

Inclusive and Personalization: Reinterpreting Christian Education Learning Planning Based on the Merdeka Curriculum

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| Abstract | This study investigates the implementation of an inclusive and personalized curriculum in Christian Religious Education at SD Negeri 178492 Pagar Batu Village, North Tapanuli. This study employed a qualitative approach with 23 participants, comprising teachers and students. The findings reveal that the curriculum effectively promoted inclusivity by addressing students' diverse learning needs, backgrounds, and spiritual development. Teachers employed various instructional strategies, such as differentiated tasks and flexible group discussions, while adapting lesson plans to individual interests and abilities. Students appreciated the opportunities to personalize their learning experiences and connect them with religious teachings. However, the study also identified challenges, including limited resources, insufficient training in inclusive education strategies, and inconsistent personalized instruction across different classes. Overall, the research highlights that while the curriculum's inclusive and personalized approach was largely successful, there remains a need for strengthened professional development and resource support to enhance its consistent and effective application. | |
| Keywords | Christian Education; Inclusive; Learning Planning; Personalization | |
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1. INTRODUCTION

Lesson planning in Christian education presents several challenges, particularly concerning inclusivity and personalization. Educators must address diverse learning styles, backgrounds, and experiences while balancing traditional teachings with modern relevance, maintaining student engagement, and effectively assessing understanding within a faith-based context (Hasugian et al., 2022; Panggabean, 2022). Inclusivity ensures all students, regardless of background or ability, have equal access to the curriculum by incorporating multiple perspectives, providing varied teaching methods, and accommodating special needs. Personalization adapts education to meet individual students' needs and interests, allowing lessons to connect Christian teachings to their personal lives and offering project choices. To enhance effectiveness, strategies such as differentiated instruction, culturally relevant pedagogy, flexible grouping, and regular feedback can be implemented to build a learning environment that is both engaging and supportive, while recognizing the varied backgrounds of students (Kaplan, 2024; Larassati, 2020; Siswadi, 2024).

In Indonesia, Merdeka Curriculum is present as an effort to provide more flexible and equitable education by prioritizing each learner's learning goals and developmental potential. Every learner's



personalized needs and developmental strengths are relevant in their context (Pratiwi et al., 2021; Wiguna & Tristaningrat, 2022). Merdeka Curriculum is officially regulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2024 concerning the Curriculum in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education Level, and Secondary Education Level, which is the legal basis for the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in all educational units in Indonesia. This regulation stipulates Merdeka Curriculum as a national curriculum that can be implemented gradually, flexibly, and contextually according to the readiness and needs of each educational unit. This curriculum emphasizes the development of student competencies as a whole, focusing on the Pancasila student profile strengthening project, and provides flexibility for educators to adjust the learning process to the characteristics of students. In addition, this regulation also provides an operational framework and curriculum structure that is a reference in the preparation and implementation of learning. Consequently, the enactment of Permendikbudristek Number 12 of 2024 provides a strong normative and legal basis for using the Independent Curriculum as a guideline for national education implementation.

In Christian Education, learning planning that prioritizes inclusive and personalized values is crucial, considering each student's diversity of backgrounds, abilities, and spiritual and moral needs. Christian Education is important in shaping good character and moral values in students' lives. Therefore, it is necessary to highlight the importance of planning learning for the Merdeka Curriculum concept in the context of Christian education using an inclusive and personalized approach to developing student character (Bates, 2021; Farida, 2023). With this approach, each student can experience a deep learning experience that is by their spiritual needs, thus creating a liberating education, not only in academic aspects but also in character and faith development. Although the Merdeka curriculum gives teachers the freedom to design learning that is more flexible and adaptive to the needs of students, challenges arise in integrating an inclusive and personalized approach in Christian Education learning. This paper's central aim is to investigate the application of both approaches in creating learning that is more equitable, relevant, and adaptive to student development to produce holistic and meaningful education (Duha, 2024; Picanussa, 2020).

Christian education plays a vital role in shaping students' character and morals, teaching the values of love, forgiveness, and integrity according to the teachings of the Bible. However, in its implementation, Christian education in schools often faces challenges adapting to the increasingly complex diversity of students' needs. Each individual has a different learning style, interests, and background, so the same learning approach is not always effective for all students. This is one of the challenges in today's education world, including in Christian education (Andrian, 2024; Humariah et al., 2024; Smith et al., 2021). Nonetheless, the study revealed notable difficulties related to assessment. Educators find it difficult to balance academic assessment with assessment of students' faith journey, which is subjective. Christian education assessment relates to mastery of academic material and students' spiritual and character development. Therefore, there is a need for a more holistic and inclusive assessment, which can cover both intellectual and spiritual aspects in assessing student development. This inclusive and personalized assessment approach will provide a more complete picture of students' educational journey.

