IMPLEMENTATION OF INDEPENDENT LEARNING CURRICULUM AS A 21st CENTURY LEARNING MODEL IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Dwi Lutfi Nur Anisa*
UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah, Jawa Timur, Indonesia
*corresponding author: dwilutfinur17@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:
This study aims to describe the implementation of independent learning curriculum in higher institutions. The independent learning curriculum is newly implemented to respond to the needs of industry 4.0. The Independent learning curriculum is implemented by applying student-centred learning. Students are free to choose the field of science they are interested in even though they are cross-departmental. The method used is a systematic review using the prism method by analyzing research manuscripts. The steps in a systematic review using the Prisma model include; defining eligibility criteria, defining sources of information, selecting literature, collecting data, and selecting data items. Based on the results of the review, it was found that the independent learning curriculum can answer the challenges of industry 4.0. The implementation of the independent learning curriculum is carried out through three aspects, namely, 1) collaboration of the campus curriculum with the independent learning curriculum, 2) the availability of learning facilities, and 3) the development of learning tools. The fulfilment of these three aspects will positively impact the multidisciplinary competence of students.

ARTICLE HISTORY:
Received: 28 June 2022
Accepted: 16 November 2022
Published: 30 November 2022

KEYWORDS:
ABSTRAK:
Kurikulum merdeka belajar merupakan kurikulum baru yang dilaksanakan dengan tujuan menjawab kebutuhan industri 4.0. kurikulum merdeka belajar dilaksanakan dengan menerapkan pembelajaran berfokus pada mahasiswa (student centered). Mahasiswa diberikan kebebasan memilih bidang ilmu yang diminati meski lintas jurusan. Metode yang digunakan yakni systematic review menggunakan model prisma dengan menganalisis manuskrip hasil riset. Langkah-langkah dalam systematic review dengan menggunakan metode prisma antara lain; mendefinisikan kriteria kelayakan, mendefinisikan sumber informasi, pemilihan literatur, pengumpulan data, dan pemilihan item data. Berdasarkan hasil review didapatkan bahwa kurikulum merdeka belajar dapat menjawab pertanyaan terkait industri 4.0. Penerapan kurikulum merdeka belajar melalui tiga aspek yaitu, 1) kolaborasi kurikulum kampus dengan kurikulum merdeka belajar, 2) ketersediaan sarana pembelajaran, dan 3) pengembangan perangkat pembelajaran. Terpenuhinya ketiga aspek tersebut akan memberikan dampak baik bagi kompetensi multidisiplin ilmu mahasiswa.


INTRODUCTION

Education is a parameter used to measure a country's quality of human resources. A good education can be solved from the curriculum composition applied in each learning process (Zulwisli et al., 2022). A good curriculum will give birth to ideas, ideas, and critical and creative thinking skills in students as the main subject in improving human resources (Mardhiyah et al., 2021). The Law of the Republic of Indonesia (2003) states that the curriculum is a set of learning plans related to objectives, content, teaching materials, and methods used and used as guidelines in organizing learning activities to achieve a national education goal.

Indonesia always strives to organize and improve the education curriculum in realising national education goals. In 2020, the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology provided a new formula to improve the education curriculum known as the independent curriculum. The independent learning curriculum has the main concept in its application: independent learning in thinking, independent learning to innovate, independent and creative learning, and learning for happiness (Daga, 2021). The independent learning curriculum is here to answer the needs of each student in meeting their competency needs within him. So the teacher can interpret the independent learning curriculum as a step in meeting student learning needs (Izza et al., 2020). The freedom in question is a reduction in Basic Competence in each
subject to allow teachers to focus more on essential competencies for students at the next level of learning (Kurniati et al., 2022).

