

Building the Future of Education with Independent Learning Curriculum Innovation in the Society 5.0 Era

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the innovation of the independent learning curriculum in the era of society 5.0 in building the future of education. The research method used is a qualitative approach to literature studies that focuses on understanding meaning and does not rely on mathematical or statistical evidence. The data collection technique was carried out through a literature review that discussed the innovation of the independent learning curriculum in the era of society 5.0 in building the future of education sourced from relevant journals and books. This method allows researchers to gain in-depth insight into the innovation of the Independent Learning Curriculum in the Society 5.0 Era in the context of education. The result of this work, namely the Independent Learning curriculum in the Society 5.0 era, produces a positive impact by prioritizing mastery of various fields of science without the limitations of study programs, increasing students' flexibility to explore individual interests, and strengthening critical skills and independence in the face of complex changes. This curriculum also pays attention to students' identities as agents of change who are responsible, ethical, and contribute positively, as well as broadening perspectives through exploring knowledge to face future challenges with strong competence.

Keywords

Era Society 5.0; Independent Learning Curriculum Innovation; The Future of Education

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1. INTRODUCTION

The fundamental component of the education system that requires debriefing is the curriculum. It is a structured framework that includes carefully arranged lesson plans, educational materials, and learning meetings (Vidiarti, Zuhaini, & Andrizal, 2019). Acting as a lighthouse, the curriculum serves as an educator's blueprint for regulating the dynamics of teaching and learning (Fathoni, 2024). Indonesia has undergone many iterations and refinements of the curriculum over time. The evolution of curriculum development within the framework of Indonesian education began with the emergence of the 1947 curriculum (Almarisi, 2023; Wijayanti & Aisahningsih, 2023), which is commonly called Rentjana Pelajaran Terurai. This curriculum's ethos is to foster a sense of national and social awareness. Its formulation was greatly influenced by the socio-political landscape that prevailed in Indonesia



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during the Dutch colonial rule.

The Independent Learning Curriculum adheres to the principle of student autonomy (Aisyah, Rizqiqa, Putri, 2022; Efendi, Muhtar, & ..., 2023; Fauzia & Ramadan, 2023; Mubarak, 2022). Autonomy in this context means giving freedom to every student to access the knowledge obtained from formal academic and informal learning paths. The curriculum goes beyond traditional boundaries, creating an environment where learning transcends the boundaries of the classroom, demanding creativity and innovation from educators and learners.

Kusuma et al. (2023) Freedom of learning is defined as an educational design that provides opportunities for students to learn in a relaxed, calm, stress-free, joyful, and stress-free environment while still considering their innate talents (Kusuma et al., 2023). The main principle of freedom of learning is the freedom of creative and independent thinking (Febrianti, 2023; Juita & Yusmaridi, 2021). Teachers, who play the role of important figures, are expected to be catalysts for actions that provide positive results for students. The essence of the learning concept proposes to reorganize the national education system to anticipate and adapt to societal changes and national progress to allow students to develop according to their potential and abilities (Lestari & Maunah, 2022).

Critical thinking, high-quality learning experiences, rapid absorption of knowledge, practical application, expressive communication, progressive learning tracks, and diverse learning opportunities characterize freedom of learning (Islam & Sauri, 2022). Students who engage in self-paced learning exhibit cognitive attitudes and patterns such as enthusiasm, optimism, foresight, creativity, and a willingness to accept new things. The implementation of independent learning is very closely related to the school-level curriculum in Primary and Secondary Education, which is outlined in directives such as KMA Number 183 and KMA 184 (Roziqin & Hotima, 2022). It aims to improve the curriculum that has moderate, inclusive, culturally aware, religious-based, and life skills that enable them to become people of faith, devotion, morals, productive, creative, innovative, collaborative, and able to contribute to overcoming various social, national, and national problems: And global challenges and the progress of civilization.

In the curriculum process, it will not be separated by innovation in it. Joseph A. Schumpeter, a pioneer of innovation theory, argued that entrepreneurs have a strong drive to establish their industries and spearhead new initiatives. They gain satisfaction from the creative process and continue gaining various skills and experience in various fields (Azizuddin & Ainulyaqin, 2022). Holmen et al. (2007) elaborate on this by highlighting that innovative opportunities represent significant economic value that emerges from synthesizing new resource combinations and identifying unmet market needs (Maul, 2018). Furthermore, Hsieh & Kelley (2016) underlined the important role of innovation as a strategic imperative to mitigate adverse impacts in a highly competitive environment, especially in new business ventures (Cahyani, Mayasari, & Sasono, 2020).