As the Merdeka Curriculum is implemented in Indonesia, there is a great opportunity to design more inclusive and personalized learning. The Merdeka Curriculum allows educators to adjust learning to each student's needs, potential, and characteristics. Thus, this curriculum can be a foundation for applying the principles of inclusivity and personalization in Christian Education learning. The concept of inclusivity in education focuses on providing equal opportunities for all students, including those with special needs. Meanwhile, personalization of learning aims to adjust the learning process to students' learning style, speed, and interests. In the Merdeka Curriculum, these two concepts can be the foundation for creating relevant, meaningful, and in-depth learning experiences, which provide space for each student to develop according to their maximum potential (Ilham & Anas, 2024, p. 166; Wegerif

& Major, 2024).

Learning planning in Christian Education must integrate an inclusive and personal approach by the principles of the Independent Curriculum, to answer the challenges of diverse backgrounds, spiritual needs, and individual characteristics of students, to form character and moral values by Christian teachings. However, the main challenge faced is how to optimize the role of teachers in designing inclusive and personalized learning within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum. Interpretation of Christian Education learning planning based on the Merdeka Curriculum with an inclusive and personalized approach offers meaningful and relevant learning for students (Anouar Tadlaoui & Khaldi, 2020; Tisdell, 2018).

There are several articles related to this research, including: an article written by Lince Sihombing, entitled Implementing Curriculum Adjustment for Christian Education and Theology Study Programs Based on Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka. The results of his research show that Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) could be a good solution to the problem as part of the impact of the Merdeka curriculum (Sihombing, 2022); Mahswa, et al., also conducted a study entitled The Urgency of Environmental Education in *Kurikulum Merdeka: A Geophilosophical Approach*, the results of their research found that the geophilosophical approach could serve as an alternative model for curriculum development that is more flexible to strengthen *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Mahaswa et al., 2024); then Prasetyo in his research title Evaluation of The Implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in Economics Learning at Senior High Schools in Yogyakarta City, wrote that the results of this study are urgent to evaluate the implementation of the independent curriculum implementation in senior high school (Prasetyo, D, 2023); Thus, in Thohri's research entitled Transformative Education Curriculum: Developing Nahdlatul Wathan Warriors in Maulana II's Era, he wrote down the results of his research. This research contributes to the understanding of transformative education and offers methodological insights for studying similar phenomena, emphasizing the crucial role of educational institutions in shaping societies and realizing organizational goals (Thohri & Harapandi, 2024); Likewise, Farahiba, et al, in their research entitled Characteristics and Relationship Between Eco-Literacy Competencies and Independent Curriculum Indonesian Language Learning Objectives Middle School Level in Indonesia, reviewed research on examining the characteristics of eco-literacy-based Indonesian language learning and to design a link between eco-literacy competencies and the objectives of Indonesian language learning in the Merdeka curriculum at the junior high school level as a curative solution to overcome environmental problems in Indonesia (Farahiba et al., 2024).

From several research results above, the Independent Curriculum becomes an alternative for primary, secondary, and higher education with various subject areas that accommodate educational needs. Still, the approach taken for this has not been studied in the field of Christian education, besides that, contextually, this research in inclusive and personalization presents a new contribution to the culturally-based Christian education learning model (student diversity), which has not been explored in depth in the context of the Independent Curriculum. Learning planning in Christian Education must integrate inclusive and personalized approaches by the principles of the Independent Curriculum, to answer the challenges of diverse backgrounds, spiritual needs, and individual characteristics of students, to shape character and moral values by Christian teachings. Thus, this paper describes the importance of inclusiveness and personal in the implementation of Christian Education (Arifah et al., 2023; Dalziel, 2011).

