

# Dissemination of the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Madrasah Aliyah

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**Abstract:** The Merdeka Curriculum has been introduced by the government as an effort to improve the quality of education by providing greater flexibility for schools and teachers in managing learning, while also emphasizing the mastery of essential competencies and the strengthening of character through the Pancasila Student Profile projects. However, its implementation in the field still faces challenges, particularly in non-driving schools under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This Community Service Program (PKM) aimed to enhance teachers' understanding at Madrasah Aliyah Swasta (MAS) Al Jauhari, Karangtengah Subdistrict, Garut, regarding the concepts, learning principles, assessment, development of the School Operational Curriculum (KOSP), and the integration of Pancasila Student Profile strengthening projects. The activity was conducted on June 14, 2022, using methods that included needs identification through interviews, literature review related to the Merdeka Curriculum guidelines, and a workshop consisting of dissemination sessions, material presentations, and interactive discussions. A total of 26 participants, comprising the principal, teachers, and education staff, took part in this program. The results indicated a significant improvement in teachers' understanding of various aspects of the Merdeka Curriculum, with post-dissemination comprehension rates reaching over 75% across all indicators. This activity demonstrates the effectiveness of dissemination in bridging the gap between curriculum policy and school practice. Moving forward, continued mentoring and in-depth training are needed to support the optimal implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in partner schools.

**Keywords:** Community service, Dissemination, Education, Merdeka Curriculum, Teachers.

## Introduction

Curriculum changes in Indonesia have been continuously implemented as part of efforts to improve the quality of education in response to contemporary challenges, one of which is the transition from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum, introduced in 2022 (Irvani, Ainissyifa, et al., 2023; Irvani & Hanifah, 2024; Ndari & Mahmudah, 2023; Zidan & Qamariah, 2023). This curriculum, previously known as the Prototype Curriculum or the New Paradigm Curriculum, is designed to provide greater flexibility for educational institutions in managing learning, emphasize the mastery of essential competencies, and integrate projects for strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile (Ulfa et al., 2024; Warliani et al., 2023). This shift is not only intended to address the shortcomings of the previous curriculum but also to prepare students to face global challenges, overcome learning setbacks

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caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and promote more contextual, adaptive, and character-oriented learning.

The Merdeka Curriculum was introduced with the primary goal of providing flexibility for teachers and schools in designing learning processes that align with the needs and characteristics of students, while also reducing content overload to focus on the mastery of essential competencies (Jannah, 2025; Khairunnisa, 2025). Through this approach, teachers are expected to have greater opportunities to develop creative and meaningful learning strategies, including the implementation of projects to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile as an effort to nurture a generation that is characterized, competitive, and capable of adapting to the dynamics of change.

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum cannot be separated from the major challenges faced by the education sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to the phenomena of learning loss and learning gaps (Pratikno et al., 2022; Rizaldi & Fatimah, 2023; Rizki & Fahkrunisa, 2022). Prolonged school closures deprived many students of optimal learning opportunities, resulting in decreased academic abilities and a widening gap in educational access, particularly in schools with limited resources. This situation necessitates a curriculum policy capable of recovering learning setbacks while accommodating the diverse needs of educational institutions. Consequently, the dissemination of the Merdeka Curriculum becomes an essential step to ensure that teachers and schools understand effective implementation strategies amid these challenges.

Many non-driving schools, particularly those under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, continue to face confusion in understanding the concepts and technical aspects of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, ranging from the development of teaching materials and adjustment of assessments to the integration of projects for strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile (Afida & Prihatin, 2024). This lack of understanding has prevented these schools from fully utilizing the flexibility offered by the curriculum, highlighting the need for comprehensive mentoring and dissemination efforts. In this context, the role of higher education institutions through community service programs becomes crucial as strategic partners in providing guidance, broadening teachers' insights, and supporting schools' readiness to implement the Merdeka Curriculum in accordance with the specific context and needs of each educational institution.

In light of these conditions, the dissemination of the Merdeka Curriculum serves as a strategic step to bridge the gap between the government's curriculum policies and their actual practice in schools (Alhapi et al., 2024; Kartika, 2024). Through this dissemination, teachers not only gain an understanding of the fundamental concepts and objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum but are also guided in its technical application, such as the development of the School Operational Curriculum (KOSP), the creation of contextual teaching materials, and the implementation of formative and summative assessments in line with the principles of independent learning. Consequently, teachers are expected to integrate projects for strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile in a more structured manner, enabling the effective implementation of this new curriculum and generating a tangible impact on improving the quality of learning in schools.

Within this framework, the urgency of dissemination activities lies not only in sharing information about new policies but also in efforts to enhance teachers' capacity to adapt to the paradigm shift in learning promoted by the Merdeka Curriculum (Dirgantoro & Soesanto, 2023; Hadi et al., 2023; Hunaepi & Suharta, 2024). Higher education institutions, in this case Universitas Garut, play a strategic role as mentors and partners for schools through community service programs focused on improving educators' competencies. This collaboration is expected to strengthen schools' readiness for the gradual implementation of the curriculum, ensure that the learning process aligns with national education policy directions, and ultimately make a tangible contribution to improving the quality of education at the partner institutions.