In addition to meeting students' learning needs, implementing the independent learning curriculum is also a manifestation of the government's seriousness in responding to the challenges of education in the 21st century. The importance of developing a curriculum based on the needs of the 21st century is explained by Van et al. (2020), which state that graduates of educational institutions, especially universities, should produce generations with 21st-century skills. In line with Clementi & Terrill (2017), the American Council on The Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) sets World-Readiness Standards, which focus on literacy, real-world applications and 21st-century skills as global skills to build students' skills in communicating effectively. Uzoamaka (2021) explains the 21st-century skills, which consist of 6C: Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Citizenship/Culture, and Character Education/Connectivity. 21st-century skills divided into 6C play an important role in developing the independent learning curriculum in Indonesia: critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, citizenship/culture and character education/connectivity.

In practice, in meeting the needs of the 21st century, the curriculum has a role in increasing student competencies, including the competence to think, act and live in the world (Putriani & Hudaiah, 2021). Thinking competence is that students can solve the problems they face by applying the concept of critical and creative thinking. Acting competence is the competency of students in responding to changes in the world, one of which is changes in technology, information, and communication. Competence to live in the world is that students can blend into social life, so they have responsibilities as social beings.

The independent learning curriculum was developed to create quality human beings, so they are ready to compete in various fields in life (Arviansyah & Shagena, 2022). In creating students who have competitiveness in various fields of life, this curriculum is presented for all students from elementary to tertiary education levels. The curriculum was also developed to produce generations of people who can understand the material that has been taught and then apply the knowledge gained in solving everyday life problems.
In practice, the independent learning curriculum in educational institutions can be used as a reference in applying learning models. The results of the study (Indarta et al., 2022) state that the independent learning curriculum has relevance to the 21st-century learning model, especially in fostering a social spirit in the era of society 5.0. It is characterized by implementing learning based on student needs (student centre). Learning based on student needs will provide an increase in student self-development. At a more distant level, today’s technological needs will be easily accessible due to increasingly qualified human thinking, so the knowledge obtained benefits humans. So with the implementation of the independent learning curriculum, it is hoped that capable human beings will be formed in society 5.0. That is, they can continue to develop side by side as fast as the development of artificial technology.

Other research discusses the implementation of the independent learning curriculum as a learning model for improving 21st-century abilities (Jufriadi et al., 2022). The 21st-century skills in question are communication, creativity, critical thinking and collaboration. The results of this study indicate that several programs in the independent learning curriculum at the tertiary level, such as the KKN-Thematic program, can improve student communication skills by 70.6% and collaboration skills by 83.3%. In addition, universities can increase student creativity by 75% in the teaching campus program. Meanwhile, in the teaching assistant program, students’ critical thinking skills increased by 71.2%.

In addition, the application of the independent learning curriculum can also be collaborated with other learning models, for example, the blended learning model. According to the results (Sadieda et al., 2022), it was stated that the mastery of learning mathematics increased after carrying out learning using the blended learning model in the independent curriculum.

In line with the results of observations at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah regarding the implementation of the independent curriculum, several programs were run solely to support the government in creating human resources that are beneficial to the environment and have 21st-century skills. Among these programs are KKN-Thematic programs, campus teaching, assistance teaching.

Based on the research description above, some of the information obtained is regarding the fulfilment of human skills in responding to society 5.0
through the independent learning curriculum, the implementation and benefits of the independent learning curriculum at the tertiary level, and compatibility in collaborating on the implementation of the independent learning curriculum with learning models. However, the research explanation above has not explained the application of the independent learning curriculum as a learning model in responding to the challenges of the 21st century. It is, therefore, necessary to examine more deeply the fusion of the implementation of the independent learning curriculum as a learning model.

So this article aims to examine some of the research results which reveal the success of the independent learning curriculum as a learning model in shaping 21st-century abilities for students so that it can be used as a reference/reference for teachers who experience problems in carrying out the learning process through the independent curriculum. This article discusses the role of the independent learning curriculum as a learning model and its application at the tertiary level.

**METHODS**

The research method used is a systematic review. The steps in the search are divided into several processes, namely identification, screening, eligibility, and included. The steps taken have been adjusted to the guidelines in PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews). PRISMA is a minimum evidence-based series aimed at helping authors report on various systematic reviews and meta-analyses that assess merit. PRISMA focuses on how authors can ensure transparent and complete reporting of this type of research (Welch et al., 2016).