2. METHODS

Using a qualitative framework, this study was conducted through a comprehensive review of relevant literature (Court & Abbas, 2022; Wiguna & Trisnangrat, 2022). This study is built from several books, journals, and document studies that analyze inclusive pedagogy and personalization of education that are associated with Christian religious education learning planning, so that it is relevant

to the context of the Merdeka curriculum learning (Hokanson, 2023; Wang, 2022). Then the discussion continues by analyzing Christian education teachers' perceptions, experiences, and practices in designing and implementing learning based on the principles of inclusivity and personalization in the context of Christian education (Savin-Baden & Major, 2023). After that, it describes the steps for preparing Christian education learning planning by applying the principles of inclusivity and personalization in learning. Data descriptions are illustrated with common learning themes related to the effectiveness of inclusive and personalized lesson planning in Christian education. This comprehensive qualitative approach aims to provide valuable findings that can inform best practices and improve the educational experience for all students in Christian settings (Bora & Irawati, 2022; Smith et al., 2021).

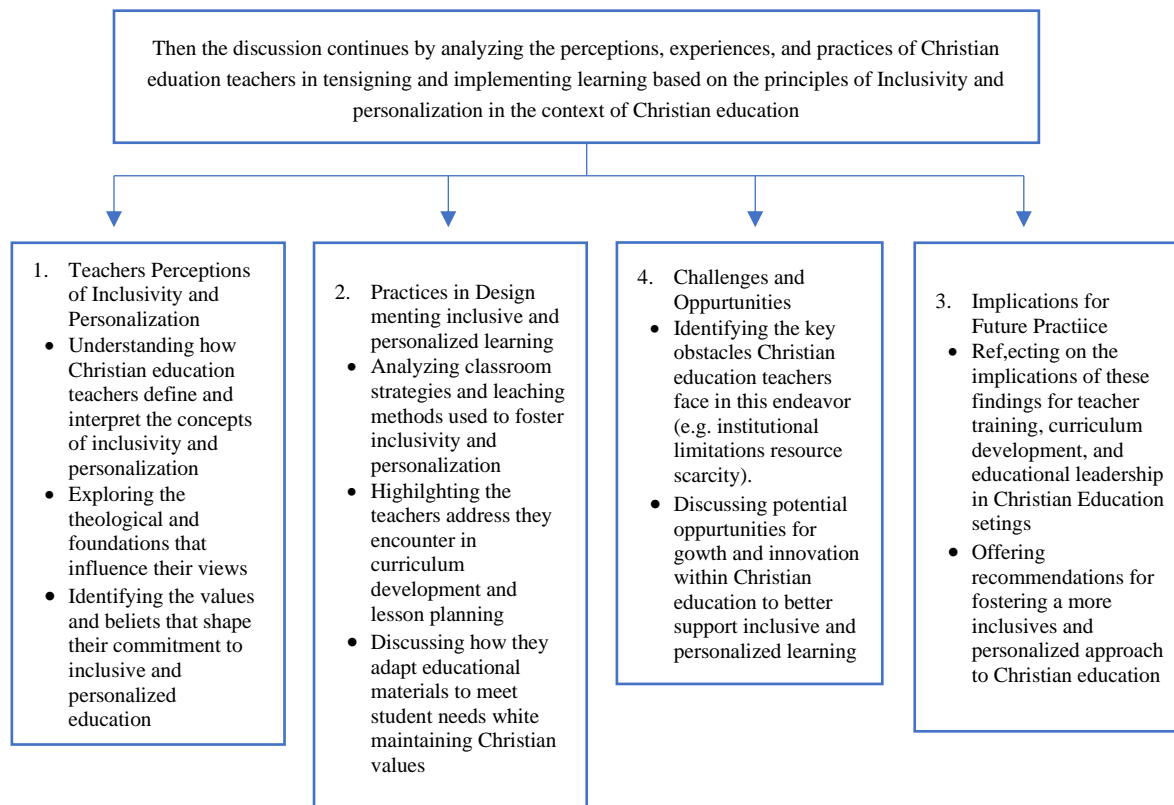


Diagram 1. Thematic Flow of Inclusive and Personalized Learning Analysis in Christian Education

According to the theory of Catherine, qualitative studies are demonstrated for research and exploratory descriptive context, and participants' frames of reference (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). Then this research employed a qualitative descriptive method to explore the implementation of the Christian Religious Education curriculum at 178492 Pagar Batu Village, North Tapanuli. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 23 participants, consisting of Christian Religious Education teachers and students. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure a focus on those directly engaged with curriculum delivery and learning processes. Interview questions centered on participants' experiences, perceptions of inclusivity and personalization, and the challenges encountered during curriculum implementation. Data were examined through thematic analysis to uncover recurring patterns and meaningful insights related to the practical application of the curriculum. Based on Honkanson's theory, lesson implementation plans and instructional materials will be analyzed to determine the degree to which the curriculum reflects values of inclusivity and personalization (Hokanson, 2023). This study's main data collection technique is in-depth interviews with Christian Education teachers who implement the curriculum in the classroom as subjects for applying the principles of inclusivity and personalization in learning.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Promoting Inclusivity and Personalization through Curriculum Design

