of education. (Ritonga, 2018)

Indonesia has undergone many curriculum changes, including 1947, 1964, 1968, 1973, 1975, 1984, 1994, 1997, 2004, 2006, and 2013 curricula (Farid Setiawan, 2022), as well as the independent (self-regulated) curricula. Curriculum changes are often influenced by political factors. For example, the 1964 Curriculum was structured to eliminate MANIPOL-USDEK, the 1975 Curriculum was used to include Pancasila Moral Education and the 1984 Curriculum was used to include the subject of National Struggle History Education (PSPB). The 1994 curriculum, in addition to eliminating the PSPB, also introduced a high school curriculum that made general education a preparatory education towards higher education. (Pratwi, 2019)

The curriculum used in Indonesia is influenced by the socio-political order. (Sadewa, nd) The colonies that inhabited Indonesian territories also influenced the education system in this country. The Dutch education system was governed by strict procedures ranging from student regulations, instructors, teaching systems, and curriculum. (Illahi et al., 2021) This type of procedural system is very different from the procedural system in the Islamic education system known earlier. The Dutch education system was also discriminatory. Schools were formed by distinguishing education between Dutch children, foreign Eastern children, and native children. This indigenous group was further divided into lower class and noble society. (Nasution, 2020)

Indigenous children's schools for non-*priyayi* (non-noble society) groups used local language teaching called 3-year Village School (Prayudi et al., 2014). Those who completed it could continue to the Connection School (Vervolg School) for two years. From here, they could continue to *Sekolah Guru Adat* or Mulo for four years, a flagship school for ordinary indigenous people. As for noble indigenous people, they could enroll in His Inlandsche School for seven years, Mulo for three years, and Algemene Middlebare School (AMS) for three years.

During the 77 years of Indonesian independence, there were many curriculum changes. In detail, during the Old Order (Orla) or the era of President Soekarno, there were three curriculum changes, namely RPP (Curriculum) 1947, RPP 1964 (Curriculum), and SD 1968. School Curriculum (Rima, 2022).

In the New Order (New Order) or the era of President Soeharto's administration, there were six curriculum changes, namely the 1973 Development School Pioneer Project Curriculum (PPSP), 1975 Elementary School Curriculum, 1975 Curriculum, 1984

Curriculum, 1994 Curriculum, and 1994 Curriculum. Curriculum Revision 1994. 1997 (Uce, 2016).

After the New Order era ended or the beginning of the reform period, there were four curriculum changes, namely the Competency-Based Curriculum (KBK) 2004, the Curriculum at the Unit Level (KTSP) 2006, K13 2013 (Daeng Pawero, 2018), and the recent one the independent curriculum launched by the Minister of Education and Culture in February 2022. (Ayundasari, 2018)

Looking at the length of time the curriculum was in effect, we can note the 1947 RPP (Curriculum) was the oldest curriculum that had not changed in the post-independence period or Orla era, which was for 17 years. During the New Order period, the longest 1984 curriculum was recorded in its time, which was for ten years. While the KTSP curriculum was the longest curriculum throughout the reform period, which was seven years. In contrast, the Primary School Plan (Curriculum) was Orla's shortest lifetime curriculum, only for four years. During the New Order era, the PSPP curriculum was recorded as the shortest curriculum, which was only for three years. The KBK pilot curriculum was the top shortest curriculum of all time, during the reform era and this republic was only for two years, followed by the 2013 curriculum (K13), and the last one was the Merdeka curriculum in 2022.

3. *Merdeka* Curriculum 2022 – present

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology launched the *Merdeka* Curriculum for up to 22 episodes as a series of *Merdeka Belajar* policies, (Baharuddin, 2021), *Merdeka* Curriculum, and *Merdeka Belajar* Foundation on February 11, 2022. (, Aas Nur Asnawati2, nd) Before widely launched, since the 2021/2022 school year, the Mandiri Curriculum was implemented in nearly 2,500 schools that have participated in the *Sekolah Penggerak* Program (PSP) as part of learning with a new paradigm. The *Mandiri* Curriculum is a curriculum with various intracurricular learning whose content will be more optimal, allowing students to have sufficient time to explore concepts and strengthen competencies. Teachers have the flexibility to choose various teaching devices to adjust learning to students' learning needs and interests. (Simanjuntak & Saragih, 2021.) Starting in 2022/2023, education units can choose to implement a curriculum based on individual readiness, starting from kindergarten B, Class I, Class IV, VII, and X. Darlis et al., 2021) To measure the readiness of education units, the government prepares questionnaires to help education units assess their readiness using the *Mandiri* Curriculum (Nurmasyitah et al., 2020). There are several advantages to implementing this curriculum, (Oksari et al., 2022), including:

a. Simpler and deeper

   The *Merdeka* Curriculum focuses more on essential material and student competency development at its stages. The learning process is expected to be more profound, meaningful, unhurried, and fun.

b. More independent

For students, especially at the high school level, there are no specialization programs, accordingly, students choose subjects according to their interests, talents, and aspirations. Teachers are also expected to teach according to the stages of student achievement and development. Moroever, schools have the authority to develop and manage learning curricula following the characteristics of educational units and students.

c. More relevant and interactive

Learning through project activities provides wider opportunities for students to actively explore actual issues, such as the environment, health, and other issues to support character development and competence in the Pancasila Student Profile.