Based on this urgency, the dissemination activity specifically aims to provide teachers with an in-depth understanding of the concepts and fundamental principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, including student-centered learning approaches, relevant assessment strategies, and the integration of projects to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile within the learning process. In addition, this activity is designed to equip schools with the capacity to prepare and develop a School Operational Curriculum (KOSP) that aligns with their vision, mission, and unique characteristics, thereby enabling the

implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum to be more structured, contextual, and to have a tangible impact on improving the quality of education in schools.

## Method

This community service activity was carried out in the hall of Madrasah Aliyah Swasta (MAS) Al Jauhari, Karangtengah Subdistrict, Garut Regency, on June 14, 2022. The participants consisted of 26 individuals, including the principal, teachers, and education staff of MAS Al Jauhari. The selection of this school was based on its urgent need for a better understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum, considering that it is a non-driving school under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which has its own curriculum policies.

The implementation methods of this activity comprised several stages: problem identification, literature review, and workshop implementation (Irvani et al., 2020; Irvani, Muhajir, et al., 2023; Irvani & Hanifah, 2024). Problem identification was conducted through interviews with the vice principal for curriculum affairs to determine the teachers' level of understanding and the school's needs regarding the Merdeka Curriculum. Subsequently, the team carried out a literature review of policies and official guidelines related to the Merdeka Curriculum, including concepts of intracurricular learning, assessment, and projects for strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile, which served as the basis for preparing the dissemination materials.

The final stage was the implementation of the workshop in the form of dissemination and interactive discussions. The activity began with welcoming remarks from the principal and the head of the study program, followed by the delivery of two main presentations by the speakers: "Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum" and "Principles of Learning, Assessment, the School Operational Curriculum (KOSP), and Projects for Strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile." After the presentations, a discussion and Q&A session was conducted to further explore the challenges faced by the participants. To evaluate the success of the activity, the team also distributed a satisfaction survey to the participants as feedback for future similar activities.

## Result and Discussion

The dissemination of the Merdeka Curriculum at MAS Al Jauhari resulted in improved teachers' understanding of the fundamental principles of learning within the curriculum. The participants gained insights that this curriculum emphasizes student-centered learning by providing teachers with the flexibility to design teaching strategies that align with students' needs and characteristics. This approach allows teachers to balance the mastery of essential content with the development of students' character as part of the Pancasila Student Profile (Handayani & Safitri, 2025; Ratnawati et al., 2024; Srirahmawati & Hunaifi, 2022; Suwarni, 2024).

Teachers also gained a more comprehensive understanding of assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes authentic evaluation through formative and summative assessments. This approach enables teachers to evaluate students' learning processes holistically, not only in terms of cognitive achievement but also regarding skills and attitudes. Through the workshop, teachers were trained to develop contextual assessment instruments tailored to their respective school conditions, allowing them to provide constructive feedback for the improvement of the learning process (Avargil et al., 2012; Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; Paris & Winograd, 2003).



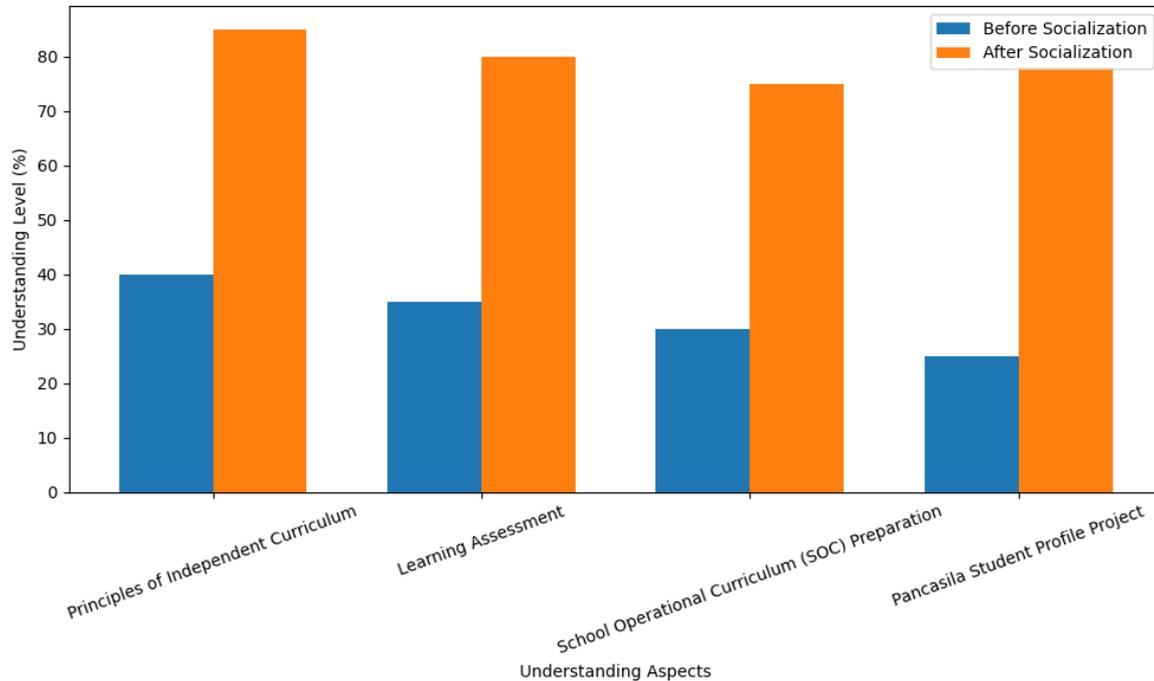
**Figure 1.** Documentation of the Merdeka Curriculum Socialization Activities