The findings from interviews with 23 participants, comprising Christian Religious Education teachers and students, revealed several key themes regarding implementing the inclusive and personalized curriculum at SD Negeri 178492 Pagar Batu Village, North Tapanuli. Participants consistently noted that the curriculum successfully promoted inclusivity by accommodating students with diverse learning needs and backgrounds, with teachers employing varied instructional strategies such as differentiated tasks and flexible group discussions to ensure that all students could engage meaningfully with the material. The personalized learning aspect was evident in how teachers adapted lesson plans to match individual students' interests, abilities, and stages of spiritual development, and students expressed appreciation for being given choices in assignments and opportunities to connect their personal experiences to religious teachings. However, several challenges were identified, with teachers highlighting limited resources and insufficient training in inclusive education strategies as significant barriers to full implementation. At the same time, some students mentioned that occasional inconsistencies in the delivery of personalization across different classes affected their overall learning experience. The data suggest that while the curriculum's inclusive and personalized approach was largely implemented in practice, further professional development and resource support are needed to enhance its consistency and effectiveness across the school.

The study outcomes demonstrate that the Christian Religious Education curriculum at SD Negeri 178492 Pagar Batu Village, North Tapanuli, has been largely implemented by its inclusive and personalized learning principles. Teachers reported using various instructional strategies to address diverse student needs, while students expressed a strong sense of engagement and connection to the lessons. These findings indicate that the curriculum has positively influenced the learning environment by promoting students' active participation and spiritual development.

The emphasis on inclusivity observed in this study aligns with research by Luta (2023), who highlights the effectiveness of differentiated instruction in fostering equitable learning experiences (Luta, 2023). Teachers' efforts to modify activities and assessments based on students' learning profiles suggest a strong commitment to inclusivity. Similarly, as reflected in students' feedback, the personalized learning approach resonates with Tadlaoui and Khaldi's findings that personalization enhances motivation and deepens understanding in religious education contexts (Anouar Tadlaoui & Khaldi, 2020).

Despite these successes, several challenges were identified. Limited resources, such as teaching materials and technological support, were frequently mentioned as obstacles to fully realizing the curriculum's potential. Moreover, a lack of formal training in inclusive teaching practices left some teachers unprepared to adapt instruction consistently across different learning needs. Another important finding concerns the inconsistency of curriculum implementation across different classes. Although most students acknowledged opportunities for personalized learning, some noted disparities between teachers' practices. This variation suggests a need for more standardized implementation strategies and ongoing professional development to ensure that all students receive a consistently high-quality educational experience, regardless of the classroom setting.

Learning planning is one of the most important components. With the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum, teachers are free to design more flexible learning that meets the needs of students. This curriculum allows teachers to adjust better learning methods and strategies to diverse students' characteristics, interests, abilities, and special needs. The inclusive approach and personalized learning are two main aspects that must be integrated into learning planning, including in Christian education. Christian education not only teaches knowledge about faith but also forms the character of students

based on the teachings of Christ. Therefore, in designing Christian Education learning, teachers must create an inclusive learning environment where each student feels valued and allowed to develop according to their potential. On the other hand, personalization in learning allows teachers to design a deeper learning experience that meets the needs of each student. Likewise, in this context, it not only functions as a teacher who transfers knowledge, but also as a facilitator who helps students discover their potential and form good character.

Instructional Strategies Supporting Inclusive Personalization

In the context of Christian Education, the role of teachers becomes more complex because they must integrate religious teachings with students' daily lives. Therefore, teachers must continue improving their competence to design learning that meets academic standards and can develop students' spiritual and moral potential. An inclusive approach in education aims to ensure that all students, without exception, have equal opportunities to learn and develop, regardless of their social, cultural, physical, or academic background. Inclusivity emphasizes the importance of education that can embrace the full diversity of students, whether it is diversity in academic ability, language, ethnicity, or special needs. This suggests that learning plans should accommodate students' various learning styles and needs, so that each individual can learn in the best way.