A systematic review is conducted by analyzing research results in manuscripts obtained from nationally indexed google scholars, Elsevier, and ERIC. Literature research is targeted to be published within the last five years, counting from 5 articles published in SINTA 3, 4, and 5 as well as QUARTILE 3 and 4. Literature obtained from online databases is then processed using Mendeley tools. Literature was selected according to the theme raised, namely (1) Free Learning Curriculum as a 21st Century Learning Model and (2) Application of Free Learning Curriculum. The process of filtering articles according to the title of the research article can be seen in Figure 1.
FINDINGS

Based on the literature, research will describe the success of the independent learning curriculum as a 21st-century learning model. The learning model is a series of learning activities that contain learning methods and steps. The learning model in the 21st century gives students the freedom to explore knowledge based on their experiences. The selection of the learning model is
fully left to the teacher according to the needs of students in the learning process. In choosing a learning model, the teacher must pay attention to cultivating 21st-century skills, namely 4C, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

In practice, the implementation of the independent curriculum in tertiary institutions is based on observations at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. The implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum or MBKM has started to be prepared since 2021, starting with several activities, including a workshop on reviewing the MBKM curriculum, namely the activity of reviewing the IQF curriculum as the basis for designing the MBKM curriculum on campus. Then a coordination meeting was held in a national seminar attended by all ex-Sunan Ampel PTKIN consisting of leaders, lecturers, and other campus stakeholders. In addition, the campus participated in the FGD (Forum Group Discussion), which was attended by the Chancellor of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung and other PTKIN leaders to discuss current issues related to educational development and the MBKM curriculum.

This activity provides the opportunity to choose for UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah students to carry out the MBKM curriculum or stick with the regular curriculum. The programs students can follow in applying MBKM include the 512 scheme, teaching assistance in academic units, work practices, student exchanges, research implementation, humanitarian projects, independent projects, and implementation of Thematic KKN or MDB KKN (Building Sustainable Villages), and student entrepreneurship activities in collaboration with campus external parties.

DISCUSSION

Independent Learning Curriculum as a 21st-Century Learning Model

The independent learning curriculum provides freedom to explore knowledge with various activities that provide experiences for students. Likewise, the teacher for the learning model used but still paid attention to the skills needed by students in the 21st century, including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (Indarta et al., 2022).

The independent learning curriculum fulfils the needs of 21st-century skills, namely critical thinking. An independent learning curriculum that includes
the educational needs of adults (andragogy) referred to as students. The educational needs of andragogy are, 1) Adults tend to learn efficiently, meaning they want to take advantage of their learning outcomes immediately, and 2) Adults want to be active and contribute a lot to the learning process. The results of research by Siregar et al. (2020) showed that the independent learning curriculum prioritizes student activity (student-centred) in the learning process and problem-based learning (problem-solving) to foster critical thinking skills.

The independent learning curriculum fulfils the needs of 21st-century skills, namely communication. The independent learning curriculum also provides opportunities to build communication skills (Society 5.0). Suryaman (2020) states that mixed learning can foster 21st-century work skills by presenting a new role of literacy (Industrial Revolution 4.0) and communication (Society 5.0) in the collaboration of higher education curricula and learning curriculum.

The independent learning curriculum fulfils the 21st-century skill needs, namely collaboration. According to Faiz & Purwati (2021), the emergence of independent learning in education in Indonesia is a slice of the general education curriculum. The general education curriculum is a curriculum that, in its implementation, provides opportunities for students to collaborate between scientific fields. Independent learning programs that are relevant to the general education curriculum are 1) student exchanges, 2) building communication between students across campuses, and 3) conducting an educational process to cover educational disparities (Tohir, 2020). So the presence of an independent learning curriculum is one form of achieving challenges in the 21st century through collaboration between scientific fields.