According to the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim, the presence of the Free Curriculum is expected to overcome the education crisis in Indonesia by producing a generation that is adaptive to the changing times. (Suhartono, 2021) The positive impacts of implementing the Mandiri Curriculum are, among others:

a. Creating a Positive Learning Space

The implementation of the *Mandiri* Curriculum prioritizes essential learning and following the interests or talents of students. This essential learning concept generates constructive interaction, forming or establishing a more positive learning space where teachers *teach at the right level and students gain knowledge at the right level.*

b. Changing the Education System for the Better

One of the uniqueness of the *Merdeka* Curriculum is that it contains several episodes with different program focuses but is still synergistic. This synergy can change the education system in Indonesia for the better and higher quality.

c. Producing More Competent Teachers

The Teacher Mobilization Program is part of the government's efforts to produce teachers who are competent and can continuously develop following the demands of the times. This means that the *Mandiri* Curriculum does not only focus on improving student competencies but also on developing teacher competencies.

The advantages of the *Merdeka* Curriculum can be seen from the side of students, teachers, and schools.

a. The advantages of Merdeka Curriculum for Students (Kurniati et al., 2022) have several advantages as follows.

1) Students are not forced to study subjects they do not like. They can choose what subjects they want to study according to their interests and talents.
2) Learning feels more fun because it is adjusted to the level of student competence at each stage.
3) Learners are not forced or rushed to master a subject.
4) Students will be accustomed to applying critical thinking through project-based learning involving the Pancasila Student Profile

b. The advantages of the Merdeka Curriculum for Teachers (Wiguna & Tristaningrat, 2022) are as follows.

1) Teachers can determine their own teaching tools suitable for the conditions of their students.
2) Teachers can teach at the right conditions or teach at the right level because learning refers to the CP phase.
3) Teachers get closer to their students through non-cognitive diagnostic assessments.
4) Teachers become more creative and innovative because they must be able to develop attractive teaching tools for their students.

c. The advantages of the Merdeka Curriculum for Schools (R. Rahayu et al., 2022) The following are some strengths of the Mandiri Curriculum seen from the School point of view.

1) Schools are given the freedom to determine the learning system suitable for school conditions.
2) School is a place to form excellent educator human resources through teaching equipment development activities.
3) Schools can map their level of readiness in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum.
4) Schools receive assistance from the government as part of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation

The characteristics of the Merdeka curriculum (Siti Solekah, 2022) include

1) Soft skills and character development. Developing soft skills and character through strengthening the profile of Pancasila students.
2) Focus on important material. Focus on essential, relevant, and in-depth materials, allowing sufficient time to develop student's creativity and innovation in achieving basic competencies, such as literacy and numeracy.
3) Flexible learning. Freedom for teachers to carry out learning according to the achievements and stages of development of each student and make adjustments to local contexts and content.

4. The Advantages of Merdeka Curriculum Compared to the 2013 Curriculum (K13)

The curriculum development program aims to refine the previous curriculum. Similarly, the *Mandiri* Curriculum is a complement to the 2013 Curriculum. Then, the advantages of this curriculum compared to the 2013 Curriculum are, among others:

a. No specialization program
   In the 2013 Curriculum, students at the high school level or equivalent are required to choose specializations, such as Science, Social Studies, or Language. The specialization system is no longer put in place in the *Merdeka* Curriculum. In this

curriculum, students are given the freedom to choose subject groups according to their interests and talents.

b. Allocation of Learning Hours

One of the advantages of the *Merdeka* Curriculum compared to the 2013 Curriculum is the allocation of study hours that is calculated per year, not as previously per week.

c. Learning Objectives

Learning objectives in the 2013 Curriculum are determined per year or grade level. While in the *Merdeka* Curriculum, learning outcomes are determined per phase, namely within 2-3 years. It means that students are given more time to achieve the ultimate goal of learning without feeling rushed.

d. Teachers' Freedom

In the *Merdeka* Curriculum, teachers are given the freedom to determine teaching devices that are appropriate to the conditions of their students. It is certainly different from the 2013 Curriculum whose teaching tools are sacred.

From the discussion, it can be concluded that the *Mandiri* Curriculum provides freedom for every educational actor to develop themselves according to their interests and talents to improve competence.

Conclusion

There are some of the best implementation strategies to consider when implementing transformative education. Offer critical thinking opportunities. Critical thinking opportunities are presented through the introduction of new ideas or opinions. Educators work with up-to-date content and discuss with colleagues while critically reflecting on their assumptions and beliefs. Offer the opportunity to act from a new perspective. Some transformative educational activities that can inspire transformative learning in an organization are job shadowing. Scenario-based education. Cultural adaptation at work. Career change. Establish cooperation with various educational institutions. One of the educational transformations that has been carried out in Indonesia is by transforming the curriculum as it began in 1947, 1964, 1968, 1973, 1975, 1984, 1994, 1997, 2004, 2006, 2013, and today. The Belajar Mandiri Curriculum has reached its 22nd episode.

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