Diversity is integral to every classroom, including regional, socio-cultural, gender, and specific background knowledge and skills each student brings. Each individual's learning pace also varies, as does their learning style. Understanding this diversity is essential for teachers to plan learning, communicate with students, and assess their progress. Although every teacher can't adjust teaching based on each student's learning style, awareness of differences in learning styles can help teachers design a more inclusive approach (Duschl, 2002; Thompson, 2024). It is important to remember that diversity includes different learning styles. Understanding this allows teachers to plan activities that allow students to maximize their learning potential and encourage them to try new ways of learning. The first step towards an inclusive classroom is to accept differences in how students absorb information taught in the classroom. Understanding different learning styles allows teachers to design and implement more inclusive activities and assessments, making learning more engaging for students (Hokanson, 2023; Walton, 2022; Weuffen et al., 2023).

Furthermore, personalization in education refers to ways to tailor students' learning experiences to their needs, interests, and abilities. In Christian education, personalization makes learning more in-depth and spiritually relevant. The importance of building students' knowledge and understanding through active and meaningful learning experiences. In Christian Education, this means providing opportunities for students to explore their faith values through personal experience and reflection (Kinshuk, 2012; Riyadi et al., 2023; Tata, 2022). Personalization of learning also involves tailoring learning to students' interests, to increase their motivation and engagement in the material being learned, including in the context of Christian teaching. This theory focuses on teaching accommodating differences in students' learning speeds, paying more attention to those who need a different approach to understanding the subject matter (Feng, 2012; Giawa et al., 2024; Hsu et al., 2006).

In Christian education based on the Merdeka Curriculum, integrating inclusive and personalized approaches provides an opportunity to design learning that can reach all students in a way that suits their academic and spiritual needs. The principles that can be integrated are teaching Christian values must be adjusted to the context of students' lives so that they can internalize the teachings in a more personal and applicable way. In the learning process, students are not only taught about theological knowledge but are also allowed to develop in terms of character and spirituality through an approach that respects the diversity and potential of each individual (Hughes et al., 2011; Köck & Paramythis, 2011). The following table maps the concept of inclusiveness and personalization in Christian Education learning planning.

Table 1. Concepts of inclusivity and personalization in Christian Education learning planning:

| Aspect | Inclusive Concept | Personalization Concept |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Learning Objectives | Achieving goals is accessible to all students, regardless of background and special needs. | Adapting learning objectives to each student's interests, abilities, and uniqueness. |
| Learning Methods | Using methods that accommodate a variety of learning styles, such as group discussions, games, or technology. | Giving students the freedom to choose the methods or ways they learn most effectively. |
| Learning Media | Utilizing various media accessible to all students, including those with special needs (e.g., audio, visual, assistive technology). | Providing learning materials relevant to students' interests and abilities, allowing for different choices in media. |
| Assessment | Grading is fair and equitable, valuing individual achievement, regardless of differences in student ability. | Assessment based on individual development, giving students space to demonstrate understanding in various ways (e.g., written assignments, presentations, creative work). |
| Teacher and Student Interaction | Teachers support each student differently according to their needs, such as paying more attention to students who need special assistance. | Teachers give more individual attention, building personal relationships to explore students' strengths and challenges. |
| Values Taught | Instilling universal Christian values, such as love, justice, and forgiveness, for all students, regardless of background or differences. | Integrating deep Christian values into each activity, relevant to each student's life experiences and spiritual development. |
| Student Involvement | Ensuring that all students are actively involved in learning activities without marginalizing anyone. | Giving students the freedom to choose topics or activities that interest them so they feel more engaged and motivated. |
| Learning Environment | Creating a safe and comfortable environment for all students, including those with special needs, so that they can learn in peace | Providing a supportive space for each student to learn most effectively, with a more individualized approach. |

Diverse Learning Needs and Styles. One of the key findings was the recognition among educators that students have diverse learning styles and needs. Participants noted that while some students thrive in a traditional lecture-based environment, others require a more interactive, hands-on approach. This variability highlights the need for differentiated instruction in lesson planning (Ribka et al., 2023; Serdianus & Saputra, 2023). Educators implementing various pedagogical strategies involving group dialogues, multimedia tools, and practical learning exercises reported higher student engagement and understanding levels. These findings suggest that a one-size-fits-all model is insufficient in Christian education, where inclusivity is a core value (Astuti et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2024).