The independent learning curriculum fulfils the needs of 21st-century skills, namely creativity. The experiential learning program is a program resulting from the adoption of an independent learning curriculum that is carried out to foster student creativity. Research by Sudaryanto et al. (2020) shows that experiential learning programs can facilitate students in thinking creatively in solving problems by involving practical experience. Experiential learning programs include teaching assistance, research/research, student exchanges, work internships, humanitarian projects, entrepreneurial activities, independent studies, and KKN.
Following the opinion of Indarta et al. (2022), an independent learning curriculum is a form of curriculum implementation in reaching 21st-century capabilities to form human resources that can adapt and compete. In instilling 21st-century skills, the independent learning curriculum is present by changing the learning model in the classroom to learning outside the classroom. The application of learning models outside the classroom will provide many opportunities for students to explore their knowledge through observing the environment and social order of the community.

Education in the 21st century demands the development of technology and knowledge from Indonesian human resources. Educators need to be professional in their duties and able to adapt according to the times to produce quality students who become human resources in the future. Students also need to be prepared to become human resources who are quick to adapt and able to compete in the world of work and to become skilled, capable, and creative human resources. This independent learning curriculum is adapted to the development of 21st-century education so that education in Indonesia is more advanced and builds higher-quality human resources.

**Implementation of the Independent Curriculum for learning in Higher Education**

At the higher education level, implementing the independent learning curriculum, or the independent learning campus, basically provides space for students to gain learning independence in tertiary institutions (Hasanah & Wijayanto, 2022). The implementation of independent learning focuses on servicing the fulfilment of the period and learning load as students' learning rights. The independent learning curriculum is a curriculum that holds the concept of eliminating the linearity paradigm in the scientific field. The elimination of the scientific linearity paradigm allows teachers and students to carry out the learning process broadly and comprehensively. However, interdisciplinary disciplines still maintain their identity. It's just that they are open to each other in discussion forums to continue to get various scientific studies in solving problems (Abdullah et al., 2014).

The United States also carried out the concept of eliminating the linearity paradigm through the implementation of an interdisciplinary education-based curriculum. The research results of Eaton et al. (2020) explain that the future of
educational reform in the 21st century lies in developing interdisciplinary collaborations from various scientific fields. The study's results explained that the implementation of interdisciplinary education found several obstacles, namely changes in the technological landscape, so brilliant ideas were needed to utilize technology in collaboration. Continued perseverance was needed to maintain the undergraduate education system in line with shifts in computing capacity and data acquisition and designing education to instil experience as an effort to increase equity. The challenges faced in implementing multidisciplinary education are considered to increase student readiness in facing the complexities of life's challenges.

Faiz & Kurniawaty (2020) state that the complexity of issues and problems in life forces each individual to have broad insights by collaborating in fields of knowledge without boundaries. Freedom of choice of study makes students competent in the field they are interested in. In line with Sopiansyah et al. (2022), the independent learning curriculum provides OBE (Outcome Based Education) based learning that focuses on competent tertiary graduates in the knowledge they acquired during college. It shows that the independent learning curriculum answers the challenges of technological developments that require each individual to have complex abilities in the field of science.

Through the implementation of the independent learning curriculum, it is intended to form the hard skills and soft skills of students as university graduates (Dirjen Dikti Kemendikbud, 2020). The independent learning policy is a step in changing the educational paradigm to become autonomous for Higher Education while maintaining an innovative and creative learning culture. In this case, the main assumption is giving trust to campuses or educators to freely apply multiple disciplines in addressing the needs of students or students in the learning process so that campuses or educators feel free to learn in carrying out learning (Sumarto, 2020).

The results of research by Hudjimartsu et al. (2021) regarding implementing the independent learning curriculum at UIKA's FTS were carried out through curriculum revitalization by forming student forums to make it easier to develop their competencies. The revitalization of the UIKA FTS curriculum includes internships in industry, independent studies, innovation talent, independent student exchanges, teaching campus lecturers, archipelago
module lecturers, and collaboration with QS100. In addition, curriculum revitalization is carried out through the PKKM program specifically for the informatics engineering study program.