Some works, such as Suryaman (2020), state that innovative, dynamic, and periodic evaluation of the educational curriculum is an urgent need to keep up with the times, science and technology, and the competency needs of the community and graduate users. This is strengthened by repeated changes in Higher Education Standards (SN-Dikti), which reflect the need to adapt to policies such as Independent Learning-Independent Campus, which aims to improve the quality of graduates with new literacy such as data literacy, technological literacy, and noble human literacy, as well as strengthen connectivity with the world of work and industry (Suryaman, 2020). (Alawi et al. (2022) explain the philosophy of the Independent Learning Curriculum and digital learning in Indonesia during the Covid-19 pandemic, focusing on the concept of the Independent Campus as a solution in facing the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and the efforts of the Minister of National Education to encourage independent learning as a form of justice in times of change, especially in emergency conditions (Alawi, Sumpena, Supiana, & Zaqiah, 2022). Yunita et al. (2023) that the independent learning curriculum has been implemented at the Jami'atul Qurro' Islamic Boarding School in Palembang with a focus on the

essence of the Pancasila Student Profile, which includes noble character, global diversity, critical thinking, cooperation, mutual respect, independence, and creativity (Yunita, Zainuri, Ibrahim, Zulfi, & Mulyadi, 2023).

This study reveals theoretical gaps in integrating innovation in the Independent Learning curriculum, especially in developing students' innovative skills. Although the innovation theories of figures such as Schumpeter, Holmen, Hsieh, and Kelley provide a solid foundation for designing curricula that encourage creativity and entrepreneurship, more research is needed to explore how these innovative concepts can be applied in real terms in learning. Schumpeter, for example, emphasized that innovation and entrepreneurship are the main forces in social change, which aligns with the goal of Freedom of Learning in equipping students with adaptive skills and critical thinking. However, there is still a lack of practical guidance in translating these theories into concrete teaching strategies. An in-depth study of the Freedom of Learning approach can identify more effective learning strategies to promote critical skills, such as problem-solving skills, rapid application of knowledge, effective communication, and the development of other innovative skills. This aligns with the demands of the Society 5.0 era, which requires humans to innovate and solve complex problems by utilizing technology optimally. This work aims to analyze the innovation of the independent learning curriculum in the era of society 5.0 in building the future of education.

2. METHODS

This research is qualitative research of the type of literature study. Data collection through literature studies in this study was carried out to explore the concept, implementation, and challenges of the independent learning curriculum in the context of society 5.0. The first step is identifying and selecting relevant and credible literature sources, including scientific journals, academic books, and government policy documents. These sources are collected with strict criteria, such as theme suitability, credibility, and time relevance, to ensure that the data obtained is high quality and up-to-date. The data was then classified into several themes, such as the principles of the independent learning curriculum, technological innovation in the era of society 5.0, its impact on education, and challenges and opportunities in implementing the curriculum in Indonesia. After the literature is collected, the data is critically analyzed through credibility evaluation, content analysis, and reflection on the relevance of each finding in the context of Indonesian education. This analysis process also includes synthesis and integration from various sources to identify existing research patterns, trends, and gaps. The last step is to map the research gap to determine the direction of research recommendations so that it can provide a comprehensive view of the innovation of the independent learning curriculum as a basis for building an educational future responsive to technological developments and the needs of the society 5.0 era.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The concept of education today has undergone a significant evolution with the introduction of independent learning, where individuals are expected to focus on mastering various scientific fields. This aims to enable them to become graduates who have a strong global understanding to face changes that occur at the global level (Faiz & Purwati, 2021). The implementation of the concept of independent learning opens up very wide opportunities to deepen their understanding of various scientific fields that they may not get in their main study program (Umazah & Sakre, 2020). This concept is a breakthrough that aims to shift the linear paradigm that has been dominant in the world of education, which has resulted in the existence of boundaries between various scientific fields.

The concept of independent learning also requires improving human resources skills through a more comprehensive education (Naufal, 2021). Curriculum modification carried out through the concept of independent learning is one of the steps taken to produce quality human resources with an

identity as Pancasila youth who have an independent and creative spirit. This concept has long been applied by one of the leading universities in the world, in line with the vision of Indonesian education, which prioritizes independence and creativity in the learning process, thereby creating an independent character through the exploration of knowledge from various sources, both real and virtual.