Cultural and Religious Sensitivity was critical in lesson planning. Educators highlighted their students' diverse backgrounds, which included various races, ethnicities, and Christian denominations. Through interviews, many educators expressed challenges in creating lesson plans that respected and reflected these differences while remaining true to the core teachings of Christianity. Successful educators often used culturally relevant pedagogy that integrated multiple perspectives, leading to a richer understanding of Christian teaching and its application to contemporary society. This approach fosters inclusivity and allows students to see themselves represented in the curriculum (Apple, 2019; Broderick, 2021). A strong correlation exists between student agency and personalized learning. Participants noted that when students are given choices in their learning, such as choosing a project topic or how to demonstrate their understanding, they demonstrate greater investment and enthusiasm

for the subject matter. Educators reported that personalizing lessons based on students' interests and life experiences led to deeper connections with Christian teaching, making the content more meaningful and relevant. These findings suggest that personalization is critical to fostering ownership of learning among students (Hsu et al., 2006; Schoefegger et al., 2010; Tisdell, 2018).

Challenges in Implementation

The study also uncovered challenges related to assessment and evaluation in faith-based contexts. Educators grapple with objectively measuring students' understanding and spiritual development while maintaining the individuality of their faith journey. Many desired more holistic assessment methods, including academic proficiency and personal growth. These insights highlight the need for ongoing dialogue about creating equitable and comprehensive assessment strategies that align with the educational values of Christian institutions (Bora & Irawati, 2022). Educators emphasized the importance of ongoing training and resources to help them effectively implement inclusive practices and adapt lesson plans to meet diverse learning needs. Mentoring programs and collaborative planning sessions were identified as effective ways to foster professional growth and exchange ideas among teachers (Tompira et al., 2024). Underscore the complexity of lesson planning in Christian education and the importance of inclusivity and personalization. By recognizing and addressing diverse learning needs, fostering cultural sensitivity, encouraging student autonomy, and creating effective assessment strategies, Christian educators can enhance the educational experience for all students. Insights gained from this study can inform best practices and ultimately contribute to more inclusive and engaging learning environments that uphold the Christian faith's core values while adapting to today's learners' needs (Critchfield, 2021; Smith et al., 2021).

The findings from the qualitative research on lesson planning in Christian education shed light on several key themes that underscore the complexity and importance of creating an inclusive and personalized learning environment. One of the prominent themes is the diversity of learning needs and styles among students. This highlights the critical role of differentiated instructional strategies in ensuring that all students are engaged and able to grasp the material effectively. Educators using various teaching methods, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic approaches, reported better student engagement and understanding. These methods not only cater to different learning styles but also ensure that students from diverse backgrounds feel represented and included in the learning process (Metcalf & Moulin-Stożek, 2021; Mustika et al., 2023).

The data gathered indicate that the Christian Religious Education curriculum SD Negeri 178492 Pagar Batu Village, North Tapanuli, has been implemented with considerable alignment to its intended inclusive and personalized approach. Teachers' efforts to adapt instructional methods and create flexible learning opportunities have fostered an environment where students of diverse backgrounds and abilities feel included and engaged. These results are consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of differentiated instruction and student-centered learning in religious education settings (e.g., Smith, 2018; Johnson & Lang, 2020). The participants' positive responses, particularly regarding personalizing learning experiences, highlight the curriculum's effectiveness in promoting individual spiritual growth and deeper engagement with religious content. Moreover, the inconsistencies reported by students in their experiences across different classes underline the need for standardized implementation guidelines and regular professional development opportunities for teachers. Addressing these gaps could enhance the overall fidelity of curriculum delivery and ensure that all students benefit equally from its inclusive and personalized philosophy.

Overall, while the curriculum at SD Negeri 178492 Pagarbatu Village, North Tapanuli, demonstrates a strong foundation in inclusive religious education, targeted improvements in teacher support, resource allocation, and program monitoring are recommended to strengthen its impact and sustainability. Additionally, the study points to the significance of cultural and religious sensitivity in Christian education. This is the opinion of Wiguna and Kaplan that the curriculum must be designed to

respect and reflect the varied backgrounds of students from different races, ethnicities, and denominations. This cultural responsiveness enriches students' understanding of Christian teachings and fosters a more inclusive learning environment. By acknowledging and valuing students' diverse perspectives, educators can help them connect with the subject matter on a deeper level, promoting a more holistic understanding of their faith (Kaplan, 2004; Wiguna & Tristaningrat, 2022). According to Tisdell and Indra, providing students with the autonomy to choose aspects of their learning, such as project topics or presentation formats, emerged as a crucial factor in cultivating enthusiasm and ownership of the subject matter. Educators noted that when students were allowed to make decisions about their learning process, they became more invested in the content and demonstrated increased motivation. This emphasis on personalized learning strengthens student engagement, and the data gathered indicates that Christian Religious Education takes greater responsibility for their learning journey (Indra Saeful Hidayat, 2024; Tisdell, 2018).