Three kinds of freedom in carrying out the independent learning curriculum in tertiary institutions exist. First, the independent learning curriculum does not replace the established tertiary learning curriculum. Students' freedom in implementing independent learning can be obtained by presenting curriculum development from each department. According to Baharuddin (2021), the curriculum on campus is developed with independent learning or what is called semi-MBKM. The semi-MBKM curriculum includes (1) Students are given the freedom to take six credits outside the study program, (2) Students carry out learning activities off campus through work internships, KKN, independent project studies, and entrepreneurial activities, (3) The learning process is carried out in a student-centred manner so that students have the opportunity to develop innovation, creativity, personality and independence, and (4) The output of graduates is expected to be science and technology so that they can solve environmental problems through their abilities and knowledge.

Research by Lavi et al. (2021) explained that implementing the curriculum to meet the needs of the 21st century can be carried out through various active methods, including projects, course assignments, research, and laboratory learning. The four active methods described can only be done by working with others or together. It is in line with the program in the semi-MBKM curriculum, namely active methods in the form of projects and research that are actualized into joint performance programs with the community. The active method in the form of course assignments is actualized into student freedom in taking six credits on a student-centred basis. The active method in the form of laboratory learning is actualized through learning by utilizing technology.

Suwandi (2020) states that higher education can provide a good learning experience by implementing an independent learning curriculum by improving learning methods and strategies by utilizing information and communication technology. The research results of Angraini et al. (2022) show that the development of an independent learning curriculum in collaboration with individual differences-based programs at the Early Childhood Education Study Program at PGRI University Kanjuruhan Malang is effectively applied in lectures. Programs based on individual differences are applied in the lecture process.
through learning strategies with the output of students being able to understand the character and diversity of students and play an active role in education and entrepreneurship. Through an independent learning-free learning curriculum (MB-KM) based on individual differences students are provided with the ability to analyze, identify, formulate so that they can implement learning models to understand the conditions of each early childhood student.

Second, learning facilities are utilized to implement the independent learning curriculum. Universities are expected to be able to provide or develop learning facilities. Taking cross-major knowledge fields creates a complex learning process, so a formula is needed in the form of adequate learning tools. Facilities in the learning process are not only in the form of objects or learning tools but also in the form of forums that make it easier for students to achieve the desired competencies. Adequate facilities can also support the smooth running of this curriculum learning. One is related to understanding administrative completeness, such as the BKP guideline document, so that students are greatly assisted in implementing the independent learning curriculum (Anggraini et al., 2022).

Third, tertiary institutions are freed to develop teaching tools in implementing the independent learning curriculum. Learning devices are instruments, tools, and learning equipment that are useful as a reference in the learning process. Learning tools in the independent learning curriculum can be improved through aspects of learning strategies so that they are not monotonous and still provide learning experiences for students.

The assessment principles above are then applied by adhering to authentic assessments through tests and non-tests (Arifin et al., 2021). The assessment results are then recapitulated and processed to make it easier for educators to carry out assessments and analyze results. Furthermore, feedback is carried out through interviews regarding the problems experienced during the learning process to make it easier to find formulas for solving learning problems.

Thus, it can be understood that tertiary institutions that implement an independent learning curriculum (independent campus) give freedom to students to obtain learning and knowledge as their learning rights through collaboration with an institution. This curriculum is implemented to aim for students to have hard and soft skills according to their interests. Students from
the independent campus studying this are expected to become graduates who are skilled and competent in their fields

CONCLUSION

The results of the literature review explain the application of the independent learning curriculum as a learning model and its application in tertiary institutions to form students capable of 21st-century skills. The application of the independent learning curriculum at the tertiary level is carried out by giving students the right to freedom to obtain learning according to their field of interest with a focus on the formation of student experience as a provision in facing life’s challenges. The literature review results still found researchers' limitations in identifying the application of the independent learning curriculum at the tertiary level, namely not discussing specifically students' understanding of the development of their 21st-century skills through teaching and implementing the independent learning curriculum. It is hoped that there will be further research to examine students' understanding of the development of 21st-century skills to obtain accurate information regarding progress in implementing the independent learning curriculum.

REFERENCES