A comprehensive education begins with a well-thought-out and thoroughly planned curriculum, ensuring its implementation aligns with the expected outcomes. The curriculum can be understood as a structured learning framework, as articulated by Saylor and Alexander, who define it as "a plan for action by students and teachers," which includes not only academic subjects but also broader school responsibilities (Anih, 2015). One of the educational frameworks that emerged is the concept of independent learning. For this reason, it is necessary to implement the concept of the Independent Learning curriculum in the era of Society 5.0 as a progressive step in facing future education challenges. Some of the progress in the development of the Merdeka Merdeka learning curriculum are:

First, mastery of various scientific fields (Bungawati, 2022; Marwiji, Qomaruzzaman, & Zaqiah, 2023). The Independent Learning curriculum presents a new paradigm in the world of education with a focus on mastering various scientific fields that are not limited to the student's main study program. This provides ample flexibility for learners to explore and delve into disciplines relevant to their interests and needs. In its practical implementation, students can choose courses across study programs that suit their interests without being bound by traditional limitations that often limit academic exploration. For example, a student majoring in Civil Engineering can take courses related to Graphic Design to expand his creative horizons, or a Literature student can choose courses related to Data Analytics to develop his analytical skills. In addition, the Independent Learning curriculum also encourages collaboration between study programs in the preparation of integrated learning materials. This allows students to gain a holistic and deep understanding of a complex topic or problem by involving various perspectives and approaches from various disciplines. Thus, mastery of various scientific fields in the Merdeka Learning curriculum is about acquiring knowledge and developing critical cross-disciplinary thinking skills, creativity, and adaptability in facing complex challenges in the era of Society 5.0. Students are directed to become independent, innovative, and able to integrate various knowledge and concepts to create solutions that positively impact society and the surrounding environment.

The previous researcher noted that the Independent Learning curriculum provides a more in-depth mastery of various scientific fields, not limited to their main study program. This is in line with the theory of Freedom of Learning, which emphasizes the freedom of creative and independent thinking and the restructuring of the education system to anticipate societal changes and national progress. The Independent Learning Theory emphasizes the importance of independent learning driven by critical thinking, high-quality learning experiences, and rapid knowledge absorption (Djafri, Arwildayanto, & Suling, 2020; Dody & Agustang, 2023; Mailin, 2021; Malik, 2023; Rahmafitri, 2024). This concept is based on the practical implementation of the Merdeka Learning curriculum, which gives students the freedom to choose courses across study programs that suit their interests without traditional restrictions that limit academic exploration.

In addition, the theory of Freedom of Learning also highlights the importance of creativity, adaptability, and expressive communication skills in independent learning. The researcher previously noted that the Merdeka Learning curriculum encourages collaboration between study programs to prepare integrated learning materials, allowing students to gain a holistic and in-depth understanding of a complex topic by involving various perspectives and approaches. Overall, it shows strong compatibility between mastering various scientific fields in the Independent Learning curriculum and the principles of independent learning championed by the Independent Learning theory. This indicates that the Independent Learning approach practically implements the values and principles carried out by the theory of independent learning, such as creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and freedom of learning.

Second, Improving HR Skills (Hadiapurwa, Riani, Yulianti, & Yuningsih, 2021; Merdeka, 2020). Through the Independent Learning approach in the curriculum, there has been a significant increase in human resource (HR) skills development. This not only focuses on the development of academic competence but also on the development of critical skills that are very important in facing the dynamics of complex changes in the era of Society 5.0. The Independent Learning approach encourages students to develop independence in learning. They are encouraged to take the initiative in exploring knowledge, finding relevant sources of information, and developing independent learning skills. This allows students to be proactive learners, have control over their learning process, and be able to learn effectively outside of the classroom environment.

Creativity is the main focus in developing human resource skills through the Independent Learning approach. Students can experiment, develop new ideas, and solve complex problems creatively. They are invited to think out of the box, integrate various knowledge and concepts, and produce innovative products or ideas. Adaptability is also a skill that is highly emphasized in the Independent Learning approach. Students are invited to face challenges and changes with flexibility and the ability to change according to the needs and demands of the environment (Anwar & Sukiman, 2023; I Gusti Ngurah, Ni Made, & Ni Luh, 2022; Khasanah & Muthali'in, 2023; Kurniati, Kelmaskouw, Deing, Bonin, & Haryanto, 2022). They are trained to be resilient, overcome obstacles or unexpected changes, and thrive amid rapid change.