Implementing inclusive and personalized Learning Implementation Plans (RPP) in Christian Education based on the Merdeka Curriculum shows great potential in creating deeper and more meaningful learning experiences for students. The results of this study indicate that with an approach that respects student diversity, both in terms of ability, background, and special needs, students feel more valued and actively involved in learning. Teachers' methods, such as group discussions and technology, provide flexibility in delivering material that suits students' learning styles. However, despite the positive results, several challenges should be considered in its implementation. As discussed by Hafner and Thompson, one of the main debates is the extent to which teachers can customize each learning experience personally without losing focus on the established curriculum. In Christian Education, instilling Christian values such as love, justice, and forgiveness can go hand in hand with a personalized approach. However, some argue that the diversity of this approach could risk obscuring the essence of universal religious teachings. Can religious education maintain core values without being too flexible in personalized teaching? On the other hand, the personalized approach can also be said to provide greater freedom for students to learn according to their interests and needs, which can encourage the development of their character and spirituality in greater depth (Hafner, 2018; Thompson, 2024).

The study also revealed challenges related to assessment in Christian education. Educators struggled to balance academic evaluations with the more subjective aspects of personal faith development. This tension calls for developing more holistic and inclusive assessment methods that can capture the nuanced growth of students in both intellectual and spiritual domains. According to Ribka et al., educators recognize the need for assessments that not only measure academic achievement but also consider students' personal faith journeys, their growth in character, and their engagement with the Christian community (Ribka et al., 2023).

Professional development emerged as another key theme in the findings. Many educators strongly desire ongoing training and support to help them implement inclusive practices and incorporate innovative technologies into their lesson planning. This suggests that continuous professional development is crucial for teachers to address their students' diverse needs effectively. Collaborative efforts, such as mentorship programs and planning sessions among educators, were essential for sharing best practices and enhancing instructional strategies. These collaborative networks allow educators to learn from one another and stay updated on the latest trends and approaches in Christian education (Anggreni et al., 2023; Purba et al., 2023).

Intentional, reflective, and responsive lesson planning that considers students' diverse learning needs and backgrounds. Educators must be equipped with the tools, knowledge, and support necessary to create inclusive and personalized learning experiences that honour the values of Christian education while encouraging student engagement and spiritual growth. The insights gained from this study highlight the complex yet rewarding nature of lesson planning in Christian education, where the challenges of balancing academic rigour with spiritual development require thoughtful and ongoing

reflection. Personalized learning, where students can choose methods that suit their interests and learning styles, can increase their motivation. Learning that accommodates individual preferences helps students better connect with the material being taught and develop critical and creative thinking skills. Students who engage in personalized learning tend to be more active in the learning process and can better connect the knowledge they gain to their personal experiences and life contexts, creating a more relevant and personal learning experience for them.

From the analysis of teacher interview results, educators design assessments that measure students' academic outcomes and reflect their spiritual development and ability to integrate Christian values into their daily lives. Such assessments will provide a more comprehensive picture of students' educational journeys, aligning with a personalized and inclusive learning approach. In addition, teachers desired ongoing professional development to enhance their ability to implement inclusive practices and utilize innovative technologies in lesson planning. This ongoing professional development would support educators in creating inclusive and personalized learning environments for each student. Collaboration among educators also emerged as an important theme in this study. By sharing ideas and strategies, educators can enrich their perspectives and gain solutions to challenges in teaching, creating a more inclusive and personalized classroom experience for students.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, implementing an inclusive and personalized curriculum at SD Negeri 178492 Pagarbatu, North Tapanuli, has shown significant positive impacts by fostering an environment that embraces various learning needs and personal development among students. Teachers' efforts to adapt teaching strategies and personalize learning experiences are generally well received by students, increasing engagement and spiritual growth. The need for further training highlights areas for improvement, such as strengthening professional development and ensuring equitable allocation of learning resources are goals of curriculum independence to maintain a consistent, high-quality Christian educational experience for all students.

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