Understanding the development of the School Operational Curriculum (KOSP) was also one of the key outcomes of this activity. Teachers were encouraged to align the KOSP with the vision, mission, and specific needs of their educational institution, ensuring that the document truly serves as a contextual guideline for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. Through interactive discussions, teachers came to understand that the preparation of the KOSP is not merely an administrative task but also a strategic effort that directs the implementation of learning in schools (Ababa, 2021; R. P. Dewi et al., 2025; Lawson, 2024).



**Figure 2.** Question and Answer Session with Participants

Equally important, this activity also enhanced teachers' understanding of integrating projects for strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile into the learning process. These projects are perceived as a means to develop students who are characterized, creative, and capable of collaboration, in line with the values of Pancasila. With this understanding, teachers felt more prepared to design projects that are relevant to the context of their schools and communities, ensuring that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is both effective and contributes to building 21st-century skills in students (M. R. Dewi & Arifin, 2024; Haq, 2024; Sari et al., 2024).



**Figure 3.** Comparison of Teachers' Understanding Before and After Curriculum Socialization

Figure 3 illustrates a significant increase in teachers' understanding of various key aspects of Merdeka Curriculum implementation following the dissemination activity. Prior to the activity, teachers' understanding of the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum was around 40%, while their understanding of learning assessment, the development of the School Operational Curriculum (KOSP), and the integration of projects for strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile were at 35%, 30%, and 25%, respectively. After the dissemination activity, there was a substantial increase, with teachers' understanding of these four aspects rising to over 75%. The highest increase was observed in understanding the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, reaching 85%, followed by learning assessment at 80%, KOSP development at 75%, and the Pancasila Student Profile project integration at 78%.

These findings indicate that the dissemination activity had a tangible positive impact on teachers' understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum. This improvement reflects the effectiveness of the implementation method, which combined material delivery with interactive discussions, enabling teachers not only to receive information passively but also to clarify the challenges they faced in applying the curriculum within their respective school contexts. These results are consistent with assertion on the importance of enhancing educators' capacity to cope with curriculum changes as part of post-pandemic learning recovery efforts (Al-Qashouti, 2024; Othman et al., 2023).

The increased understanding of the School Operational Curriculum (KOSP) development indicates that teachers have begun to recognize the importance of aligning the operational curriculum document with the school's vision, mission, and characteristics. Meanwhile, understanding of the projects for strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile, which was previously relatively low, increased significantly after the dissemination activity. This underscores the need for ongoing mentoring to enable teachers to integrate these projects into learning in a contextual manner that aligns with the school environment (Awoyemi et al., 2024; Meng, 2023; Prastikawati et al., 2024).

This dissemination activity not only broadened teachers' knowledge but also enhanced their readiness to effectively implement the Merdeka Curriculum in their respective educational institutions. Moving forward, continued support is needed, including in-depth training and collaboration between schools and higher education institutions, to ensure that this understanding is translated into learning practices with a tangible impact on students (Aithal & Maiya, 2023; Grunwald et al., 2024).

## Conclusion

The dissemination activity on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at MAS Al Jauhari, Karangtengah Subdistrict, Garut, successfully improved teachers' understanding of learning principles, assessment, the development of the School Operational Curriculum (KOSP), and the integration of projects for strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile. This improvement reflects the success of the implementation method, which combined material delivery, interactive discussions, and Q&A sessions, enabling teachers not only to gain theoretical knowledge but also to understand strategies for applying the curriculum in the context of their respective educational institutions.

The findings from this activity indicate that mentoring through dissemination is highly necessary, particularly for non-driving schools under the Ministry of Religious Affairs that still face limitations in understanding the Merdeka Curriculum. Moving forward, follow-up actions are needed in the form of in-depth training, continuous teacher capacity development, and collaboration between higher education institutions and partner schools. These efforts are expected to ensure the optimal implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and produce a tangible impact on improving the quality of learning and fostering students' character development.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article.

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