Leadership is also an important aspect of the development of HR skills. Through the Merdeka Learning approach, students can lead projects or activities that require leadership skills, such as organizing teams, making decisions, and managing conflicts. They are trained to be effective leaders, have a clear vision, and can inspire and motivate others. The Independent Learning approach greatly impacts student human resource skills development. They are academically intelligent learners and have independence, creativity, adaptability, and strong leadership skills to face challenges and opportunities in the Society 5.0 era, which is full of complexity and rapid change.

Previous researchers have shown that the Independent Learning approach in the curriculum allows for a significant improvement in the development of human resource skills, not only limited to the development of academic competencies. This is to the theory of Freedom of Learning, which emphasizes the freedom of creative and independent thinking, which encourages students to develop independence in learning, seek relevant information, and develop independent learning skills.

Innovation theory also supports mastering various scientific fields in the Independent Learning curriculum. Joseph A. Schumpeter (Frank, 1998), As a pioneer of innovation theory, they argued that entrepreneurs have a strong drive to establish their industries and spearhead new initiatives. It illustrates how the Merdeka Learning approach provides space for students to explore various scientific fields according to their interests and talents, which aligns with critical thinking, high-quality learning experiences, and progressive learning trajectories, as mentioned in the Merdeka Learning theory.

Critical skills, creativity, adaptability, and leadership emphasized in the Independent Learning approach are also important elements in innovation theory. Entrepreneurs are valued for their ability to adapt to a competitive environment, face challenges flexibly, and develop creative solutions to complex problems. This is in line with the concept of mastering various scientific fields, where students are allowed to develop these abilities through the Independent Learning curriculum (Witasari, 2021). Overall, it describes a strong fit between field data on the mastery of various scientific fields through the Independent Learning curriculum with the theory of Independent Learning and innovation theory. The Independent Learning Curriculum not only allows students to master various scientific fields but also develops important skills for the demands of the Society 5.0 era and the role of entrepreneurship in innovation.

Third, Identity as Pancasila Youth (Nafi'ah, 2023; Sofiyana et al., 2021). In the Independent Learning Curriculum context, the identity of students as Pancasila youth is very important. This curriculum aims

to improve academic ability and strengthen the values of nationality, entrepreneurship, and creativity, which are integral parts of the spirit of Freedom of Learning. Identity as a Pancasila youth refers to awareness. Through this curriculum, they are taught to understand, appreciate, and internalize the values of Pancasila in every aspect of their lives. They are prepared to become future leaders who can contribute positively to society and the country.

The Independent Learning Curriculum also emphasizes the development of entrepreneurship and creativity. Students are encouraged to think out of the box, create innovative solutions to societal problems, and take advantage of existing opportunities responsibly and ethically. They are trained to be visionary and highly competitive entrepreneurs in an ever-changing global market. As agents of change, those who follow the Independent Learning Curriculum are taught with social and moral responsibility. They are empowered to be leaders who lead by example, inspire others to do good, and become drivers of positive change in various fields, ranging from economic and social to environmental. Thus, the Independent Learning Curriculum not only produces academically intelligent graduates but also creates a young generation with a strong identity as Pancasila youth who are creative, independent, responsible, and ready to make a real contribution.

Previous researchers have shown that mastery of various scientific fields is not limited to the student's main study program in the context of the Independent Learning Curriculum. This is by the concept of Freedom of Learning explained in the theory that this approach provides opportunities for students to learn independently and creatively, without pressure, and consider their innate talents (Kusuma et al., 2023). This shows the compatibility between the principle of Freedom of Learning, which emphasizes the freedom of creative and independent thinking to develop mastery of various scientific fields.

Previous researchers also underlined the importance of creativity and entrepreneurship in the Independent Learning Curriculum. Students are encouraged to think out of the box, create innovative solutions, and take advantage of opportunities with high responsibility and ethics. This is in line with the theory that Independent Learning is characterized by critical thinking, high-quality learning experiences, and practical application (Islam & Sauri, 2022), as well as emphasizing the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship in facing a competitive environment (Cahyani et al., 2020).

Furthermore, it describes the identity of students as creative, independent, and responsible Pancasila youth, which is the main goal of the Independent Learning Curriculum. Thus, it is consistent with the theory that students are taught to have moderate, inclusive, culturally aware, religious-based, and life skills that enable them to be positive contributors to overcoming social, national, and global problems (Roziqin & Hotima, 2022). Thus, there is a strong relationship between field data on mastery of various scientific fields and theories that highlight the importance of the Independent Learning approach in developing students' academic abilities, creativity, entrepreneurship, and strong identities. This confirms that the Independent Learning Curriculum is a new educational paradigm that allows students to develop holistically according to their potential and talents.

The last is the Exploration of Multi-Source Knowledge (Muzakki, 2023; Rahman, Astina, & Azizah, 2021). Exploring multi-source knowledge is an important approach in modern education, especially with the concept of Freedom of Learning in the Society 5.0 era. Students who are involved in the exploration of multi-source knowledge are invited to develop the ability to search for information from various sources, both physical and virtual, such as books, journals, online articles, learning videos, online seminars, and online discussions with experts or practitioners in relevant fields. Through this exploration of multi-source knowledge, students can broaden their perspective and understanding of current global and local issues. They do not only rely on information from one source but obtain richer and more diverse viewpoints from various sources that can complement and enrich their thinking.

A concrete example of this multi-source knowledge exploration is when students learn about the impacts of climate change. They not only read academic texts but also watched documentaries on

climate change, attended webinars with environmental experts, read reports from international organizations that study the impacts of climate change, and discussed with local communities directly affected by climate change. Thus, the exploration of multi-source knowledge improves the quality of students' understanding and trains them to access information critically, sort out relevant information, and develop information synthesis skills to form a comprehensive and informed view of the complex issues surrounding them.

Previous research, which included exploring multi-source knowledge in the context of Freedom of Learning in the Society 5.0 era, highlighted the importance of developing abilities. With this, it has a theoretical fit that Merdeka Learning prioritizes critical thinking, high-quality learning experiences, and rapid absorption of knowledge (Islam & Sauri, 2022). The exploration of multi-source knowledge allows students to master various scientific fields that are relevant to their interests and needs, not just fixated on the main study program. They can broaden their perspectives and understanding of global and local issues in line with progressive learning trajectories and diverse learning opportunities (Islam & Sauri, 2022).

The theory explained also highlights the importance of independent learning and creativity in mastering various scientific fields. Students who engage in multi-source knowledge exploration will develop cognitive attitudes and patterns such as enthusiasm, optimism, and foresight, which support holistic mastery of various scientific fields. (Roziqin & Hotima, 2022). They are also invited to apply the knowledge gained practically, thereby strengthening the skills of human resources in facing complex changes in the Society 5.0 era, by the main principle of Freedom of Learning, which prioritizes the freedom of creative and independence, thinking (Febrianti, 2023; Juita & Yusmaridi, 2021).

Thus, the exploration of multi-source knowledge in the context of Freedom of Learning not only supports the mastery of various scientific fields but also trains students to become agents of change who are independent, creative, and contribute positively to society and the nation by their identity as Pancasila youth (Febrianti, 2023; Kusuma et al., 2023; Rahman et al., 2021). The integration between field data and theory shows a strong fit in efforts to build an adaptive and progressive future of education in the era of Society 5.0.

Finally, Building the Future of Education with Independent Learning Curriculum Innovation in the Society 5.0 Era is a progressive step in facing the challenges of future education. The Independent Learning Curriculum presents a new paradigm focusing on mastering various scientific fields, providing flexibility for students to explore disciplines relevant to their interests and needs. In addition, this approach allows for developing HR skills that include independence, creativity, adaptability, and critical leadership in facing the complexities of the Society 5.0 era. Identity as Pancasila youth is also strengthened through this curriculum by strengthening national values, entrepreneurship, and creativity. Exploring multi-source knowledge is an important approach in shaping students as agents of change who are independent, creative, and contribute positively to society and the nation. Overall, the Independent Learning Curriculum reflects adaptation and progressivity in education in the Society 5.0 era, leading to learning that is holistic, inclusive, and relevant to the demands of the times.

4. CONCLUSION

Implementing the Independent Learning curriculum in the Society 5.0 era has significantly impacted educational transformation by prioritizing mastery of various scientific fields without being limited to the main study program, increasing flexibility and opportunities for students to explore disciplines relevant to individual interests and needs. In addition, this approach also strengthens the skills of human resources as a whole, not only in academic competence but also in independence, creativity, adaptability, and leadership, which are essential in facing complex changes in the Society 5.0 era. The Independent Learning Curriculum also pays special attention to the identity of students as

Pancasila youth, who are trained to become agents of change, responsible and ethical, and who contribute positively to society and the nation. In addition, by exploring multi-source knowledge, students can broaden their perspectives and understanding of relevant global and local issues, hone their critical analysis skills, and enrich their insights to become a skilled and empowered generation facing future challenges. Thus, the Freedom of Learning changes the traditional educational paradigm and forms a solid foundation to build a generation ready to face the complexities of the Society 5.0 era with strong competence, identity, and independence.

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